

THE
PRACTICE
OF
Christian Perfection

Written in Spanish by R^d. Father
ALPHONSUS RODRIGUEZ
of the SOCIETY of JESUS.

Translated into English out of the French Copy
of Mr. *REGNIER DES-MARAIS*,
of the Royal Academy of *PARIS*.

THE FIRST PART.



L O N D O N,
Printed by *Thomas Hales*, MDCXCVII.

PRAC TICE

Christian Religion

Written in Spanish by R. F. Lopez
ALPHONSO RODRIGUEZ

of the Order of St. Francis

of the Province of St. Francis

of the Order of St. Francis

of the Order of St. Francis

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of the Order of St. Francis

Printed by Thomas H. MDCXCVII

THE ESISTE DADATORY.

~~it necessary to be your Royal~~

Protection of its Translation;

being who propo-

what is to be done for the

Book requires no less

your

Approbation than your

Royal Assent to procure its

Doctrine a

M A D A M

OUR Majesties

daily and con-

stant Exercises

of Piety, giv-

ing the World

no less an Idea

of Christian Perfection, than

this Book proposes; I judg'd

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THE EPISTLE DEDICATORY.

it necessary to beg your Royal Protection of it's Translation; being the Author proposes what is so hard for Flesh and Blood to perform, that his Book requires no less powerful Approbation than your Royal Assent, to procure it's Doctrine a more plausible Reception; and as efficacious a Motive as your Royal Example, to make the hard things it teaches, be practis'd with greater facility: Nothing, according to the common Maxim, so powerfully Charming the whole World, as a Royal Example.

Of

THE EPISTLE DEDICATORY.

Of those Christian Practices,
to which the Author in this
Book excites us, none are more
difficult than a Perfect Con-
formity to God's Will, in
the greatest and most sensible
Crosses; and the free and in-
tirc Pardoning our greatest and
most inveterate Enemies. None
but his Majesty, and your
Royal Self, can truly Judge the
greatness and sensibility of your
Cross; since none can tell
what 'tis to loose a Crown,
but those who have once worn
one: Tho' all may judge with
what Conformity your Ma-
jesties

THE EPISTLE DEDICATORY.

jesties bear it, since they be-
hold you with admiration suf-
fer this loss, with such
cheerfulness, and equality of
Mind, as tho' still you enjoy'd
your three Kingdoms. Nor
can any but your Selves also,
perfectly judge the greatness
of your Charity in Pardon-
ing your Enemies Ingratitude;
since your Majesties only
know, the great Obligations
you have ever heap'd upon
em, yet all cannot but see
by repeated and most con-
vincing Arguments, that both
your Majesties have been,
and

THE EPISTLE DEDICATORY.

and still are, far readier to
give, than your Enemies to
ask, or even to receive a
Pardon. Wherefore, besides
my own very many parti-
cular Obligations to your
Majesty, those I have also
to my Country, requir'd I
shou'd Dedicate this Work
to your Royal Self, there-
by to procure such profit-
able and advantageous Effects
thereof, as your Majesty con-
stantly Practises, by your Sub-
jects endeavouring to Imitate
your Royal Example; which
that

THE EPISTLE DEDICATORY.

that they may, are the
heartly wishes and constant
Prayers of,

M A D A M

Your Majesties most
Dutiful and Obe-
dient Subject.

T H E

THE
EPISTLE
OF
M^r. DES-MARAIS
TO THE
READER.



WHEN I first undertook this Work, I knew not of any other *French* Copy, but of that which was Printed in the Year, 1621. whose Stile and Language was such, as pleaded for a new Translation. Since that three have been Printed, one at *Lyons*, in the Year, 1667. and two at *Paris*, in the Years, 1670. and 1674. As the two first, caus'd me to defer the Publishing of mine; so the last wou'd have made me quite lay aside all farther thought thereof; had not the Translatour himself told me, that his was rather a Collection than a Translation: For as he takes notice in his Preface, he compos'd it out of three different *Spanish* Copies and took out of each of 'em, what most of all pleas'd him; wherefore since I gave not my self the liberty he took, but kept within straiter bounds, by following one only Copy; I thought this wou'd render our Works so very different, that there remain'd no Reason at all, why I shou'd any longer suppress mine.

The Copy I follow'd was that Printed at *Sevil*, in
Tom. I. * * the

The Epistle of Mr. Des-Marais to the Reader.

the Year, 1615. tho' I must own 'twas not by any choice of mine I did so; because I was then Ignorant, that there were any other Copies; nor shou'd I yet have known it, had not the Translator of the last *French* Copy, inform'd me thereof in his Preface. But this Ignorance of mine sav'd me the pains the other says he had, which of the Copies to choose. The first of which, is that of *Sevil*, I before spoke of; the second of *Saragose*; and the third of *Madrid*. I must Confess that had I known of 'em, and after perusal found 'em as different as the foresaid Translator professes he did, yet I shou'd have thought my self oblig'd to follow the first: Because it being Review'd, Corrected and Printed by the Author's own Direction in his Life time, it ought most of all to participate of his Spirit. But that which wou'd also have hindred me from being in pain which of them to choose, was, that after I had a sight of that of *Saragose*, comparing it with that of *Sevil*, I found no difference at all between them; and therefore see no reason for that objection the Translator makes against the first; because it mixes the sayings of Prophane Authours, with those of the Holy Fathers; nor why he prefers the second, as less charg'd with these sorts of Citations; since nothing was more common amongst the *Greek* and *Latin* Fathers of the Church than this; and since that even Saint *Paul* himself Authorizes it by his own Example: Wherefore 'tis much to be wonder'd at, that the Translator shou'd so easily condemn a thing of this Nature. But that which is still more surpris'ing, is, that there are as many Citations in his Translation as were in the Authors Copy, which he rejects as being too full of 'em. Since I dare affirm there are not above two or three that he has omitted to Translate. And if that of *Madrid*, which after all the diligence I have us'd I cannot, yet meet withal, be not more different from the other two; than they are from one another; * I cannot comprehend what cou'd cause
in

Act. Apo.
c. 17. v. 28.
Ad Tit. c.
1. v. 12.

* I have since found it, and find no difference at all from the rest.

The Epistle of Mr. Des-Marais to the Reader.

in him so much perplexity, which of 'em, he shou'd make choice of.

As to that difficulty, he objects he met withal, in seeking the Citations of the Fathers, and Ecclesiastical Authors, in the Books out of which they were taken; this objection seems to be better groundd than the former: For some of these indeed, are not so exactly markt in the *Spanish* copies; but yet they are not so numerous as to give him Reason to say they were many or most of 'em false: Nor cou'd this give him just occasion, of affirming this difficulty to be so great, as not to be surmounted. For on the contrary comparing his Translation with the *Spanish* Copy, I found his Citations the very same with the Authors; wherefore if there be so many Faults, as he asserts, in the *Spanish*, there are as many crept into the *French*; or if the *French* Copy be free from 'em, as he pretends it is, the *Spanish* Copy also cannot have any; they being the very same. I dare not after any other manner decide this difficulty; because I have not seen the Citations in the Authours themselves, judging it a more laborious and difficult, than a necessary or profitable employment; but as to the Citations out of Holy Scripture; which are far more numerous, than those out of the Fathers; having exactly perus'd 'em in the Scripture it self, the better to give them their true and genuine sense, I must needs affirm they are not at all exact in his Translation; for I counted in the very first Treatise, no less than forty five false Citations; wherefore if the Translatour's care was no greater about the Fathers Citations, than it was about these, he has still left to such as have a minde to see the passages in their source, difficulties no less hard to be overcome by them; than those he complains to have met with all himself.

For my own part, I found no other difficulties to overcome than such as are commonly met withal in every Translation, when one endeavours to perform it

well,

The Epistle of Mr. Des-Maraïs to the Reader.

well, and when the Authour, one Translates, has not altogether such a stile as the Translatour desires to Imitate. For he who Translates well, is not only oblig'd, to stick close to the Sense of the Author, but also to conserve his Stile and Figures, as far as the Nature of the Language in which he writes will bear. But the Stile of the Original which I have Translated, not being very accurate, but very familiar; and sometimes descending so low, as that it cou'd scarce be Imitated, without spoiling the property of our Language, and rendring it harsh to nice Ears, I upon this account often found my self puzzled how to surmount these difficulties; wherefore the better to satisfy all sides, I have endeavour'd to choose a way of writing, which at the same time might be so easie and Natural, as to retain the Authours Sense; and yet so elevated also, that the delicacy and property of our Language might not be blemish'd, or appear any wayes diminish'd. those who will take the pains to compare this Translation with the Original, will be able to judge whither or no I have succeeded in my undertaking; and will at least find, that I have faithfully rendred the Authours Sense, without altering, retrenching or adding in the least any thing of my own; so that shou'd this Translation find nothing else to commend it, it will at least have this fidelity and exactness for it's commendation.

After having given you a succinet account of my own endeavours, in this Translation; I think my self oblig'd to enlarge, in what concerns the pains the Authour has taken in the Original; and lest the Translation of his Dedicatory Epistle to his Brethren, the Fathers of the SOCIETY, shou'd not be sufficient to give so general a notion of the design and Quality of his work, as to make the excellency and merit thereof clearly and fully appear; I must needs add this short Elogium or Commendation thereof. 'Tis full of Principles of Christian Morality, full of that Spirit and

Union,

*An Elogium
of the
Work.*

The Epistle of Mr. Des-Marais to the Reader.

Union, with which the Scriptures and Holy Fathers are Replenish'd; full also of History and Erudition; and most proper to guide all sorts of Persons, both into, and in the way of Perfection. For those, who (as Persons more knowing, and of a more Elevated Spirit than others) desire to be guided by the great Maxims and Truths of Christianity, will there find sufficient, wherewith to satisfy their high and sublime thoughts: Those upon whom, the impulse of a tender and affectionate Devotion, makes a deeper impression than any thing else, will there find whatsoever is able still more to inflame the Heart of a Christian, touch'd with the Love of God: And those, whom God wou'd draw to himself, by a happy Simplicity of Spirit, will there also meet with such sufficient Instructions and Examples, as are proportionable to their reach, and suitable to that kind and manner of Vocation, by which they are led.

Now to say something of the Author himself, and thereby to give an Idea of what esteem we ought to have of his Work, I will here set down in a few Words, what the Historians of his Order have writ of him. He was Born at *Valladolid* in the Year 1526. and at the Age of twenty Years he Renounc'd the World, to Consecrate himself to God in the SOCIETY of JESUS at *Salamanca*. After having been employ'd thirteen Years in teaching moral Divinity at *Monterey*, he was sent to *Montille*, in the Province of *Andaloussa*, to be there Master of Novices; and to make such Spiritual Exhortations, as are every where in Practice in all the Houses of the SOCIETY. In these two Employments he acquitted himself for thirty Years together, with all possible Zeal and Application; and hereby evidenc'd how knowing he was in the Science of Saints, and in the Conduct of Souls; And being afterwards chosen to go to *Rome*, to the fifth General Congregation, he there also gave marks of an Exemplary Vertue, and a Consummated Prudence. At his return he was sent to *Corduba* where for twelve Years he had the Direction of Spiritual things,

*An Abridg
ment of the
Author's
Life.*

The Epistle of Mr. Des-Marais to the Reader.

things, that is to say, the care of taking an account of the Interior State of all the Religious in the House; and to help 'em to overcome and root out of their Souls, whatsoever oppos'd their advancement in Perfection; where his Office was to make the Weekly Exhortations, as he had done at Montille: And it was towards the end of the twelve Years he remain'd here, that gathering together what he had made upon different Subjects, he Compos'd these three Volum's, of the *Practice of Christian Perfection*. Which notwithstanding, he Publish'd not till a long time after; when going to the Provincial Congregation, which was held at *Sevil* in the Year 1606. he was Order'd to stay there, to take care of the Novices; and at the same time to Publish this his Work. After having apply'd himself for Eight Years together, without any relaxation, to these two Employments, he became so Infirm, that he had neither Force to Exercise any longer the painful Function of Master of Novices, nor even to Celebrate the Holy Sacrifice of Mass; yet to the end he might not be depriv'd of the Precious Body of IESUS CHRIST, he Daily Receiv'd it from the Hand of another; and having Liv'd two Years in this languishing condition, at length, upon the 21th. of *February* in the Year 1616. in a good Old Age full of Merits, he happily rested in our Lord in Peace; leaving in all, a great Regret of his loss, and a very high Esteem of his Sanctity. He was a great lover of Retirement, an exact observer of Rules, and had a very great Zeal for the Salvation of Souls; he Liv'd in such an intire Abnegation of himself, and of all things Self-Love cou'd suggest, that he never minded any thing but God in all things. The time in which he was free from other Indispensable Employments, he spent in Prayer and Spiritual Reading; adding to these Pious Exercises very frequent Austerities, which he continu'd to the end of his Life: And when 'twas once represented to him, that he cou'd not practise such Penances without shortening his Life, he Answer'd, *An unmortified Religious Man is already Dead*. Behold in short the Life of this most excellent Master of Spirit; but the Reading his Works will still give you a better knowledge of him, for there was nothing he propos'd to others to Practise, of which he gave not first an Example in himself; his Life being nothing else but a continual Practice of that, which in his Writings he Taught others.

T H E

THE
ENGLISH
TRANSLATOR
TO THE
READER.



OME may perhaps wonder, why I rather Translated this Book out of the *French* Copy, than out of the Original it self; this being contrary to the Ordinary Practice. The reason why I did so; was, because very competent and Sufficient judges, who perfectly understood *Spanish*, *French* and *English*, assur'd me, they wou'd rather follow this *French* Copy, than the *Spanish* Original. First, because Mr. Des-Marais's Translation has a more equal and constant Stile than the *Spanish* Original; which cannot be wonder'd at, since the Author Writ it at such different, and distant times. Secondly, because the *French* Phrase or Manner of Expression, comes nearer to the *English*. These assurances of so Excellent judges, gave me the first Thoughts of undertaking this Work, and making choice also of this *French* Copy; and the Translating it, gave me the advantage of a very serious and frequent perusal of so Admirable a Book. Which the oftener I Read, the more I admir'd; this being

The English Translator to the Reader.

being the ordinary effect such Excellent Pieces produce. Moreover, the care and pains, which Mr. Desmarais, in his Preface, assures us he took, both in the choice of the Edition, and in his Translation, is enuff to give it a more than ordinary Vogue; his Capacity, Experience and Industry, being so well known all over France; where he was esteem'd for one of the greatest Criticks in his time.



ALPHONSVS

ALPHONSUS
RODRIGUEZ
TO THE
RELIGIOUS
OF THE
SOCIETY of JESUS.



*S*AINT Gregory being de-
sir'd, to Write some Spiritual
Instructions for the Conduct
of certain Religious Houses,
excuses himself, in his 6th.
Book and 27th. Epistle, in these terms. The
exercis'es of Mortification and Prayer
Practis'd by Religious, produce such a
source or fountain of Wisdom in their
Hearts, that they stand not in need,
of being Water'd with those few drops,
our Aridity is able to cast upon 'em.
For

The Author's Dedicatory Epistle.

For as the Fountain in the mid'st of the Terrestrial Paradise, Water'd all parts thereof, and kept it continually fresh and Green, without the help of Rain, which it needed not; so those who are in the Paradise of Religion, have no need of being Water'd from without; because Prayer and Mortification, produce in 'em such a source or fountain of Grace, as is always sufficient to maintain their Vertues, in their full splendor and beauty.

I might R.R. FF. upon this account, with far more reason than Saint Gregory, excuse my self after the same manner he did, to those Faithful Souls whom our Lord has Planted, in the Garden of the SOCIETY of IESUS; Souls whom he has cultivated and water'd, by the help of that Mental Prayer they Daily make. But that which kinders me from bringing this excuse, which without doubt wou'd be a very just one (if I could imagine that you expected any new things from me, of which you had not already both the knowledge and practice) is, that I propose not in this Work any thing else, but to refresh your Memories, of those things you already know, and Daily practise.
And

The Author's Dedicatory Epistle.

And in doing this I shall pay Obedience to the Intention of our Holy Founder, who in one of his Constitutions Ordains, that Once a Week, or at least once a Fortnight, there should be one appointed to lay before our Eyes the Obligations of a Spiritual Life; for fear lest Human frailty, which Daily carry's us to relent in our Duties, might cause us also to forget 'em, and to leave off their Practice. This Constitution, God be prais'd, is exactly observ'd throu'out the whole SOCIETY, and produces great fruit therein. Having therefore above these Forty Years been employ'd in the Function of Exhorting the Novices, or other Religious; and having gather'd divers things together for this end; my Superiors and many other Persons to whom I owe a deference, were of Opinion that I might render great Service both to God and to Religion, and that the advantage drawn from my Labors wou'd be more lasting, if I should take care to review and put in order what I had already Compos'd.

Reflecting also that in the Constitution I before cited, Saint Ignatius puts this alternative: Let there be, says he, one appointed

Const. p. 3.
Cap. 1.
§. 28.

The Author's Dedicatory Epistle.

appointed to give these Spiritual admonitions to the Religious, or at least let the Religious be oblig'd to Read 'em: This so much the more encourag'd me in my undertaking; because 'tis a Practice establish'd in the SOCIETY, and very much recommended by Saints, to Read something every Day that may help to our Spiritual advancement. Wherefore seeing this is the chief aim I had in this Work; I have for this reason, layd before you as clearly and briefly as I was able, such things as are more essential, and more common to our Profession; to the end they may serve us for a Looking-Glass, which we may Daily consult, thereby to correct our imperfections, and to adorn our Soul's after the most becoming manner; whereby they may be render'd more pleasing to the Eyes of the Divine Majesty.

Moreover, tho' the chief Intention I had in this, was to satisfy the particular obligation I have to serve those, whom Religion has constituted my Fathers and Brethren in JESUS CHRIST; yet because we ought to extend as far as we can, the effects

The Author's Dedicatory Epistle.

effects of Charity, being particularly oblig'd to it by our Institute; I have endeavour'd to dispose this Work after such a manner, as that it may be useful not only to our SOCIETY in particular, but to all other Religious also, and even to all Persons in general, that aspire to Christian Perfection. Wherefore to the end that the Title may correspond to the Work, and may signify that 'tis a profitable and useful Book for all the World, I have intitled it, The Practice of Christian Perfection. I call it Practice, because things are treated in it after such a manner, as may render the Practice very easie.

I hope by the Mercy of our Lord, that my Pain's will not be unprofitable, and that this Grain of Seed of the Word of God, being Sow'd in the good Soil of those Soul's that aspire to Perfection, will not only render Thirty or Sixty, but even a Hundred fold.

T H E

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THE

THE FIRST TREATISE O F

The Esteem and Affection we
ought to have, for all that re-
gards our Spiritual advance-
ment: And of many other
things that may contri-
bute thereunto.

CHAP. I.

*Of the great Esteem we ought to make
of Spiritual things.*

WISH'D * for a right Understanding of
things, says the Wise Man, and God gave it
me, I call'd upon him, and he fill'd me with
the Spirit of Wisdom, which I prefer'd
before Scepters and Crowns, and believ'd
that Riches and Precious Stones, deserv'd
not to be compar'd thereunto; for all the
Gold and Silver upon Earth, is nothing but
a little Sand and Clay, in comparison of Wisdom. The true
Wisdom which all of us ought to desire, is Christian Per-

exigua, & tanquam lutum estimabitur argentum in conspectu illius. Sap. 7. 7.

Tom. I.

A

fection,

* Optavi, &
datus est mihi
sensus, & in-
vocavi, & ve-
nit in me spi-
ritus sapien-
tiae: & prae-
fui illam reg-
nis & sedibus;
& divitias nihil
esse duxi in
comparatione
illius; nec
comparavi illi
lapidem preti-
osum, quoni-
am omnia su-
per in com-
paratione
illius arena est.

† Super omnia autem hæc, charitatem habete, quod est vinculum perfectionis. *ad Colos. 3. 14.*

* Omnia arbitror ut stercora, ut Christum lucrificiam. *ad Phil. 3. 8.*

fection, which consists in uniting our selves to God by love; according to these words of Saint Paul, † *Above all things I recommend Charity unto you, which is the bond of Perfection, whereby we are united to God; wherefore we ought to have as great an esteem of Christian Perfection, and of all that can contribute to attain it, as Solomon says he had of Wisdom; and believe, with the same Apostle, * That if we gain JESUS CHRIST 'tis enough; for all the rest is nothing but dirt and ordure.*

This is the best means we have to arrive to Perfection, because the growth which this esteem will make in our hearts, will be the measure, not only of our Spiritual advancement in particular, but also of Religion in general. The reason is, because we desire nothing, but according to the esteem we have of it; for our Will being a blind faculty, that pursues nothing but what our Understanding proposes to it; that value which our Understanding sets upon any object, becomes of necessity the measure of our desires; and our Will being the absolute Mistress, that commands all the interior and exterior faculties of our Souls, we never strive or labor any farther, in acquiring any thing, but according to that degree, wherein our Will is mov'd to desire it. Wherefore, 'tis very necessary we shou'd have a high esteem, for whatever concerns our advancement in Perfection; to the end we may also earnestly desire it, and apply our selves with all care and diligence to obtain it: For all these things have such a relation one to another, that the measure of the one, is the infallible rule of the other.

He who Trades in Jewels, had need have a good insight into their value, to prevent being over-reach'd in his Markets; otherwise he may happen, to Sell a Stone of great value, at a very low Rate. Our Traffick is in Precious Stones; † *And we are all Merchants of the Kingdom of Heaven, and seek for fine Pearls.* Wherefore we had need understand very well, the Merchandise we Trade in, lest by a strange abuse, we give Gold for Dirt, and part with Heaven for Earth. * *Let not the Wife Man, says our Saviour, by the Mouth of the Prophet Jeremy, glory in his Wisdom, nor the Strong Man in his Strength, nor the Rich Man in the abundance of his Wealth; but let him that do's glory, glory in his knowledge of me.* The chiefest of all Treasures, consists in the knowledge, love, and service of God; this is our greatest, and indeed our only affair; or to say better, 'tis for this we were Created; for this we Enter'd into Religion; and 'tis in this

† Simile est regnum celorum homini negotiatori quærenti bonas margaritas. *Matth. 13. 45.*

* Non gloriatur sapiens in sapientia sua, & non gloriatur fortis in fortitudine sua, & non gloriatur dives in divitiis suis, sed in hoc gloriatur, qui gloriatur, scire & nosse me. *Jerem. 9. 23.*

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this alone, we ought to seek our repose, as in our only End, and herein establish our greatest Glory.

Wherefore I wish, that this esteem of Perfection, and of Spiritual things, that may conduce to it, shou'd make a deep impression in the hearts of all the World, and particularly of Religious; and that we take care to encourage one another thereunto, not only by our words, and in our ordinary conversations, but much more by our actions, and the general conduct of our Lives; for by this means, both those that are as yet but Novices in the way of Vertue, and such as are already more advanc'd in it, and all in general, must acknowledge that in Religion we shou'd esteem only Spiritual things: And in fine, as Saint *Ignatius* sets forth in his Constitutions, † what we regard most in Religious Persons, is neither profoundness of Learning, nor yet a great Talent in Preaching, nor any other natural or human endowments, but Humility, Obedience, and a Spirit of Recollection and Prayer. 'Tis this we must let all those understand from the beginning, who are receiv'd to Religion, and 'tis with this Milk, they who intend to lead a Holy Life must first be fed; to the end that perceiving this to be what is most of all esteem'd, and the way those take, who are convinc'd of the vanity of the World, and that such as these are chiefly lov'd and esteem'd; they may presently apply their thoughts, and use their endeavours, not to acquire great Learning, or become famous Preachers, but to outdo one another in Humility, and Mortification. Yet I pretend not by this, that the gaining a general esteem and good will, ought to be the motive that shou'd make us embrace Vertue; but only, that when we shall know, that Vertue is the sole thing regarded in Religion, we shall more easily be convinc'd, that it also is the sole thing, that truly deserves to be esteem'd. For in this manner, every one coming to the Knowledge of the true way, in which he must walk, will intirely apply himself to Vertue, and will only think of applying himself seriously to his Spiritual advancement, and will believe, that all the rest is but vanity and folly.

By all this, we may easily understand, how much, the conversation of those that talk of nothing else but human Sciences, and generally of all the advantages of wit, extolling such as are eminent therein, is dangerous to Religious Societies; and so much the more, because these new beginners, finding the more grave sort of Men, to set so high a value upon these trifles, fancy that 'tis effectivly so, that 'tis the thing of the greatest vogue

† Const. p. 10.
§. 2. Reg. 16.
or summ.
Reg. 19.

in Religion, and that 'tis by this, they must advance and render themselves considerable. Upon this account they propose it to themselves, as their only object; and by degrees, the esteem of Human Learning, and Talents of Wit daily more and more increasing, that of Humility and Mortification insensibly decays; and at length they come to make so little account of the one in comparison of the other, that the inclination they have to their Studies, makes 'em frequently neglect their more strict obligations; whence it happens, that many come to relent, to be perverted, and to quit Religion. In the mean time, instead of insilling into those young Men, the vain desire of being reputed Men of Wit and Learning, and inspiring 'em with false sentiments of honor (which proves the beginning of their ruin) were it not better to represent to them, how important and necessary a thing it is to become Vertuous, and Humble; and how unprofitable, or to say better, how dangerous 'tis without it, to be a learn'd and able Man?

Sirius in the Life of Saint *Fulgentius* Abbot, has a passage that relates to this matter. Who there tells us, that when this Holy Abbot perceiv'd amongst the Religious Men in his Monastery some that labor'd hard, and employ'd all their time in the service of the Community, but were negligent in the exercise of Piety, and did not apply themselves with the same fervor to Prayer, Reading, and Interior Recollection; he made much less account of these, than of others. On the other side, when he found any addict'd to Spiritual things, and were careful to advance in vertue, tho' by reason of their weak and sickly constitutions of body, they were not able to afford any service to the Convent; 'twas these to whom he shew'd a more tender love, and for whom he had a far greater esteem. And certainly he had great reason to do so; wherefore, if a Man be not humble and submissive to the Will of his Superior, what will it otherwise avail him, to have great merits and other good qualities? For if from thence we chiefly take an occasion of greater liberty, and pretence of exemptions, certainly 'twere far better we never had had any Talents at all. The case were different, if in the account, which God will one day demand of the Superior, he shou'd ask, whether his Subjects were Men of great Understanding, and Labor; but he will not ask an account of this; but demand of him whether he took care that those committed to his charge, improv'd themselves in
the

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the Science of Saints, advanc'd daily in vertue, and were employ'd according to their Talents, without suffering their exterior employments to prejudice their interior advancement.

'Tis this, in the opinion of a very holy Man, * for which every particular person shall be likewise accountable to Almighty God; who will not ask us, what we have Read at the Day of Judgment, but what we have Done; or whether we have been great Orators and Preachers, but whether we have Practis'd well all the duties of a true Christian.

* Thomas à Kempis. lib. 1. de contemptu mundi cap. 9. §. 5.

Our Blessed Saviour having sent his Disciples to Preach, the Sacred Text recounts, that they return'd full of joy, telling him, † *That even the Devils were subject to them, in his Name.* To whom our Saviour answer'd, *Rejoyce not, that you work Miracles, and that the Devils are subject to you; but rejoyce in this, that your Names are writ in Heaven.* 'Tis clear-then, that we ought to place all our joy and happiness in acquiring the Kingdom of Heaven, for without that, all the rest is meer nothing: * *What will it avail a Man, to gain the whole World, if miserably he comes to loose his own Soul at last?*

† In hoc nolite gaudere, quia spiritus vobis subijciuntur; gaude-
te autem quod nomina vestra scripta sunt in caelis.
Luc. 10. 17. 20.

* Quid enim prodest homini, si universum mundum lucretur, animæ vero suæ detrimentum patiatur?
Matth. 16. 26.

And if we say, what our Saviour himself says, that those employments which tend to the Conversion of Souls, ought not to make us forget what we owe to our own Salvation, since 'twere in vain to have contributed to the saving of all the World, if we do not labor to save our selves; what may we not with greater reason say of other employments? Certainly 'tis inconsistent with good reason, that a Religious Man shou'd be so wholly taken up with his Study, or so carry'd away and distracted by any other Worldly employments, as to be deficient in his interior duties; neglecting Prayer, Examen of Conscience, and the exercise of Penance and Mortification; whereby Spiritual things wou'd have the last and lowest place in his thoughts; to which he wou'd afford only what remains, after he had dispatch'd all the rest of his affairs; and in case he cou'd not compass 'em all, wou'd chuse rather to omit his Spiritual duties, than be remiss in the others. For infine this were to live, not as a Religious person, but like a Man, that had no gust nor feeling of Heavenly things.

Saint *Dorotheus* reports, that his Disciple *Dositheus* acquitted himself so well of his Office in attending the sick, and took so great care of 'em, accommodated their Beds and Chambers

Chambers so well, and kept all things so neat, and in so good order, that the Saint going one day to visit the Infirmariy, *Dositheus* told him: *Father, I have an idle thought of vain glory, which tells me, that I do my duty in this employment perfectly well, and methinks you ought to be very well satisfid with me.* But the answer of the good Abbot, gave a check to the presumption of his Disciple. *I allow,* sayd Saint *Dositheus*, *† that you are grown a very good Infirmarian, and very careful; but I don't perceive as yet, that you are become a good Religious Man.* Let every one therefore use his utmost endeavour, that no Man may say of him, you are a good Infirmarian, or a good Porter; you have made your self a very able Scholar, or a very Learn'd Doctor, or a very great Preacher; but you are no good Religious Man: For to conclude, we enter'd not into Religion, but there to become true Religious. 'Tis this honorable Character we ought to prefer before all things; 'tis this we ought to seek after with all diligence, and which we ought to have perpetually before our Eyes. All other things in comparison of our advancement in Piety, ought only to be look'd upon as Appendixes thereunto, according to the words of our Saviour: * *Seek in the first place the Kingdom of God and his Justice; and all other things shall therewith be added unto you.*

† Non tamen bonus effectus es Monachus. *Patr. rom. 3. Doff. 11.*

* *Quærite ergo primum Regnum Dei, & iustitiam ejus, & hæc omnia adjicientur vobis. Matth. 6. 33.*

† *Cass. lib. 10. Infirm. c. 24. de Abbas Paul.*

We Read of some Fathers in the Desert, † that not being able to apply themselves continually to Prayer or Reading of Spiritual Books; and withal resolving not to spend any of their time idly, they employ'd all the time they had to spare, in making Baskets of Palms, or some other Manual works; and many of 'em, at the end of the Year, burnt what they had made, as having only labor'd to employ themselves, and avoid idleness. So ought we to make what concerns our Spiritual advancement, our chief business, and apply our selves to all our other affairs, even to those which regard the Edification of our Neighbor, with the same Spirit as these Holy Fathers did in making their Baskets; that is, without relenting the least in the World, in the obligations we have to work out our own Salvation, and to aspire always to become more and more perfect. Let us then proceed upon this ground, and hold it for an infallible Maxim; that those Spiritual exercises, which contribute to our advancement in Piety, must always be prefer'd before all other things whatever, and that we must never omit or neglect any of those duties upon any account: For 'tis that which maintains us
and

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and makes us improve in vertue; and if once we come to neglect 'em, we shall quickly find our selves at a loss. We have but too much experience, that when our interior go's not as it ought, it proceeds from our growing cold in Spiritual Exercises; * *My heart is wisher'd within me, says the Psalmist, because I have forgot to eat my bread.* If the food of our Souls be wanting, we must needs grow very feeble and languishing. Saint Ignatius recommends earnestly this Point, and insists often upon it. † *The Study, says he in one place, as well of Novices in Vertue, as of all others, ought to be that of their self denial, and of the most proper means of advancing in Vertue and Perfection;* and in another place he says, * *Let all allow the whole time allotted for their Spiritual Exercises, and endeavour daily to improve themselves in Vertue, according to that measure of Grace which God has given 'em.* And insin, he adds elsewhere: † *Let every one be as exact as possible he can, in employing well the time which is set him, for his Prayer, Meditation, and Spiritual Reading;* and these words, as exact as possibly he can, deserve without doubt a very particular reflection.

By this we may easily judge, that what business soever we may have, either by reason of our employments in which we are exercis'd, or by reason of Obedience to our Superiors, their intention is not, that we shou'd omit upon this account, our Spiritual exercises, which we are accusom'd to perform; because it cannot be the intention of our Superiors, that we shou'd fail in our Rules, and particularly in Rules so important and indispensable. Therefore let none pretend to excuse his neglect of his Spiritual exercises, under the specious pretence of Obedience, alledging, that he cou'd not attend to Prayer, Examen of Conscience, or to Spiritual Reading, because he was oblig'd to satisfie the duties of Obedience. For after all, 'tis not Obedience, but only our own particular laziness, and the little fervor we have to Piety, that hinders us from performing all these things. Saint Basil says, * *We ought to be very faithful in giving to Almighty God the time allotted for our Spiritual Exercises; and as when it happens, that we have not had time to eat and sleep, having been oblig'd to watch with a sick Person, and assist him to die well, we take great care immediately to refresh our wearied bodies, and will be sure to find time for that: So in case we happen to be hinder'd, to make our Prayer, or to Examen our Conscience at the ordinary hour,*

* Aruit cor meum, quia oblitus sum comedere panem meum. Psal. 104. 3.

† Exam. c. 4. §. 47. & Reg. 12. Summaris Consi.

* Reg. 12. Summaris.

† Reg. 1. Comm.

* Bas. Ser. de renunt. sacali istius & Spiritualis perfectione.

We

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We must very ardently desire, to supply that omission, and to acquit our selves effectually of it, as soon as possibly we can. When out of necessity a Superior employs one at the time of his Spiritual exercises, he do's not intend that he shou'd neglect, but only defer 'em, and that as soon as he has time, he shou'd not fail intirely to discharge that duty, according to the saying of the Wise Man, *† Let nothing hinder you from Praying at all times.* He do's not say, hinder no Man, but let nothing hinder you; that is, let not any business; make you omit your Prayer: And certainly nothing is capable to make a good Religious Man omit it, because 'tis always his best pastime, to employ himself in it.

† Non Impediatis Orare semper.
Eusef. 18. 22.

* S. Dorotheus.
Sens. seu. Doct.
11. in Biblioth.
SS. Patrum.
Tom. 3.

In the Book call'd *Bibliotheca Patrum* * 'tis Writ of Saint *Dorotheus*, that tho he were often oblig'd to go very late to Bed, and many times to rise in the night, to entertain Strangers and Passengers, of whom he had the care, yet he never mis'd to get up to make his Prayer, at the same hour with the other Religious of his Convent; and finding that the Brother whose Office it was to call up the rest, did not knock at the Door of his Cell, because of the employments he knew he had been taken up withal, Saint *Dorotheus* desir'd one of his companions to do him that kindness, notwithstanding he had lately had a great Fever, and was not yet well recover'd of it. This was without doubt to have a true desire not to fail in his Spiritual duties, and to be far from dispensing with himself in that kind, upon every small indisposition, that thereby he might not be behind hand all the rest of the day. We Read also in the same Book, that an Ancient holy Monk, saw once an Angel that gave Incense to all those Religious that made hast to come to Prayer, and Incens'd also the Seats of those other Religious, that cou'd not be present at this duty, by reason they were elsewhere detain'd by other lawful hindrances; but the Angel past by the places of those, who throu' sloth neglected to come to the Quire, without giving any Incense. This is very proper, both to comfort those, who, elsewhere employ'd by Obedience, cannot assist with the rest at the common exercises of Devotion, and to warn us that throu' our own fault we fail not in 'em.

C H A P.

C H A P. II.

Of the Love and Fervor we ought to have for Perfection.

Blessed, says the Gospel, † are those who hunger and thirst after Justice, for they shall be satisfied. Tho' the name of Justice is particularly apply'd to one of the four Cardinal Vertues, distinct from the rest; yet 'tis nevertheless very proper for all sorts of Vertue and Sanctity: In general, we call Candor and Holiness of Life, Justice; and we term those just Men, who are holy and virtuous. The Wise Man sayd, * *That the Justice of the Righteous shall deliver 'em*, that is, they shall be sav'd by their holiness of Life: So the same word is also taken in several other places of Scripture, † *Unless your Justice*, says our Blessed Saviour, *exceeds that of the Scribes and Pharisees you shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*, that is, unless you have more Vertue, more Religion, and more Holiness than they. In the same manner must be understood what our Saviour sayd to Saint John when he refus'd to Baptize him: * *For so it becomes us to fulfil all Justice*, as if he would have sayd, thus I must do, to give an example of Obedience, and of all sorts of Perfection. We must then understand those words which I have cited in the beginning of this Chapter after the same manner; and believe that JESUS CHRIST meant, that those are bless'd who have so great a love and passion for Vertue and Perfection, that they are as much in pain, as if they suffer'd hunger, and a violent thirst. Saint Hierom Writing upon this passage, says, † *That 'tis not enough to have a slight desire of vertue, and Perfection; but we must have a great hunger and thirst after it; so as to cry out with the Royal Prophet, * Even as the Hart longs for the Fountains of Waters, so my Soul do's incessantly long after you O my God.*

'Tis so necessary for us to be strongly affected with this desire, that, as I have already sayd in the precedent Chapter,

Tom. I.

B

all

† Beati qui esuriunt, & sitiunt iustitiam quoniam ipsi saturabuntur. *Matth. 5. 6.*

* iustitia rectorum liberabit eos. *Prov. 11. 6.*

† Nisi abundaverit iustitia vestra plusquam Scribes, & Phariseorum, non intrabitis in Regnum celorum. *Matth. 5. 20.*

* Sic enim decet nos implere omnem iustitiam. *Matth. 3. 15.*

† Non nobis sufficit vel le iustitiam, nisi iustitiz patiamur famem. *Hier. ibid. Matth.*

* Quomodo desiderat cervus ad fontes aquarum: Ita desiderat anima mea ad te Deus. *Psal. 41. 2.*

* Initium
enim illius,
verissima est
discipline
concupiscen-
tia, Sap. 6. 18.

all our Spiritual advancement depends upon it: This is the first principle which disposes us to it, and the only means to acquire Perfection, * *The beginning of Wisdom*, which is nothing else but the knowing and loving of God, in which this Perfection consists, *is to have a true and strong desire to obtain it.* The Philosophers also say very well, that in all matters, and especially in our Moral actions, the End is the first Wheel that sets us on work: So that the more passionately we desire this End, the more care and fervor we employ to obtain it. I say moreover, that this earnest desire is so important for our Spiritual advancement, and that it thou'd truly proceed from our hearts, and so carry us on towards it, without the help of any other motive, that there will be very small hopes of those who have not these sentiments. Let us give an example in the Person of a Religious Man, and every Man else in time may make the same application according to the different circumstances he finds himself in. 'Tis very necessary in Religion that the Superiors thou'd have a watchful Eye over their Subjects; and that they thou'd reprehend and punish those who do amiss; and yet there can be no great hopes of any Religious Man, who do's his duty only for this motive; for infine, that regularity of Life wou'd last no longer then whilst the Superiors Eye were over him: But if what he do's, proceeds not truly from his heart, and from a real desire of amendment, there will be no great reason to rely much upon it, and infallibly such a one can never persever.

There is this difference between those things that are mov'd by an exterior impression, and those that move of themselves; that in all things which are mov'd from without, the motion weakens by degrees, as they come nearer the end whether they are directed, as when we throw a Stone upwards; whereas in all those things that have the principle of their motion within themselves, as when the same Stone falls towards its own Center, that motion, the farther it go's, becomes still more and more rapid: The difference will prove the very same between those that act for fear of punishment, because notice is taken of 'em, or infine, for any other human respect; and those that act for the love of virtue, and out of a pure desire to please God. These remain always firm and constant in the exercises of Piety; and the others persever no longer, than the reprehension lasts, or they are watch'd,

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watch'd, otherwise they quickly return to their usual disorders.

Saint Gregory tells us * of his Aunt Gordiana, that when her two other Sisters Tharfilla and Emiliana, reprehended her for her light Carriage, and want of that modesty and reservedness, which was requisite in a Person of her Profession; she presently put on such a serious and compos'd countenance, as long as their reprehension lasted, that she seem'd to receive the admonition in good part, with a design to profit thereby: But after a while that feign'd reservedness quite vanishing, she return'd to her old follies, past her time in idle talk, and only took care to divert her self with other Secular Pensioners in the same Monastery: Just like a Bow that is hard bent, as soon as the string is loosen'd, presently returns to its natural posture; so 'tis not to be wonder'd at, that those motions in this young Lady, which had not their source from her heart, but came from without, were of so short a continuance.

* Greg. hom. 38. in Evang.

The affair of Christian Perfection, is not a business to be done by constraint, it must be the heart that undertakes it. Our Saviour speaking to the young Man in the Gospel, tells him, † *If thou wilt be perfect*, to the end he might shew us that the root of all perfection depends upon our own Will; for if we have not a true desire to become perfect, all the care and application of our Superiors will avail nothing, whence we may infer the same answer, and solution of the question Saint Bonaventure makes, when he demands, how comes it to pass, * that heretofore there needed but one Superior among a thousand Religious Men, nay, for four or five thousand, who, as Saint Hierom and Saint Austin sayd, Antiently liv'd under one Abbot, and now a days, one Superior is scarce sufficient for ten Religious, nay even for a less number? The reason is, that these Ancient Religious cherish'd in their Souls an ardent desire of Perfection, and that zeal which warm'd 'em within, made 'em also take to heart the care of their improvement, to which they zealously apply'd themselves. † *The just*, says the Wise Man, *shall shine, and spread like sparks of Fire among Reeds*; by this Metaphor the Holy Ghost declares very well, with what easiness and swiftness just Men proceed in the way of Vertue, when their hearts are once inflam'd with this Divine fire. They *shall spread like sparks of fire among Reeds*. Imagine to your self, how speedily the fire runs among the Reeds, where it has once taken; so do the just Men run

† Si vis perfectus esse. Matth. 19. 21.

* Bonavent. opus. de perfect. Relig. li. 1. ca. 39.

† Fulgebunt justi, & tanquam scintillæ in arundinetis discurrunt. Sap. 3. 7.

and advance in the path of Vertue, when once they are well inflam'd; and 'tis after this manner, that these Antient Solitaries behav'd themselves; who for this reason were so far from having any need of a Superior, to spur 'em on in their duties, that they rather wanted one to moderate their zeal. But if we have not these desires in our hearts, there will need not only one Superior to every ten Religious; but thò ten good Superiors shou'd labor never so hard, to instruct and make one good Religious Man, they wou'd never compass it, against his Will: For what will it avail to visit his Chamber, to see whether he makes his Meditation and Prayer at the time appointed? The visit being past, cannot he amuse himself as he pleases? And even when he is upon his Knees, can't he apply his thoughts to the study of other affairs of less moment? When he shou'd afterwards give an account of his Conscience, can't he say what he pleases, and conceal what is most essential, and ought to be reveal'd? Can't he make us believe that his Conscience is in a very good state, when perchance 'tis in a most deplorable condition? 'Tis therefore in vain to apply all the care and precaution imaginable to make a Man vertuous, if he himself do's not desire it, and seriously apply himself to become perfect.

* 1. p. lib. 5.
cap. 37. Hist.
Pied.

The Answer of Saint Thomas of Aquin, to one of his Sisters, * who ask'd him what she shou'd do to be sav'd? Serves extreamly well to our purpose; he told her, *By willing and desiring to be sav'd*; for if you will you shall be sav'd; if you will, you may improve your self in Vertue and Piety; and if you will, you may render your self perfect: All depends then of our willing; that is, of our well willing, or willing it effectually, and applying our selves with all our endeavours to compass it; for Almighty God is always ready to assist us; but if our Will be defective, all that our Superiors can do, is in vain: 'Tis you therefore that must take your Salvation to heart, 'tis your affair; 'tis you alone that are concern'd, and 'tis for this you enter'd into Religion. Let every one then be persuaded, that as soon as he shall begin to relent, and forget what regards his Spiritual advancement, as soon as he neglects the exact performance of his exercises of Devotion, and feels not interiorly an extream desire of making progress in vertue, and of mortifying himself; from that very moment the great concern of his Eternal Salvation will go ill. Saint Ignatius in the beginning of his Constitutions, lays a foundation which suites very well

well with this Doctrin; † *The interior Law*, says he, of *Charity*, and of that Love, which the Holy Ghost has imprim'd and engrav'd in our hearts, is that which ought to support, conduct, and make us advance in the way of God's service: 'Tis this fire of his Love, 'tis this insatiable desire of his greater glory, that ought continually to excite us, to raise our selves towards him, and make us profit in vertue.

† In prom.
Conf. 5. 1.

When this desire is once truly imprim'd in the Soul, it makes us apply our selves with fervor and diligence to obtain what we desire: For naturally we are industrious to seek, and find out the things to which our inclinations carry us; and 'tis for this reason that the Wise Man says, * *The beginning of Wisdom is to form in our hearts, a most true desire thereof.* But in this we also find another advantage, which renders this means very efficacious; for let the things be never so hard in themselves, the strong desire of 'em, makes 'em become both easie and sweet. For example, how comes it to pass, that a Religious Man shou'd have so little pain to quit the World, and to enter into Religion; but because he desir'd with all his heart to do so? God had inspir'd him with an extream desire thereof, which is the Grace of a Vocation; and had pluck'd out of his heart the esteem, and affection he had before for the World; and had plant'd therein, the Love of retirement and Religion; whereby all things might become easie. On the contrary, why is it, that the self same things seem so uneasie to those that are in the World, if it be not, because God has not inspir'd 'em with the same Will; as he has done you, nor done 'em the favor to call 'em to the same state of Life? Wherefore, as that which render'd our entrance into Religion so easie and pleasant to us, was the fervor which we then had, and that constant Will, which neither our Parents, Friends, nor the whole Earth together, were able to change or pervert: So in like manner, that which will make us profit and advance in Religion, and render the exercises thereof very easie, is the perseverance in this fervor, which we brought with us to Religion. So long as this shall last, the practise of all Religious duties will become easie; but if that once cooles, they will seem painful and insupportable. What do you think, is the reason, that some are frequently dejected, and even tir'd out in their Religious duties, and at other times perform 'em with all libetty and content of mind? Let no one lay the fault upon the actions themselves, nor

* Initium enim illius, verissima est disciplinae concupiscentia, Sap. 6. 18.

upon

upon Superiors, but impute this inconstancy to himself, and to the little zeal he has for Vertue and Mortification. A healthy strong Man, says Father *Avila*, will carry that burden with ease, which a Child or sick person is not able to move; 'tis therefore only from the different disposition of our Souls, that the difficulty proceeds; the duties are always the same. They seem'd to us for a time so easie, that they cost us no trouble at all: If now they appear different from what they were before, we must blame our selves for it, being still but Infants in Vertue, whereas we ought before now to have been *Perfect Men*; * and believe we are fallen sick, and have permitted our first fervor to grow cold, which we had when we enter'd into Religion.

* In virum perfectum.
ad Ephr. 4. 13.

C H A P. III.

That a fervorous desire of our advancement, is a means, and a most proper disposition, to receive favors from God.

THAT which renders it very necessary for us to have this desire, and as I may say, this hunger and thirst for our Spiritual advancement, is, that we cannot contribute on our part any disposition so prevalent as this is, for the obtaining from God the perfection we aim at. Saint *Ambrose* says, † that when a Man is strongly affected with this desire, this is so pleasing to God, that he fills his Soul with his graces, and favors: And to this purpose he alledges what the Sacred Virgin says in her Canticle: * *The Lord has fill'd the hungry with good things.* The Royal Prophet had sayd the same before: † *The Lord has fill'd the empty Soul, and has satiated the hungry and thirsty Soul with good things.* That is, as we have already observ'd in the former Chapter, that upon those who have had so great a zeal for vertue and perfection, as that they have in a manner hunger'd and thirsted after it, God has heap'd his favors, and

† *Amb. serm.*
3. *sup. Ps.* 128.

* *Esurientes implevit bonis*
Luc. 1. 53.

† *Quia satiavit animam inanem, & animam esurientem satiavit bonis.*
Psal. 106. 9.

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and enrich'd 'em with his gifts, in recompense of that good Will; the fervor of which, is very pleasing in his sight. An Angel appear'd heretofore to *Daniel*, * and told him that his Prayers had been heard from the beginning, *Because he was a Man of desires*. The desire which King *David* † had to build a Temple, was so pleasing to God, that tho' he would not have him put that design in execution, yet he recompens'd him, as if he had fully executed it; and confirm'd the Crown to his Posterity. And infine, the great desire that *Zachens* * had to see our Saviour, merited that our Saviour shou'd first regard him, and both invite himself, and dine the same day at his House. But the truth of this Maxim is more clearly and expredly taken notice of by *Salomon*, where speaking of Wisdom, which is nothing else but God himself, says, † *Wisdom is easily seen by those that love it, and is soon found by them that seek it*. But do you know with what facility 'tis found? * *It prevents those that desire it, and shews it self first to them*. You have no sooner wish'd for it, but 'tis at hand. † *He that rises early to seek it, shall not go far before he meets it, for he shall find it sitting at his door*. How infinite is the goodness and mercy of God! Who is not content, to come only to seek us, to knock often at our doors: Behold, says he in the *Apocalyps*, * *How I stand at your door and knock*; and in the *Canticles*, † *Open my Sister the door to me*; but, as if he were tir'd with waiting and knocking, he sits himself down at the door of our hearts, to let us know that he shou'd have enter'd before, if he had not found it shut; and notwithstanding he did so, instead of going away and leaving us, he chuses rather to sit down, and wait for us; that we may be sure to find him as soon as we open it. Tho' you have delay'd to open your Heart to God, and to answer his inspirations, he has not for all that gone away; he has too great a desire to come in, to be so easily repuls'd; and therefore he sits at the door, and waites till you open. *The Lord expects*, says the Prophet *Isay*, * *that he may shew mercy upon you*. And certainly, there is no friend that desires so earnestly to come and visit his intimate friend, as God desires to come into our Hearts: He longs much more to communicate himself to us, and bestow his favors upon us, than we to receive 'em; he only expects that we shou'd desire 'em, and have a hunger and

* Quia vir desideriorum
cs. Dan. 9. 23.

† 2 Reg. 7. 22.
3. & 16.

* Luc. 19. 5.

† Facile videtur ab his, qui diligunt eam; & invenitur ab his, qui quarunt illum. Sap. 6. 13.

* Præoccupat qui se concupiscunt, ut illis se prior ostendat. Ibid. 14.
† Qui de luce vigilaverit ad illum, non laborabit; æstidentem enim illam foribus suis inveniet. Ibid. 15.

* Ecce sto ad ostium, & pulso. Apoc. 3. 20.
† Aperi mihi Soror mea. Cant. 5. 2.

* Expectat Dominus, ut miseretur vestri. Isay. 30. 18.

* Ego sitienti
dabo de fonte
aque vitæ
gratis.
Apoc. 21. 6.
† Si quis sitit,
veniat ad me,
& bibat.
Joan. 7. 37.

and thirst after 'em: * *To him that thirsts, I will give of the Fountain of the Water of Life gratis. † If any Man therefore thirsts, let him come to me, and let him drink.* He would have us earnestly desire the acquiring of Vertue and Perfection, to the end, that when he has conferr'd upon us what we desire, we may know how to esteem it, and preserve it as a most precious Jewel: For generally, what we do but slightly wish for, we esteem but little after we have got it. One of the chief reasons why we make so small progress in Vertue and Perfection, is, because we do not so earnestly long for it and desire it as we ought: 'Tis true we desire it, but 'tis after so weak and indifferent a manner, that the desires which we form are almost as soon miscarry'd or vanish'd, as conceiv'd.

* Foray. pro-
cessu. 4. Relig.
ed. 3.

† Velle adja-
cet mihi, per-
ficere autem
bonum non
invenio.
ad Rem. 7. 18.

* Vult. &
non vult
piger.

Prov. 13. 4.

† Desideria
occidunt pi-
gram: Noluc-
runt enim
quidquam ma-
nus ejus ope-
rari. Tota die
concupiscit,
& desiderat.

Prov. 21. 25.

* In deside-
riis est omnis
otiosus.

† Hier. ep. 4.

ad Rustic.

Audi filia, &c.

M. Avila. c. 6.

* Sicut som-
niat esuriens,
& comedit:
cum autem
fuerit exper-
gesfactus, va-
cua est anima
ejus.

Isa. 29. 8.

Saint Bonaventure says, * that there are many that intend well, and lay the best designs imaginable; but never have the courage to overcome themselves so far, as to put those good thoughts in execution: So that we may say of 'em, what the Apostle sayd of himself: † *A good Will every where accompanies me, but I have not force to execute it.* These kind of projects without effect, are not the issue of a resolute Will; and to speak properly, they are but meer half Wills, or small Velleities; and infine, we Will, but we do not Will effectually. * *The slothful,* says the Wise Man, *Wills and not Wills. † His desires kill him, for his hands will not work at all, he spends himself all the day long in desires.* He is all in desire, says Saint Hierom; * and Father Avila † compares him very well to those, who in their Dreams imagine they do great feats, and when they are awake dare undertake nothing, according to the words of the Prophet Isay, * *He that is hungry Dreams sometimes that he Eats, but when he comes to wake, his Soul is as empty as before.* It seems, that such kind of Men when they are at their Prayer, that they burn with a desire to suffer, and to see themselves scorn'd by every body; but as soon as they are gone from it, upon the least occasion that presents it self, they behave themselves quite otherwise than they had purpos'd. Because in effect, the desire they had conceiv'd was no true one, but a kind of a Dream they had fram'd. Others compare 'em to Soldiers in Hangings, that always brandish their Swords over their Enemies head, but never strike: And this is one of the explications we may give to these words, of the

Psalmist,

Psalmist, † *Man is like an Image*; they pass their whole Life in lifting up their Arm, and never strike. And they may also be compar'd to a Woman in Labour, who cannot be Deliver'd; and we may apply to them these words of *Ezechias in Isay*: * *The Children are come even to the Birth, and the Mothers have not the strength to bring 'em forth.* Saint *Hierom* explicating this passage of Saint *Matthew*, † *Woe be to them that are with Child, and give Suck in those days.* Woe, says he, to those Souls that have not brought their buds to the maturity of a perfect Man. And woe be to such who have not brought forth the good desires they had once conceiv'd, but stifi'd 'em in their Breast; For it were but to stifle 'em, if we never put 'em in execution? And woe be to those, who pass all their Life in wishes, and are surpris'd by Death, before they have perform'd any good work: For then 'twill not only prove of no advantage to them, to have had those good desires, but they shall be severely punish'd for not having put 'em in execution; and infine they will see their own Children they had conceiv'd, rise up against 'em; whereas they might have receiv'd great assistance from 'em, if they had taken courage to bring 'em forth.

Holy Scripture tells us, that *Abfalon* * had a most comely Head of Hair; but it prov'd in the end his only ruin, for in his flight being thereby entangl'd in the Bough of an Oak, he was kill'd by *Joab* in the posture he hung. Death in the same manner will surpris'e us, whilst we are suspended or taken up by good desires, and these good desires will make in part, the subject of our condemnation. Saint *John* says in the *Apocalyps*, † that he saw a Woman in Labour, and that there lay by her a horrible Dragon, watching till she shou'd be Deliver'd, that it might devour the Child. 'Tis this that the Devil endeavours with all his power to do by us, when ever the Soul has conceiv'd any good design; therefore, we ought to be very careful when we have made any good resolution, to proceed to the execution as soon as we can. Saint *Bernard* says, * that the Prophet *Isay* meant the same thing by that short and pithy sentence: † *If you seek, seek*; that is to say, be not weary in desiring, be not weary in seeking, for true desires require fervor and perseverance: They must be fervorous; they must be efficacious; they must infine be such, as according to the words of the Prophet *Michaas*, may cause in us a

Tom. I.

C

continual

† Veruntamen in imagine pertransit homo. Psal. 38. 7.

* Venerunt filii ulque ad partum, & nutritibus in illis diebus. Isay. 37. 3.

† Vt autem filii ulque ad partum, & nutritibus in illis diebus. Matth. 24. 19. Vt illis animabus quae non perduxerunt sua germina in virum perfectum. Hier. in eund. loc.

* 2 Reg. 18. 9.

† Apoc. 12. 4.

* Bern. Serm. 2. de Alis. & Humil. cordis.

† Si quaeritis, quaerite. Isay. 21. 12.

† Indicabo
tibi, & homo,
quid sit bonum
& quid Domi-
nus requirat a
te; utique fa-
cere judicium,
& diligere mi-
sericordiam, &
solicitem am-
bulare cum
Deo tuo.
Mich. 6. 8.

Matth. 5. 6.

continual care always to please God more and more. † *I will shew you O Man,* says he, *what that is which is good, and what our Lord requires of you: 'Tis to do Justice, to love Mercy, and to be careful to walk always with your God.* Behold these are the desires he expects from us, that he may bountifully bestow his treasures and graces upon us: Happy are those Souls that are most hungry, and that thirst most in this kind, for they shall not fail to be abundantly satisfi'd, and shall see all their desires intirely accomplish'd. We Read in the Life of Saint Gertrude that our Saviour JESUS CHRIST, appearing one day to her, told her that he had given to every good Soul a Pipe of Gold, to suck and draw from his Sacred Side, as much grace as they cou'd desire: And that Pipe of Gold, as he afterwards declar'd, was no other than a holy and upright Will, by which we draw upon our selves all sorts of blessings from God.

CHAP. IV.

That the more we apply our selves to Spiritual things with Fervor, the more we desire 'em.

* Qui edunt
me, adhuc esu-
rient: & qui
bibunt me, ad-
huc sitient.
Eccl. 24. 29.

† Greg. ho-
mil. 16. in
Evang.

THEY that Eat me shall yet hunger, and they that Drink me shall yet thirst, says the Holy Ghost, speaking of Divine Wisdom; and Saint Gregory says, † that there is this difference between the pleasures of the Body and those of the Soul, that we desire those with great impatience when we have 'em not, and when we have got 'em, we make but little account of 'em: For example, in the World, every one, according to his Birth, Quality, and the Profession he has undertaken, longs very much either for some Civil, Military, or Ecclesiastical Preferment: Yet notwithstanding, tho' he has scarce compass'd what he desir'd, he begins to condemn it, and to cast his Eyes upon something else; which in the like manner he is as soon weary of, as he possesses it; and insine without being able to regulate his Ambition, or to set bounds to his desires, he still gapes after some-

something new, and never rests satisf'd with any thing he has. But 'tis not so in Spiritual things; whilst we are destitute of 'em, we have a distast and an aversion from 'em; but as soon as we come once to possess 'em, then 'tis we begin to know their value, and we esteem 'em much more; and the more we tast 'em, the more earnestly we seek after 'em. The reason of this difference, says this great Saint, is, that the enjoyment of all Temporal goods and pleasures, discovers to us the vanity and emptiness of 'em; so that not finding in 'em that satisfaction we hop'd for, we undervalue and disesteem what we have got, and hoping to find the content we desire in something else, we let our selves be transported with other new desires. But still we deceive our selves; for all those new desires will have the same ill success, with our former wishes; for being we are not made for this World, there is nothing to be found in it, that can ever intirely satisfie our longing: This is what our Saviour taught the Samaritan when he told her: † *Those that drink of this Water shall thirst again*, all the pleasures of this Life can never quench the thirst of Man, who is Created for Heaven. But as to Spiritual goods and pleasures, we never love or desire 'em so much, as when we possess 'em; because then we best know their value; and the more perfectly we possess 'em, the greater is our desire and thirst after 'em. The same Saint Gregory also says, * 'tis not to be wonder'd at, that we do not desire Spiritual things, whilst we have not experienc'd nor even so much as begun to tast 'em; for how can any one love that, he is ignorant of? The Apostle Saint Peter also says, † *If nevertheless you have tasted how sweet the Lord is*; and the Royal Prophet, † *Tast and see how sweet the Lord is*; because if once we begin to find a gust in God, and relish Spiritual things, we shall experience such a sweetness in 'em, that we shall never be satisf'd therewith. By these words then, *Those who Eat me shall yet hunger, and those that Drink me shall yet thirst*, we must understand, that the more we apply our selves to Heavenly things, and the more fervently we embrace 'em, the more we shall feel the desire of possessing 'em, increase in us.

But you will tell me, how can this agree with what our Saviour says to the Samaritan? * *He that shall Drink of the Water, that I shall give him, shall never thirst*. Here the Son of God says that we shall never thirst, if we Drink

† Omnis qui bibit ex aqua hanc, iterum sitiet. Joan. 4. 13.

* Quis enim amare valeat, quod ignorat? Greg. lib. 1.

† Si tamen gustatis quoniam dulcis est Dominus.

1. Pet. 2. 3. † Gustate, & videte, quoniam suavis est Dominus. 1. Sal. 33. 9.

* Qui autem biberit ex aqua, quam ego dabo ei, non sitiet in eternum. Joan. 4. 13.

of the Water which he will give; and the Holy Ghost in another place by the mouth of the Wise Man, says, *That the more we shall Drink, the more we shall thirst.* How shall we adjust such different matters, and reconcile 'em one with another? The holy Fathers answer thus, that by the word of JESUS CHRIST to the *Samaritan*, we understand that he who shall drink of this living Water, our Saviour speaks of in that place, shall never thirst after sensual pleasures; by reason that the sweetness of those Spiritual delights, will give him an absolute distast of those of the World, and will render 'em unpleasant to him. As

† Sicut post
gustum mellis
omnia viden-
tur insipida,
ita gustato spi-
ritu, desipit
omnis caro.
Greg. *Ibid.*

* Eccl. 24. 19.

When you have tasted Hony, says Saint Gregory, † other things will seem harsh, and sour; so when we have once tasted what God is, and Spiritual things, all that favors of any affinity and contagion of flesh and blood, will become insipid and cause a loathing. But as to the saying of the Wise Man, * *Those who Eat me shall yet hunger, and those who Drink me shall yet thirst,* we must take that, as intended for Spiritual things, and understand thereby, that the more we tast 'em, the more we shall find the hunger and thirst which we had for 'em to increase; for being then come to a better knowledge of their worth, and having experienc'd their sweetness, we shall consequently be inclin'd to pursue them with more zeal: And thus 'tis that the Holy Doctors reconcile these two passages.

† Beati qui
esuriunt & si-
riunt iustiti-
am, quoniam
ipsi saturabun-
tur.
Matth. 5. 6.

But now in what manner can this agree with what our Saviour says again in Saint Matthew, † *Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after Justice, because they shall be fill'd?* Here he says that he will fill those who shall hunger and thirst after justice; and there we see the Wise Man assures us, that such as shall Eat and Drink of Wisdom, shall always find the same hunger and the same thirst as before. How is it possible that things so contrary can stand together, and what means is there to reconcile 'em? Notwithstanding, 'tis easie to do it. 'Tis properly the priviledge and excellency of Spiritual things to satisfy, and yet at the same time to whet our appetite; to quench, and yet to increase our thirst; and infine to cause, that the more we Eat and Drink of 'em, the more we hunger and thirst after 'em; but 'tis such a sort of hunger, as instead of rendring us faint and weak, it makes us strong, and hearty; and such a thirst as instead of putting us to pain, gives us a great deal of pleasure: 'Tis true that 'twill be only in Heaven, where we shall be perfectly satisfi'd, according

to these words; † *I shall be fully satisf'd when I shall see thee in thy Glory*, and these others, * *They shall be inebriated with the plenty of thy House.* Yet notwithstanding the forecited words out of the Wise Man must be understood according to the interpretation of Saint Bernard; † who says, we shall never in such a manner be satisf'd with the sight of God, as to be without a great desire and thirst after his sight; because instead of giving us a disgust or loathing, 'twill perpetually raise in us a new desire of seeing and enjoying him. Saint John in the *Apocalyps*; speaking of the Blessed, who assisted at the Throne, and before the Lamb, says, * *That they sung as it were a new Song*, to let us know that this Heavenly Song, will always contain something that will be new to us, and will continually cause in us a new joy, and a new admiration; which will make us continually cry out as the Children of *Israel* did, when they first saw the *Manna* fall in the Desert, *Manhu?* that is, *what is this?* 'Tis just so with Spiritual things here in this Life; because they being an emanation from those above, by consequence participate of their vertue and qualities. On the one side they satisfie and fill our Hearts; and on the other, they cause in us an extream hunger and thirst; and the greater tie or inclination we have to them, the more we tast 'em; and the more we enjoy them, the more also this hunger and thirst continually increases in us; but this very hunger is a kind of satiety; and this thirst a most sweet, and most agreeable refreshment to the Soul. All this ought to raise in us, a high Idea of Spiritual things; to make us conceive a great esteem of 'em, and embrace 'em with great Zeal and Fervor; that forgetting and scorning all the Allurements and Vanities of this World, we may say with the Prince of the Apostles, † *Lord 'tis good for us to be here.*

† Satiabor, cum apparuerit gloria tua.
Psal. 16. 15.
* Inebriabuntur ab ubertate domus tuæ.
Psal. 35. 9.
† Bern. ser. 6. c. 94. ex parte

* Et cantabant quasi canticum novum.
Apoc. 14. 3.

Exod. 16. 15.

† Domine, bonum est nos hic esse.
Matth. 17. 4.

C H A P. V.

That the desire which a Man has to become perfect in Vertue, is a great mark that he is in the Grace of God.

THAT which ought yet to encourage us more feavently to desire a progress in perfection, and to procure continually by new endeavours, daily to please God more and more (which ought to be at the same time of great comfort) is, that there can be no evidence greater than this, of Gods dwelling in a Soul, and of the good state 'tis in. There is no mark, says Saint Bernard, † more certain of the Presence of God in a Mans Heart, than the desire of increasing still in grace: Which he proves by that saying of the Wise Man, we have already cited, *Those that Eat me shall still hunger, and those that Drink me shall still thirst.* If then you hunger and thirst after Heavenly things, rejoyce, since 'tis an evident sign, that God dwels in your Soul; 'tis he who causes in you this hunger and thirst, and you have certainly lighted on the true vein of this precious mine; because you daily follow it so close. As a Spaniel ranges and hunts coldly, whilst he finds no game, but when he has once his prey in the Wind, he pursues it eagerly, and never gives over till he has catch'd it; so, whoever has truly experienc'd the sweetness of the Divine odour, runs after it without ever resting; and crys out with the Spouse in the Canticles, * *Draw me after thee, weel run in the odour of thy Divine Perfumes.* 'Tis God who is within you that draws you thus after him: But if you feel not within you this kind of hunger and thirst, you may justly fear, that God dwels not in your Heart; for these Spiritual things, as we have already sayd, according to Saint Gregory, † are peculiar in this, that when we do not possess 'em, we love 'em not, and are not in pain about 'em.

Saint

† Nullum omnino præsentia ejus certius testimonium est, quam desiderium gratia amplioris.
Bern. serm. 2.
de S. Andrea.

* Trahe me post te, curremus in odorem unguentorum tuorum.
Cant. 1. 3.

† Greg. Hom. 39. sup. Evang.

Saint Bernard sayd he trembl'd, † and his Hair stood an end, as often as he reflected on those Words, which the Holy Ghost utter'd by the mouth of the Wise Man, * *Man knows not whether he deserves Love or Hatred.* This passage is terrible, says this great Saint, † it lets not the mind be at ease, and I shook with horror, as often as I thought of it, never repeating within my self but with trembling, that sentence: *Who knows whether he deserves Love or Hatred?* If then the reflecting only, that we know not whether we are in Gods grace, or no, has made a great Saint, who was as 'twere a living Pillar of the Church tremble; what effect ought it to have upon us, whose sins give us so many causes of fear, * *Who carry within our selves the Sentence of our Death?* I am certain I have offended God, and I know not whether he has forgiven me: Who would not tremble in making this reflection? But if we could possibly be assur'd, that our sins were remitted, and that we are in Gods grace; if we could find a certainty of this, what esteem ought we not to make of it? For thô without a particular Revelation from God, we cannot have in this life an infallible certainty, that we are in his grace; yet there are certain signs that are able to give us a moral probability of it; and the surest mark we can have, is, to feel in our hearts a fervent desire of daily perfecting our selves more and more in vertue. So that there can be no need of any other motive but this, to oblige us always to cherish such a desire, since it gives us, in some measure, an assurance, that we are in Gods grace; and that nothing can be a greater comfort to us in this Life.

This may easily be confirm'd, by what the Holy Ghost says in the Proverbs; † *The ways of the just are like the Sun, that rises, and increases: both in light and heat till mid-day.* The farther they go, the more they increase in Vertue; and to use the Words of Saint Bernard * The just Man never believes, that he has fully perform'd his duty, he never says 'tis enough, but always hungers and thirsts after Justice; so that if he were to live here always, he wou'd perpetually strive to become more just, and more perfect; and to advance always from good to better. And therefore 'tis also Written of the just. † *They shall proceed from Vertue to Vertue;* that is, they shall continually increase in their fervor, and advance

† Bern. Serm. 23. sup. Cant.

* Nescit homo utrum amorem an odium dignus sit. Becl. 9. 1.

† Terribilis est locus iste, & totius expertis quietis; totus inhorruit: si quando in illum rapus sum, illam apud me replicans cum tremore sententiam, quis scit si est dignus amore, an odio? Bern.

* In noimetipis responsum mortis habuimus.

2. ad Cor. 1. 9.

† Jussorum semita quasi lux splendens procedit, & crescit usque ad perfectam diem.

Prov. 4. 18.

* Nunquam justus arbitratu se comprehendisse nunquam dicit: satis est: sed semper e-surit, sitisque justitiam: Ita ut si semper viveret, semper quantum in se est, justior, esse cō-

tenderet, semper de bono in melius proficere, totis viribus conatur. circa med. † Ibunt de virtute in virtutem. Psalm. 83. 8.

Bern. ep. 255, ad Ab Gaurin.

† Via impio-
rum tenebro-
sa: nesciunt
ubi corruan-
t. Prov. 4. 19.

in the way of Vertue, without ever resting till they arrive at the height of perfection; but the way of tepid, cold, imperfect, and wicked Men, is like the light of the Evening, which diminishes every moment, and at last go's out, and leaves us in the Darknes of mid-night: † *The way of the Wicked*, says the Wise Man, *is full of Darknes*, so that they cannot perceive those precipices into which they fall, they march in so great obscurity, that they stumble every step they take, and their confusion is so great, and their blindness is so deplorable, that they perceive not even the faults they commit; nor have any remorse of 'em in the end. But quite contrary judging of sins according to their own fancy, they will not believe that to be a sin, which is so in effect; and a Mortal sin oftentimes seems to them but Venial; nay many times it passes for a trifle, or a light imperfection.

C H A P. VI.

That not to advance in Vertue, is to go back.

In viâ Dei
non progredi,
regredi est.

* Nemo mit-
tens manum
suam ad ara-
tum, & res-
piciens retro,
aptus est reg-
ao Dei.

Luc. 9. 62.

† Tandiu
non relabi-
mur, quandiu
ad priora con-
tendimus. At
ubi ceperimus
scire, descen-
dimus; no-
strumque non
progredi, re-
verti est. Si
volumus non
regredi, curren-
dum est.

Aug. in ep.
131. ad Demetr.
Virg.

IT is the general maxim of all Holy Men, that in the way of God, we certainly go back, if we do not advance; which I here intend to demonstrate; to the end, it may serve for a powerful motive, to encourage us daily to make new progress in perfection. For what Man is there after he had travail'd several days journey homeward, wou'd return back? Especially knowing the sentence, that the Saviour of the World pronounces against him in the Gospel; * *Whoever puts his hand to the Plow, and looks back, is not fit for the Kingdom of God*, these are Words which shou'd make us tremble. And the great Saint *Austin* upon this occasion, says: † *'Tis not possible for us to keep our selves from going down, but by striving always to get up; for as soon as ever we begin to stop, we decline; and not to advance, is to go back; so that if we desire not to go back, we must always run forward without stopping.*

Saint

Saint Gregory, Saint Chrysostom, Saint Leo Pope, and many other Saints, in several places say the same, and almost in the same terms, but Saint Bernard goes farther in two of his Epistles, † where addressing himself to a negligent and tepid Religious Man; who contents himself with an ordinary Life, not taking any care in his advancement, thus discourses with him, in this following Dialogue. Well, will you not profit? No, what then? Will you go back? Much less; what will you do then? Ile stay where I am, and neither grow better nor worse. Then you will do that which is impossible, for in this Life there can be no state of permanency, that is a priviledge which belongs only to God, * *With whom there is no change nor the least shadow of vicissitude*, † *I am the Lord*, says he, *and I do not change*. But all things in this World are subject to a perpetual change. * *All shall grow old like a garment*, says the Psalmist, speaking of the Heavens. *And thou shalt change 'em as easie as we change our garments, but as to thee O Lord, thou art always the same and thy Tears are Eternal*. Man above all other Creatures, according to the testimony of Holy Job, is never long in the same condition, † *he passes like a shadow and never continues in the same state*. JESUS CHRIST himself, as Saint Bernard adds, * as long as he liv'd here upon Earth and convers'd with Men, was never at a stand. † *He grew in Wisdom, Age, and Favor, before God and Men*. That is to say, that as he grew in Age he gave more signal tokens of his Wisdom and Holiness. * *And prepar'd himself as a Champion to run his Race, of labor and sufferings*, Saint John likewise says. † *That he who professes to dwell with JESUS CHRIST, must walk in the same path, and keep the same pace with him*. But if whilst our Saviour runs on, you come to stop, is it not clear that you will be short of him, instead of approaching near him? Holy Scripture tells us, * that Jacob saw a Ladder, that reach'd from Earth to Heaven; on the top of which Almighty God lean'd; and that it was full of Angels, who perpetually went up and down, without ever resting; which says Saint Bernard, was to let us know that in the way of Vertue, there is no mean between going up and down, and between advancing forward and going backward: But as when we work at the Turn, the Wheel flies back as soon as we go to stop it, so

Tom. I. D from

† Bern. ep. 253. & 341.

* Apud quem non est transmutatio. nec vicissitudinis obumbratio. Jac. 1. 17.

† Ego Dominus, & non mutor. Malach. 3. 6.

* Omnes sicut vestimentum veterascent, & sicut opertorium mutabis eos, & mutabuntur. Tu autem idem ipse es, & anni tui non deficient. Psal. 101. 27. & 28.

† Fugit velut umbra, & numquam in eodem statu permanet. Job. 14. 2.

* Quando in terris visus est, & cum hominibus conversatus est, numquid stetit? S. Bern. 16.

† Et Jesus proficiebat sapientia, & ætate, & gratia apud Deum, & homines. Luc. 2. 52.

* Exultavit ut gressum eandem viam. Psal. 18. 6.

† Qui dicit se in ipso manere, debet, sicut ipse ambulavit, & ipse ambulare. Joan. 1. 2. 6.

* Gen. 28. 12.

† Debemus, inquit, ad virtutum studia nosmetipsos semper extendere, ipsique nos jugiter exercitiis occupare, ne cessante profectu, confectum diminutio subsequatur. Ut enim diximus, in uno mens eodemque statu manere non praevalet; id est ut nec augmentum virtutum capiat, nec detrimentum sustineat: Non acquisisse enim, minuisse est, quia definens proficiendi appetitus non aberit à periculo recidendi.

from the same moment you desist from going forward in Vertue, you must of necessity go backward. Abbot *Theodore* explicates the same thought in these terms, recounted by *Cassian* † we must, says he, apply our selves to the study of Vertue without remissness, and seriously exercise our selves in the practise of it, least coming once to cease from growing better, we immediately begin to grow less perfect; for our Souls, as we sayd before, cannot rest long in the same state, so as to grow neither better nor worse in Vertue: For we loose what we do not gain, and whosoever do's not find in himself a desire of still growing better, is in great danger of falling, or in a very short time becoming much worse.

Cass. Collat. 6. Ab. Theod. cap. 14.

* *Cass. ubi supra.*
† *Greg. 3. p. Pass. adm. 51.*

The same *Cassian*, * explicates this by an excellent comparison, which also Saint *Gregory* uses. † Those who lead a Spiritual Life, says he, are like a Man in the midst of a rapid River, if he stops the least, and strives not continually to bear up against the stream, he will run great danger of being carry'd down: The course therefore we ought to take, is so directly opposite to the current of our Nature, corrupted by sin, that unless we labor and force our selves still to go on, we shall not fail of being hur'y'd back by the impetuous torrent of our Passions. * *The Kingdom of Heaven is to be taken by Storm, and 'tis only the violent that carry it.* And as when you go against the Tide, you must always Row without ceasing, and when you leave of but a moment, you find your self far of from the place where you were: So here you must still Row, you must still push forward, and make head against the current of your deprav'd Passions, unless you be content to see your self, quickly carry'd back, far from that degree of perfection, to which you had before attain'd.

* *Regnum celorum vim patitur, & violenti rapiunt illud. Matib. 11. 12.*

Saint *Hierom* and Saint *Chrysostom* make this truth still more evident by a point of Doctrin approv'd by all Divines, cited by Saint *Thomas* in these terms. † A Religious Life, says he, is a state of Perfection; not that a Man becomes perfect as soon as he becomes Religious; but because Religious Men have a more strict obligation to aspire to perfection, and that he who strives not to become perfect, and who do's not apply himself in good earnest to it, cannot be sayd to be a true Religious Man; because

† *S. Th. 2. 2. q. 82. art. 5. ad 2.*

because he do's not perform the work, for which he embrac'd that profession: I will not enter now into dispute, whether a Religious Man wou'd sin Mortally who shou'd say, I content my self with being faithful to the Commandments of God, and my Essential Vows; but for other Rules which don't oblige under pain of sin, I design not to observe 'em. My intention is not to decide this point; because the opinions of Divines are different in this matter: Some hold that he wou'd sin Mortally; others say, no, unless there were some kind of contempt mixt with it. But what is certain, and what they all agree in, is, that a Religious Man in such a disposition of mind, and who shou'd make such a resolution, wou'd give very ill example, and that morally speaking, he wou'd be in danger of falling into Mortal sin; † *For he that undervalues small things, will by little and little come to fail in great.*

† Qui spernit modica, paulatim decideret. Eccl. 19. 1.

The better to comprehend this, Saint *Chrysostom* gives us several familiar examples: If a Domesticque Servant, says he, * were neither Thief, Drunkard, nor Gamester; but trusty, sober, and without any Vice; yet notwithstanding shou'd idle his time, and sit all day in the House, without dispatching what belong'd to his charge; there's no doubt, but he wou'd deserve to be severely punish'd; for tho' he did not positively any harm, yet 'tis fault enough, to neglect what he ought to do. Moreover, tho' a Husband-man, be never so honest in all other things, yet nevertheless shou'd stand with his Arms a cross, and wou'd neither Plow nor Sow; 'tis certain tho' he did no other harm, yet he would be blameworthy for this only reason; for 'tis a considerable fault enough, to fail in what belongs to his duty. And infine, if one of our Hands, shou'd put us to no pain, but were Paralytique, and absolutely of no use to us; shou'd we not think that alone a sufficient damage? Just so 'tis in Spiritual matters: If a Religious Man stand idle neglecting his own improvement, and is not concern'd whether he profits in Vertue, he is much to be blam'd; because he omits the obligations of his profession; for to him, 'tis to do ill, not to do good; and 'tis to go back, not to advance continually. To conclude, what greater fault can we find with any Land, than that 'tis barren, and bears no crop, tho' never so well husbanded? In the same manner, if a Land, like your Soul, continually cultivated by so many good instructions, water'd by the frequent showers of Heavenly Graces, and warm'd by

* Chrysost. serm. de viis. c. vii.

† Retribue-
bant mihi ma-
la pro bonis,
sterilitatem a-
nimæ meæ.
Psal. 34. 12.

the Rays of the Sun of Justice, bears no fruit, but continues still arid and barren; will you not think that dryness and sterility a great misery in your selves? 'Tis of this the Psalmist complains, when he says, † *They return'd me evil for good, and afforded me nothing but aridity and Barrenness.*

Another comparison also is frequently made use of, which fits well to our purpose, and very much confirms what we have sayd. As Saylers dread nothing so much in the main Sea as a calm, because then they consume all their provisions, and afterwards find themselves in want of what is most necessary: So there is nothing so much to be fear'd by those that Sail in the Tempestuous Sea of this World, and steer towards Heaven, than a miserable calm, that stops 'em in the midst of their course, and hinders their going forward. Because that small provision they had made for their Voyage is soon spent, and the little Vertue they had, begins to fail 'em; amidst the storms and tempests of Temptations, that assault 'em on all sides, they find themselves even in their greatest distress destitute of all help, when most in need of it, and run great danger of perishing. Woe be to them that are surpris'd with such a dangerous calm.

* Currebatis
bene: Quis
vos impedit
veritati non
obedire?
Gal. 5. 7.

† Jam satu-
rati estis: jam
divites facti
estis.
1. ad Cor. 4. 8.

* Grandis
enim tibi
restat via.
3. Reg. 19. 7.

* *You did once run well*, says the Apostle, *who has hinderd you from obeying the Truth?* You went at first with full Sail what calm or shelves has stopt you? Certainly, † *Your bellies are full, and you imagine your selves very rich.* You fancy you have done enough: And being tir'd, you think you have great reason to rest your selves, and that what you have already got, will suffice for your voyage: But reflect and consider well, that you have yet a great way to go, * *For that part of your Journey that still remains, is very long.* Believe you shall meet with many occasions wherein you will stand in need of a more perfect humility, of a more couragious patience, of a more absolute disengagement, and of a greater mortification; and that perchance you may be surpris'd and found unprovided, at the time of your greatest distress.

C H A P. VII.

That a good means to attain Perfection, is still to consider what Vertue we want; without relying upon what we have already gain'd.

† **L**ET him that is just, become still more just, and let him that is holy, become still more holy. Saint Hierom and Venerable Bede tell us, that when our Saviour sayd, * Blessed are those that hunger and thirst after justice, for they shall be satisf'd. † It was to teach us that we must never think we are just enough, but that we ought to aspire still at growing better, which is what Saint John recommends to us, in that passage of the *Apocalyps*, we have just now cited.

bere, sed quotidianum iustitiæ semper amare profectum Hier. Bede.

Saint Paul proposes to us for this effect an excellent means he himself made use of: * Brethren, says he, I do not imagine that I am as yet arriv'd to perfection, but this I do; I forget all that is past, and advance toward that which is yet before me; I strive to arrive at the Goal, and to gain that prize of glory, to which we are all call'd in JESUS CHRIST, if therefore the Apostle of the Gentils, the Vessel of Election, cannot believe himself perfect, who dares presume to think himself so? He believes not that he has attain'd perfection, but he endeavours, all that possibly he can, to acquire it, and to that end he forgets all that he has done, and considers only what he wants; and 'tis to obtain this, that he excites and encourages himself with all his force. All the Saints have very much extoll'd, and earnestly recommended this means as having been prescrib'd and practis'd by the Apostle, whereupon Saint Basil, † and

priora extenditur, & præteritorum obliviscitur,

Basil. ep. ad Chli.

Saint

† Qui iustus est, iustificatur adhuc, & sanctus sanctificatur adhuc. Apoc. 22. 11.

* Beati qui esuriunt, & sitiunt iustitiam, quoniam ipsi saturabuntur. Matth. 5. 6.

† Apertissime nos instruit, numquam nos satis iustos æstimare de-

* Fratres, ego me non arbitror comprehendisse. Unum autem, quæ quidem retro sunt obliviscens, ad ea verò quæ sunt priora extendens me ipsum, ad destinatum persequor, ad bravium supernæ vocationis in Christo Jesu. Ad Phil. 3. 13.

† Quicunque sanctus, quotidie in

† Felix est
qui quotidie
proficit, qui
non confide-
rat quid heri
fecerit, sed quid
hodie faciat,
ut proficiat.
Elzer. sup. 17. 83.

Saint *Hierom*, † teaches, that whosoever will become a Saint, must forget what he has done, and think continually of what he has still to do; and that such only are truly happy, who every day improve, and never think of what they did yesterday, but of what they ought to do this present day, in order to their advancement.

But Saint *Gregory* and Saint *Bernard*, descend more to particulars, and say, that this means prescribed by Saint *Paul*, consists of two principal parts. The first is, to forget the good we have done, and not to have any regard to it. Certainly we had great need to have been forewarn'd of this in particular; for 'tis very natural to us, to turn our thoughts to what is most pleasing to us, and to shun what is not so suiting to our humor, so that, as we take pleasure in considering our improvement, and the good we believe we have done, and on the contrary finding it troublesome to consider and see how poor we are in Spirituality, and how much we want; we are consequently and easily carry'd, rather to think of that little good we have done, then to consider what is still wanting to our perfection: Saint *Gregory* says, that as a sick Man, in a burning Feaver, turns himself still to seek the coolest and softest place in his Bed, in hopes to find a little ease; so 'tis very ordinary for human weakness, to fix it's thoughts upon the past good: But Saint *Bernard* says, *

* Si enim
respicis ad ea
quæ habes, e-
levaris in su-
perbiam, dum
te aliis præpo-
nis: proficere
negligis, quia
magnum te
habere arbitra-
ris, & tepidius
incipis deficere
& remissius
agere.
Bernard

† Deus, gra-
tias ago tibi,
quia non
sum sicut cæ-
teri hominum,
raptores in-
justi, adulteri,
velut etiam
hic Publica-
nus: jeju-
no bis in Sab-
bato; Decimas
de omnium
quæ possideo.
Et Publicanus
à longe stans,
nolebatur nec o-
culos ad cæ-

in this there is a great deal of danger; for if you look only upon the good works you have done, you will come to be easily tempted with vain glory, preferring your self before others; and you will neglect your profit; because you believe that you are already arriv'd, to a great Degree of Perfection; and insin you begin to relent, and from tepidity falling into negligence, you incur incessantly your own ruin. The example of the *Pharisee* in the Gospel, shews us plainly what must happen to those, who behave themselves in this manner; the *Pharisee* cast his eyes upon the good works he had done, and then numbering 'em up:

† I thank thee O God, says he, that I am not like other Men, Theeves, Deceivers, or Adulterers, nor like this Publican: I fast two days in the week, and I pay exactly the Tithes of all I have: And the Publican stand-
ing a far off, not daring so much as to cast up his Eyes towards Heaven, struck his breast, saying, Good God be Merciful

to me a Sinner. I assure you, says our Saviour, *this Publican went home more Justifi'd than the Pharisee.* So we see, the one by humbling himself was Justifi'd, and the other by his criminal presumption drew upon himself, the sentence of Death and Condemnation. 'Tis what the Devil designs against us, by representing to us always the good we have done; to induce us to have a great esteem of our own Actions, and to grow proud thereby; and undervalue our neighbour, to the end, that our own pride may condemn us. But there is still a farther danger, as Saint Bernard says, in looking only upon our good Work; since thereby we neglect to improve our selves in Vertue, and grow cold in the concern of Heaven; and at last imagining that we have done enough, we shall think of doing no more, and only of reposing our selves; as Travellers do, who when they begin to grow weary, turn back to see how far they have gone: So when Men enter into the way of perfection, and begin to be tir'd they look back upon what is behind 'em, and fancying they have advanc'd a great deal, they content themselves, and by a most shameful sloth, stop half way.

To avoid these Inconveniencies we must always think, not upon what we have already done, but upon what still remains, for the one tempts us to rest our selves, and the other incites us continually to go on with our work; which is the second branch of that means the Apostle teaches us, to have our thoughts always fix'd upon that which we yet want; in order to encourage our selves to procure it: Saint Gregory, † explicates this by several familiar comparisons, and says, that as a Man who ow's a thousand Crowns, do's not think himself discharg'd of his debt, for having pay'd three or four hundred, but still reflects upon what he has yet to pay, and cannot be at quiet, till he has fully satisfi'd his Creditor: So we who are deep'y indebted to Almighty God, ought not to reckon upon what we have already pay'd, but always consider what we are still to pay, in order to satisfy the debt that remains; and mind nothing else but the applying our selves continually, to find out means whereby to do it; moreover, says he, as Men upon a Voyage, that travel with a resolution to arrive at their Journeys end, never look back to see how many miles they have already gone, but consider how far they have yet to go, and think of nothing else, till

lum levare;
percutiebat
pedus suum,
dicens: Deus,
propitius esto
mihi peccato-
ri. Dico vo-
bis, descendit
hic iustifica-
tus in domum
suam ab illo.
Luc. 18. 11.
o seq.

† Greg. lib.
22. Mor. c. 3.

till they are come to the place whether they design to go: So we, who are Travellers in this World, and pretend to go to our Country, which is Heaven, ought not to look how far we have gone, but think how far we have yet to go, and how to get thither: And adding moreover, that when a Man undertakes a Journey to any place, it avails him nothing, to have gone a great way, unless he continues to go on till he comes to his Journeys end; because he cannot expect the recompense of all his labor till he arrive thither. Wherefore 'tis to no purpose to have run well at the first, if in the middle of your race you come to be tir'd; whereupon the Apostle Counsels us, † *Run so, as you may carry the Prize.* Never look back upon the way you have left behind, but keep your Eyes fixt upon the Goal, you aim at: Consider that 'tis perfection you ought to aspire to; and think how far you have yet to go to get thither, whereby you will make hast still to advance; for as Saint *Chrysostom* says: * A Man never gives over running, whilst he thinks he is not yet come to his Journeys end.

† Sic currite, ut comprehendatis.
1. ad Cor. 9. 24.

* Chrys. hom. sup. ep. ad Rom. Tom. 4.

† Bern. ser. 2. de alitis, & basit. cord.

Saint Bernard says, * that we ought to imitate Merchants, who tho' they have already, got never so much Wealth by their Traffick; and undergone great hardship and pain: Yet are never satisfi'd with what they gain'd, nor discourag'd by the losses they have suffer'd: But as if hitherto they had neither done nor gain'd any thing, they strive continually to acquire new Riches. Thus, says he, ought we to apply our selves continually, to increase our store, and to enrich our selves in Humility, Charity, Mortification, and all other Vertues: And as good Merchants for Heaven, we ought to make no account of the small pains we have hitherto undergone, nor of the riches we have as yet acquir'd; for which reason, our Blessed Saviour in Saint *Matthew*, * compares the Kingdom of Heaven to a Merchant, and commands us * to Traffick till he comes.

* Matth. 13. 45.
† Negoti-
mini dum ve-
nitis.
Luc. 19. 13.

And the better to explicate this comparison propos'd to us by our Saviour himself, you must observe what great care Merchants always take, not to let slip any opportunity of profit: Do you the same; let slip no occasion of making some new progress in Vertue; and according to what Saint *Ignatius* says, * *Let all constantly endeavour never to neglect any degree of Perfection, which by the assistance*

* Conf. 6. s. 1.
s. 1. & Reg.
15 a. sum.

of

of God's Grace we may obtain: Suffer not any accident to escape without endeavouring to draw some Spiritual advantage from it. An angry word is sayd to you, you are commanded to do something against your Will, an opportunity is offer'd you of humbling your self; if you receive all these things, and make that use of them you ought, they will produce you very considerable profit. We ought to seek after occasions of this Nature, and buy 'em at any rate. And as a Marchant never go's to bed with more satisfaction, nor thinks to have had better success in his traffick, than after he has that day made several good and advantageous bargains; so a Religious Man ought to believe, that he has never thriv'n so well in his profession, and ought never to go to bed better satisf'd, than that day wherein he met with many occasions, to exercise his Humility and Patience: A Marchant never troubles himself at the losses another Man suffers, and is not angry at him upon this account, but thinks, and often reflects with joy, upon his own particular gain: So ought a Religious Man never to heed whether another did well or ill, in giving him the Mortification he receiv'd, nor be angry with him for it; but rejoyce at the particular profit he receives thereby. If we carry'd our selves after this manner, we shou'd not so easily loose our peace of mind in such like occasions; for when those very things which of their own Nature are capable to rob us of it, and cause a discontent in us, are the only things we seek after, and desire; what can there happen, that can ever disturb our peace, or cause any affliction of Mind?

Consider moreover, the great care and industry of a Marchant, in all business that can any way occasion his gain, how he thinks of nothing else, and with what earnestness he undertakes any affair, when he perceives the least appearance or hope of gain: Whether he be at table, whether he go's to bed, or rises, insine, whether he sleep's or wak's, wheresoever he is, or whatsoever he do's, that care alone takes up his thoughts, and never lets him be at rest. In the same manner we must proceed in the affair of our Salvation, having our mind and heart intirely taken up with it; and we shou'd be always attentive to make some Spiritual profit, upon every the least occasion that offers it self. And this thought shou'd always accompany us; at table, at our going to bed, at our rising, in all our actions, and in all our exercises;

Tom. 1.

E

at

at all times and in all places, and during our whole life. 'Tis our only business; and provide we do it well, we need desire nothing else, and all the rest is not worth the tormenting our selves for a moment. Saint *Bonaventure*, † adds to all this, that as a good Merchant never finds in one Country all he wants, but often travels into different Countries to search for many things; so a Religious Man ought to seek for his Spiritual advancement, not only in his Prayer, Meditation, and Interior Consolation; but also in resisting of Temptations, in mortifying his Senses, in suffering Injuries, pain, and labor; and in discharging his duty in all occasions that present themselves.

If in this manner we seek after Vertue, without doubt we shall be rich in a short time, *If you seek for Wisdom, says Salomon, * as Men seek for riches; and if you dig for it as you would find a treasure: You shall then know what is the fear of the Lord, and you shall learn the true science of God.* What God demands of us here, says Saint *Bernard*, † is not much, seeing that for gaining the treasure of true Wisdom, which is God himself, he requires no greater care at our hands, than Men employ in this Life to gain riches; which are subject to a thousand accidents, and whereof the enjoyment is so short; and so full of trouble. To keep then a proportion in things, were it not fitting, that as there is an infinite difference between Spiritual and Temporal goods, so there should also be as great a difference in the manner of our seeking the one and the other. 'Tis also a great *thrust* and confusion to us, says this Saint; * that Worldly Men desire those things that are pernicious to them, with more earnestness, than we desire those things that are of the greatest advantage, and that they run faster to Death, than we do to Life.

'Tis set down in Ecclesiastical History, † that the Holy Abbot *Pambo* going one day to *Alexandria*, and meeting with a *Curtezan* that was very finely drest, began to weep bitterly, crying out several times, alas what a miserable Man am I! And his Disciples having ask'd him why he sigh'd and wept so bitterly: He answer'd, would you not have me weep, to see this miserable Woman take more care and diligence to please Men, than I do to please God, and to see her take more pains to lay snares

† *Pon. l. 2.*
apud *lib. 2. de*
prof. Rel. ca. 1.

* Si quaeritis
eam quasi pec-
cuniam, & si-
cut thesauros
effoderis il-
lam, tunc in-
telleges timo-
rem Domini
& scientiam
Dei invenies.
Prov. 2. 4.
© S.
† *Ber. ubi sup.*

* Magna
confusio, mag-
na valde, quod
ardentius illi
perniciosa de-
siderant, quam
nos utilia. Ci-
tius illi ad
mortem pro-
perant, quam
nos ad vitam.
Bern. serm. 1.
de alt. & hel.
cord. & epist.
341.

† *Hist. Eccles.*
P. 2. l. 6. c. 1.

snare for Men, to drag 'em into Hell, than I use endeavours to gain 'em to JESUS CHRIST, and to conduct 'em to Heaven? We read also of Saint *Francis Xaverius*, that he was asham'd and extremely troubled to see that Marchants had got before him into *Japan*, and that they had been more diligent to Sail thither to sell their Marchandise, then he had been to carry thither the Treasure of the Gospel, propagate the Faith, and encrease the Kingdom of God: Let us conceive the same thoughts, and be fill'd with a holy confusion, to see * *that the Children of this World, are more prudent and careful in the concerns of this Life, than we are in our concerns for Heaven: And let this serve to hinder us from remaining any longer, in our sloth and Tepidity.*

* Quia filii hujus seculi, prudentiores filiis lucis in generatione sua sunt. Luc. 16. 8.

CH A P. VIII.

That 'tis very advantageous for the attaining Perfection, to aim at the highest things.

TWILL be very advantageous for our Spiritual advancement, that we shou'd propose to our selves such things for Objects, as are of a more exquisite perfection than ordinary, according to the Counsel of the Apostle, † *Desire more excellent gifts of God, and I shew you still a more excellent way:* This means is without doubt of a very great importance; for our desires must of necessity fly high, if we intend our actions should arrive to such a point of perfection, as may satisfy our indispensable duties: This may easily be understood by a familiar comparison: When your Bow is too weak bent, you will never be able to hit the mark, unless you aim a great deal higher; because the looseness of the string makes your Arrow always decline. Just so 'tis with us: Our Nature is so feeble, and we are so slacken'd

† Amulami- ni autem charitativa meliora, & adhuc excellentiorem viam vobis demonstro. 1. Cor. 12. 31.

by the ill habits we have contracted, that we must take our aim a great deal higher than the mark, if we intend to reach it. Man is become so miserable by Sin, that to arrive to an ordinary degree of Vertue, he must carry his thoughts and desires a great deal farther. But some will say, all I pretend, is to avoid Mortal Sin; as for the rest, I do not aspire, to any height of perfection. 'Tis much then to be fear'd that you'll not arrive so far as you desire; for the string is slack: Perhaps you might have come thither if you had taken your aim higher; but not having done so, there's no likelihood you shou'd arrive whether you pretend, but are in great danger of falling into Mortal Sin. The Religious Man who intends not only to observe the Commandments of God; but also endeavours to follow his counsels; and pretends not only to fly from Mortal Sin, but also to avoid, as much as he can, all Venial Sins, and even the least Imperfections; chuses a good way, not to fall into Mortal Sin; because he takes his aim a great deal higher; and tho' his frailty shou'd hinder him from arriving at what he intends, yet at most he will only fail in something of counsel, in some little Rule, light Imperfection, or Venial Sin. But he that only aims at not offending God Mortally, let the Bow be never so little slackned, and he neglects to aim at what he pretended, he will without doubt fall into some Mortal Sin. 'Tis by this means, that Secular Men fall so often into most grievous Sins; and good Religious Men are by the Mercy of God preserv'd from 'em: And certainly tho' there were no other advantage in Religion, this alone were always sufficient to comfort us, and shou'd oblige us continually to thank the Divine goodness for having call'd us thereunto. For to conclude, I hope by the Grace of God, that you will pass all your Life here without Mortal Sin; whereas if you had liv'd in the World, perhaps, you wou'd hardly have past one Year, Month, or Week; no not even one Day or Hour, without falling thereinto.

By this you may easily understand what danger a tepid Religious Man is in, who sticks not to break his Rules, and makes it not his business to aspire to Perfection. 'Tis very hard he shou'd continue long in that condition, without being expos'd to the danger of committing some great crime. But if you truly desire to improve your self in Vertue, purpose, for example, to acquire such a perfect

perfect humility, that you may be able to receive contempts and injuries with joy; and God grant, that after all this you may be able to support 'em with patience: Resolve with your self to make an intire submission both of your Will and Understanding, to all that your Superiors shall ordain; and God grant, that even after this resolution, you come not sometimes to fail in the duty of Obedience, and in the exactness it requires. Infine, resolve to be perfectly resign'd even in those occasions that are in themselves most difficult and extraordinary; and you will do a great deal, if you submit, even to the most easie and common accidents.

'Twas well contriv'd by Almighty God, says Saint *Austin*, † to place the greatest and most perfect of his Commandments at the head of all the rest. * *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy Heart, with all thy Soul, with all thy Strength, and with all thy Mind.* † *This is the greatest and first Commandment.* 'Tis the end for which all the rest were giv'n us, according to the words of the Apostle, * *The end of the precept is Charity*: And the excellency of this Commandment is such, that the Fathers and Divines are of Opinion, that 'twill be only in the other Life, where we shall be able to fulfill it perfectly. For to have our hearts and minds taken up with God, to be continually absorpt in him, and to apply all the powers of our Soul only to Love and Adore him; is a thing that can't be well perform'd by us, but in Heaven. Here in this Life, the weakness of our nature, and the necessity of satisfying the wants of our Body, hinder us from ever arriving to so high a degree of Perfection. And tho' this Commandment contains the fulfilling of all the rest, yet God nevertheless order'd, it shou'd be plac'd in the head of all; that we might know at first sight what we ought to aspire to, and how far we must endeavour to advance. Wherefore, says Saint *Austin*, † *are we commanded to love God with all our heart, which is a command we cannot fully perform in this Life? 'Tis because a Man never runs well, if he knows not how far he has to go.* Almighty God has set immediately before our Eyes the greatest of all the Commandments, that aiming at so sublime an end, and compleat a Perfection, we might never cease to endeavour the attaining it; and if it happens that our strength cannot reach so far, our aiming high may yet carry us, a good way at least, towards our desir'd end.

† *Aug. lib. de perf. instr. ratiocin. to' 7.*

* *Diligens Deum tuum ex toto corde tuo, & ex tota anima tua, & ex omnibus viribus tuis, & ex omni mente tua.*

Luce. 10. 27.

† *Hoc est maximum & primum mandatum.*

Matth. 22. 38.

* *Finis autem precepti est caritas.*

† *Tim. 1. 5.*

† *Cum nam precipitur quod Deus ex toto corde diligatur, etiam si hoc preceptum in hac vita impleri non possit: quia non recte curritur, si quod currendum est, nesciatur.*

Aug. ubi supra.

Saint

* Beatus vir,
cujus est auxi-
lium abs te :
Ascensiones
in corde suo
disposuit.
Psal. 83. 6.

† Sanctus
ponit ascen-
siones in cor-
de suo, pec-
cator descen-
siones.

Hier. sup. hunc
Psal.

* Cogitatio-
nes robusti
semper in
abundantia.
Prov. 21. 5.

† Vox mul-
torum est :
Sufficit mihi
vita commu-
nis : Cum imis
salvari potero,
fatis est.

Nolo merita
Apostolorum :
Nolo violare
per summa :
Incédere per
planiora con-
tentus sum.

Gers. 3. p.
tract. de Myst.
Theod. in illud
Jes. consil. 4.

* Multi sunt
vocati, pauci
verò electi.

Matth. 20. 16.

† Et lata por-
ta, & spatiosa
via est, quæ
ducit ad per-
ditionem, &
multi sunt qui
intrant per
eam. Quam
angusta porta,
& arcta via
est, quæ ducit
ad vitam, &
pauci inveni-
unt eam.

Matth. 7. 13.
& 14.

* Aug. in
illud Ps. 8.
Pecora campi.

† Matth. 25.
12. & 30.

* Saint Hierom Explicating those Words of the Psalmist, * *Blessed is the Man O Lord whose help is from thee, his heart is always thinking how to raise it self higher and higher* : The just Mans heart, says he, † is always touting aloft, and the sinners heart is perpetually sinking. The just Man has his Eyes continually fixt upon those things which are most sublime in vertue ; he aspires to encrease in perfection ; and 'tis this which he continually reflects on, according to the saying of the Wife Man : * *The thoughts of the strong are always carry'd to an abundant encrease*. But the sinner thinks of nothing less ; he is content to live as the rest of the World do ; and the most he proposes to himself, is to attain to a mean degree of vertue ; and afterwards growing cold, he sinks insensibly, and never comes near his mark. This is the ordinary Discourse, says Gerson, † of many People ; 'tis enough for me to lead a common Life ; I only desire to be sav'd ; as for the rest, it imports little in what rank I am : I leave that Sovereign degree of glory for the Apostles and Martyrs ; I pretend not to fly so high, but am content to walk upon the plain ground. Such is the Language of sinners and imperfect Men, who are much a greater number than the Just and Perfect : * *For many are call'd, says our Saviour, but few are chosen* : † *And large is the gate, and broad is the way that leads to Perdition, and many there are that enter. How narrow is the gate, and strait the path, that conducts to Eternal Life, and there are few that find it*. Saint Austin * speaking of such as walk in the broad beaten way of a loose Life, says, that those are the Men whom the Prophet calls *Beasts of the field* ; because they will always walk in a spacious place, and will never be confin'd to any Rule or Discipline. And Gerson says, that by this kind of Discourse : *'Tis enough for me to live as others do, so I be but sav'd, 'tis sufficient : I aspire not to a greater Perfection* ; a Man very easily discovers the imperfect and bad state his Soul is in, since he is not willing to enter in at the strait gate ; and adds farther that those People, who throu' their sloth and tepidity, imagine that 'tis enough for 'em to be sav'd amongst those of the lower rank, have great reason to fear lest they come to be condemn'd with the Foolish Virgins, † who fell a sleep without taking care to provide for any thing ; or with the negligent Servant, who bury'd the Talent he had receiv'd, and

and wou'd not take pains to improve it, he was cast into utter darknes; and we find not in the Gospel, that he was condemn'd for any thing else, but for having neglected to improve the Talent, his Master had intrusted him withal.

But to make it appear more clearly in how shameful, and deplorable a condition those Men are; the same *Gerson* brings this example. Imagine, says he, a Father of a Family, rich, and generous, had many Children; and all of 'em very capable of advancing his Family, and acquiring by their good qualities, great honor to themselves and their Progeny: All apply themselves with care to perform their duty except one, who throu' a meer slothfulness leads a loose and shameful Life, tho' he be as capable and fit for great Actions, as any of the rest, provided he wou'd apply himself; yet notwithstanding he do's nothing becoming his birth and good parts; but contents himself, as he says, with a small fortune; and since he has wherewithal to live easily, he will not trouble himself to encrease his Estate, nor break his brains with any ambitious thoughts. His Father calls upon him, exhorts and commands him to entertain nobler thoughts, minds him of his good qualities, and noble birth; proposes to him the Example of his Ancestors, and of the rest of his Brothers; but when he sees that notwithstanding all he can do, he cannot yet prevail with him, to quit that remiss way of living, nor persuade him to a more generous Life; he must needs conceive a very just indignation against him. 'Tis the same with God; we are all his Children, and Brothers of JESUS CHRIST; our Heavenly Father wou'd not have us content our selves with an idle languishing Life, but exhorts us to perfection in these words; † *Be ye therefore Perfect as your Heavenly Father is Perfect.* Consider how Holy and Perfect he is, think upon what your birth obliges you to, and endeavour by your actions to make it appear that you are the true Children of such a Father; take also example from your Brothers, and if you will, look upon your Eldest Brother JESUS CHRIST, who most freely gave his Blood and Life, to repair that lamentable condition into which our Race was fallen; and to restore it to its former splendor. But if so great an example dazles you, look upon your other Brethren who are as feeble as your self, born in sin as you were, subject to Passions, Temptations, and bad Inclinations,

† *Effote ergo vos perfecti, sicut & Pater vester celestis perfectus est.*
Matth. 5. 48.

* *Ut sitis filii Patris vestri qui in cælis est.*
Matth. 5. 45.

nations, as you are. They fought against 'em continually, they overcame 'em, they gain'd a Crown of Glory; and our Mother the Church proposes their example to you, and Celebrates their Feasts, in order to encourage you to imitate 'em. And if you desire yet to have examples of those nearer related to you, consider your Brethren, who were born in the bosom of the same Mother as you were, that is to say, who were of the same order you are of: Look upon Saint Ignatius, Saint Xaverius, Saint Francis of Borgia, the great Edmund Campian, and so many others, that have flourish'd in the Society: Endeavour all you can to imitate 'em, and not become the shame of your Race and Society. He that with all these motives cannot be encourag'd to perform extraordinary Vertuous actions, but will still lag in a loose way of living, is it not true that he gives just cause of Indignation to his Father, who is God himself, and great occasion of scandal to his Brethren, and deserves that his Heavenly Father shou'd disown him, and his Brothers not acknowledge him?

For this reason therefore we say, that we must always form great resolutions, and raise our thoughts and hearts to actions of great Vertue; to the end, that if our weakness cannot carry us so far, we may not at least lag so much behind. Let us do in this, like Marchants, that ask a great deal more than the thing is worth, with design that the buyers may be induc'd to give 'em a just price: Or like good Referrees, who to bring the parties at difference, to a reasonable condescension, at first ask too much, that at last they may obtain what is sufficient. But what I desire you shou'd insist upon, is nothing too much, but only what is most just and equitable: Aim at what is perfect, that you may prevail with your self, to do that which is absolutely necessary, and purpose always the greatest things, that you may be able to perform what is competent: For if you design only that which is less perfect, and look no higher, you will never reach to what you pretended.

By this Discourse may be easily seen, how important it is, that in the Spiritual Exhortations we make, we shou'd never speak of any thing, but of that which is perfect in a high degree; as for example, if we Preach of Humility, it must be that sort of Humility which is most profound, and reaches to a true dis-esteem of our selves;

if

if we speak of Mortification, we must propose that which reduces all our Passions, to submit wholly to Reason; if we speak of conforming our Will to God, we must require a conformity, that leaves us no other Will, but that of Almighty God's; and that our Will be always such, as in all things resigns it self wholly to his, and places all its joy and content in that Divine Will; and in all sorts of Vertue, we must set forth and propose the noblest Ideas, we can frame of 'em; and carry matters to the highest pitch they can go: But to what purpose were it, say some, to Preach at this rate, to weak People, that are yet but Novices in Spiritual matters? If you propos'd to them things proportionable to their strength, and such as were easie to be put in practise, and within their reach, very probably they wou'd embrace 'em; but this sublime Perfection you propose, ravishes Men to the third Heaven, and is proper only for a Saint *Paul*, and for some few other great Saints, whom God has particularly chosen, to raise 'em to the highest degree of Glory and Perfection.

But you are extremely mistaken in this point; since this Discourse is more proper for you, and 'tis to you it ought to be address'd, for the same reason you alledge to dissuade me from it. You say you are weak, and that I ought not to propose to you, such high things as you are not yet able to attain unto: I answer, that because you are weak, I must represent to you, the most Perfect kind of Vertue and Devotion, that endeavouring and aiming always at what is best, you may not fall so short as not to accomplish at least what is your indispensable obligation; and for this end, 'twere very advantageous for you to read the Lives of Saints, and observe the most remarkable Vertues, wherein they excell'd; it being without doubt the intention of the Holy Church in proposing to us their Heroick Actions, to invite us by their example to rouse up our selves, and at least, to quit that sloth and stupid Lethargy, which has seiz'd us, in case we have not sufficient courage and resolution, to imitate 'em in their austere and holy way of living. There arises yet another advantage, from the reading of those Lives; which is, that by considering the great purity of these Saints, and how far we come short of it, we may have reason to be asham'd, and find just grounds of humbling our selves. This is the opinion of the great

Tom. I.

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Saint

† Greg. lib.
14. Mor. c. 9.
* Respiciet
homines, &
dicet peccavi.
Job. 33. 27.

† Hier. in
vita Pauli
Primi Ereem.

* Vidi Mo-
nachos, non
sum ego Mo-
nachus.
Macchar.

Saint Gregory; † for interpreting those words of Job,
* *He will look upon other Men, and then will say I
have Sinn'd*, he says, that as a poor Man is much more
sensible of his own Poverty, when he considers the
mighty Wealth and Treasures of rich Men; so the Soul
humbles her self more deeply, and may acknowledge her
own indigence with more reason, when she reflects upon
those great Examples the Saints have left us, and
those glorious Actions they have perform'd. Saint Hierom
reports, † that Saint Anthony having been to Visit
Saint Paul the first Hermit, and admiring the Holiness
of his Life, at his return being ask'd by his Disciples
where he had been, *Alas*, reply'd the Holy Man, *miser-
able Sinner that I am, I have no right to bear the Name
of a Religious Man; I have seen an Elias, I have seen
a Saint John Baptist in the Desert, when I beheld Paul in
in his Solitude.* We read also of the great Saint Ma-
carius, * that having seen the sublime perfection of some
Holy Hermits, whom he had visited; the Blessed Man wept,
saying to his Disciples, *I have seen real and true
Religious Men, but as for me, I deserve not the Name
of a Religious Man.* What these great Saints sayd out
of pure Humility, we may well say with a great deal
of Truth, if we only consider their's, and many other
Examples that liv'd before, or since their days. Let us
then throu'ly consider, the great Perfection they arriv'd
to, that we may be encourag'd, either to endeavour to
strive as they did, or if our strength fails us, that the
confusion and just shame, we must needs feel for being so
tardy, may supply in some measure, what is defective
by reason of our frailty; but whatever happens, the means
I here propose, cannot but prove very advantageous, to those
who put 'em in practise.

C H A P. IX.

How important 'tis for us, not to neglect the least helps; that may contribute to our Spiritual Advancement.

† **H**E that neglects small things, as 'tis in Ecclesiasticus, will by little and little fall into decay, the document contain'd in this saying, is of great importance to every body, especially to those who aspire to Perfection; for great things, by their apparent value, recommend themselves to our care, and we attend exactly to make the best we can of 'em; but 'tis very usual with us, to be careless in small things; because we fancy they are of no great consequence; and thus in the mean time we deceive our selves, it being very dangerous to neglect and fail in those lesser things; and therefore the Holy Ghost in this passage of Scripture declares to us, *that he who scorns and neglects small things, shall fall by little and little into great faults*: To convince us then of this truth, and to oblige us to be watchful, it might suffice, that God himself says so: But to the end, that this may make a deeper impression upon our minds, being treated a little more at large, let us consider the opinion heretofore of several great Saints on this subject. Saint Bernard says, * *That those who run into disorders and crimes of the highest nature, begin at first by committing small faults; and no body ever falls or plunges himself at first into an excess of wickedness*: That is to say, that commonly speaking, none ever arrive at first to the highest point of Vice or Vertue, but that Good and Evil insinuate themselves by degrees, and grow insensible in us. It happens in Spiritual, as it falls out in Corporal Diseases; both the one and the other encrease by little and little: So

† Qui spernit modica, paulatim decidet. Ecclesi. 19. 1.

* A minimis incipiunt, qui in maxima prouunt. Nemo repente fit summus. Ber. de ord. vit. & mor. instit.

† A minimis
incipiunt, qui
in maxima
proruunt. Ne-
mo repente fit
summus.

Ber. de ord.
vit. & mor.
instit.

that when you see a Religious Man commit some great fault, do not imagine, says the same Saint, † that his disease then begins; for none ever come to fall on a sudden into any enormous sin, after they have liv'd innocently, and vertuously for a great while; but they begin first by their negligence in those duties which they reckon as small, and then their Devotion growing cold, it diminishes daily more and more; insomuch that at last they deserve that God shou'd withdraw his Hand; and when they are no more upheld, they soon yield and fall under the first great Temptation that Attaques 'em.

* Cass. Collat.
6. Ab. Theod.
cap. 17.

Cassian * explicates this very well, by a very fit comparison, drawn out of Holy Scripture: Houses fall not to ruin upon a sudden, but the decay begins at first, by some gutter out of repair and neglected, by which the Rain by degrees rots the Timber that sustains the building, and in process of time it penetrates the Wall, softens the Morter, and at last undermines the very Foundation; so that the whole building tumbles down, perchance in one Night: † *By sloth and want of care*, says the Holy Ghost in *Ecclesiastes*, *the Roof of the House will come to sink, and for want of taking pains to repair it, will Rain throu'*. Every body knows, that for want of mending a gutter in time, and of looking carefully to the covering, or by neglecting a little reparation in the beginning; the whole building at last falls to the ground: Just so 'tis with us, says the same Author, a certain Natural inclination which we have to Evil, first flatters our Senses, and then gets ground, and insinuating it self into our Souls, shakes the firmness of our good resolutions, and at last so weakens and undermines the whole Foundation of our Piety, that all our Spiritual Edifice falls down in a moment. A little care and vigilance might in the beginning easily have prevented the growth of the evil; but because we neglected it when 'twas but small, and did not take care in time to correct such faults, as appear'd to us but inconsiderable; it happens that this shameful sloth and neglect, is the cause why we suffer our selves to be overcome by any Temptation which occurs; nay some thereby quit their Religious Order, and become miserable Renegad's and Apostats. I wou'd to God that sad experience had not taught us, that these woful examples are too frequent amongst us!

† In pigritiis
humiliabitur
contignatio;
& in infirmi-
tate manuum
peritillabit
domus.
Ecc. 10. 18.

Part. i. Of the Esteem of Spirituals.

45

In truth we have great reason to wonder, and withal to tremble at the same time, when we consider that the ruin of many who have fallen into this precipice, had its Origen from very poor and small occasions at first; all which happens by the great wile and craftiness of the Devil, who dares not attaque those that serve God, by tempting 'em in the beginning to omit things that are very essential, but begins with those that seem to be of little consequence, and so getting still insensibly some advantage, he gains at last his ends, even with more security, than if he had acted otherwise. For if at the first push he shou'd propose and Tempt us to a Mortal Sin, he wou'd quickly be discover'd and repuls'd: But by little and little insinuating himself, throu' slight omissions, and small faults, he gets into our Souls before we are aware. And 'tis for this reason Saint Gregory says, † that *Small faults are in some kind more dangerous than great ones.* Because great faults, as soon as we think on 'em, carry such a horror along with 'em, as obliges us to endeavour speedily to get up after we have fallen, and to be very circumspect in avoiding 'em for the future; but as to small faults, the less we perceive 'em, the less we thun 'em; and making no account of 'em we fall so often, that in time we get such a habit of 'em, as we seldom or never are able to root out; insomuch that the evil which seem'd nothing at first, grows and becomes incurable, throu' our neglect, and frequent relapses: Saint Chrysostom confirms the same, * when treating of this subject; he says, *I dare advance a proposition which will appear strange and unheard of. It seems to me that Men ought to be less vigilant in flying from great sins than in avoiding small faults; for the enormity of great sins naturally gives us a horror of 'em, but we are easily induc'd to admit little faults; by reason we fancy them not to be considerable: And the little account we make of 'em hindring our endeavours to correct our selves, they become at last so great by our negligence, that we have not the power generously to resist, and cast 'em off.*

† Greg. 3.
Past. adm. 24.

* Mirabile quidem, & inauditum dicere audeo: solent mihi nunquam non tanto studio magna vitanda vitanda, quanto parva, & vilia. Illa enim ut avertemur, ipsa peccati natura efficit, hæc autem hæc ipsare, quia parva sunt, desideria reddunt; & dum contemnuntur, maxima sunt

non potest ad expulsiorem eorum animus generose insurgere: unde citò ex parvis negligentia nostra. Chryf. hom. 87. sup. Matth.

This is the reason why the Devil chiefly makes use of this means to assault Religious Men, and those that serve God; knowing 'twill be more easie for him afterwards to make 'em fail in greater, and more essential Duties. What matter is it, says Saint Austin, † whether a Ship

† Quid enim interest ad naufragium

be

fragium, u-
trum uno gran-
di fluctu navis
operiatur &
obruatur, an
paulatim su-
brepens aqua
in sentinam &
per negligentiam
derelicta,
arque con-
tempta, imple-
at navim, at-
que submer-
gat?

Aug. ep. 118.
ad Seleuc.

† Ex mini-
mis guttis mul-
tiplicatis inun-
dationes aqua-
rum fiunt, quæ
etiam magna
aliquando
incensia subru-
unt. Per mo-
dicam rimam,
aqua latenter
in navem in-
fuit, donec
submergatur.

Ps. sup. illud
Psal. 66.
Et gentes in
terra dirigitis.

† Precausti
magna: de mi-
nibus quid
agis? an non
times minuta?
projectisti mo-
lem: vide ne
arena obrua-
rit.

Aug. sup. il-
lud Psal. 39. 13.
Multiplicata
sunt super ca-
pillis capitis
mei,

be swallow'd up by one great Wave, or whither the Waves
entering by little and little into the Hold, and there
neglected, sink at last the Vessel; the Devil do's
not care whither he enters into the Soul by this or that
breach, all being alike to him, provided he gains his
point, and brings you at last to Ship-wrack; Saint Bona-
venture says, † that of many small drops of Rain great
Torrents are form'd, which undermine and overthrow strong
Walls; and that a small chink by which the Water gets
into a Ship, causes oftentimes the loss of the Vessel:
Wherefore Saint Austin tells us, * that as, when
a Ship springs a leak, we must immediately fall to Pump,
and get out the Water, to prevent her sinking, so we
must by fervent Prayer, and strict Examining of our Con-
science continually endeavour to cast out, whatever imper-
fection or impurity is gotten in, which otherwise wou'd at last
procure our Ruin; this is the task, and ought to be the
continual exercise of a Religious Man; he must labor al-
ways to mend what is amiss, and put his hand conti-
nually to the Pump; otherwise he will be in great danger
of drowning. You are arm'd, says Saint Austin in ano-
ther place, † and well provided to defend your self against
great Sins, but what care do you take to avoid little faults;
are you not afraid also of them? You have already thrown
into the Sea those great Bales, which wou'd have sunk
your Ship; but take heed lest the small heap of Sand still
left in the bottom, do's not yet drown you: You have
happily escap'd all those great storms that blew so hard
against you, in this Tempestuous Sea of the World, but take
heed you suffer not Ship-wrack where you are in this Har-
bour of Religion; for as 'twould avail nothing for a Ship to
have weather'd all the storms and escap'd all the Rocks
at Sea, if it perishes in the Haven; so 'twould be of no
advantage to you to have resisted all the assaults of the
greatest Temptations, if afterwards you yield to lesser,
and thereby come at last to loose your Soul.

C H A P. X.

Another weighty Reason, which obliges us to set a great value upon the least thing that can contribute to our Spiritual Advancement; and evidences of how great consequence its performance ought to be to us.

ANOTHER very considerable reason why we shou'd apply our selves with great care and attention to the least thing, that may contribute to our perfection, is, that if we neglect it, 'tis to be fear'd, that God will refuse us those particular graces and assistance, we stand in need of, as well to preserve us from sin, as to assist us in arriving to the Perfection we aim at; for want of which we shall be expos'd to great danger. To comprehend this the better we must presuppose that Doctrine, which is deliver'd us by Saint Paul; that God never refuses that Supernatural assistance which is necessary and sufficient for every one, to overcome if he will, the strongest Temptation, † *God is faithful, says the Apostle, and will not suffer you to be tempted above your strength, but will afford such means during the Temptation, that you may be able to sustain it.* Besides this general assistance, which the Apostle here speaks of, there's yet another more particular, and tho' we might resist and overcome the Temptation without this particular grace, if we make that good use we ought of the general, yet it falls out too often, that we do not overcome the Temptation, unless God adds this particular grace. 'Tis not but that we might resist it if we wou'd; because the first general grace is sufficient, according to the Apostle, and we fall throu' our own fault, because we fall wilfully; yet we shou'd not have fallen, if at that time we had been assisted with that particular grace. But as this special and efficacious

† Fidelis autem Deus est, qui non patietur vos tentari supra id quod potestis, sed faciet etiam cum tentatione proveniunt, ut possitis sustinere, 1. Cor. 10. 13.

efficacious grace is a pure bounty and liberality of God's great Mercy, so he is not pleas'd to give it to all Men, nor upon all occasions, but only to whom he pleases, and to such as deal generously and liberally with him; according to those words of the Prophet, † *With the holy, you will be holy; with the innocent, you will be innocent; with the elect, you will be elect; and with the perverse, you will be perverted*: Another version has it, * *With the meek, you will be meek; with the liberal, you will be liberal; with those who deal sincerely and candidly, you are sincere and candid; and with those who are perverse and wicked, you are also perverse*, &c. Saint Ignatius in his Constitutions, declares the same to us where he says, † *The stricter union we make with God, and the more liberal we shew our selves to his Divine Majesty, the more bountiful we shall find him to us, and we shall become more capable of receiving daily from him more and more graces*; Saint Gregory Nazianzen also, * and many other Fathers of the Church, set forth the same Doctrine.

And that we may well understand what 'tis to be liberal towards Almighty God, we need but consider, what 'tis to be liberal towards Man: To be liberal, *Is to give to another more than we owe him, and more than we are oblig'd to give him*; for to render him barely that which is of right due to him, is not what we call liberality, but Justice. Whosoever then makes it his chief care to please God, not only in matters of duty and obligation, but also in those things that are of supererogation, and which tend to a more eminent Perfection (and this not only in great matters, but even in the smallest) he is sayd to be truly liberal towards God; and God in return will deal most liberally with him; for God is always pleas'd to make those that deal thus with him, his chief favorites, and pour's his blessings upon 'em in greater abundance; nor do's he only give 'em that general assistance, which is sufficient to resist Temptations, but he bestows upon 'em other efficacious and special graces, by means whereof they remain always Victorious in all attacques which the Devil makes against 'em; but if you are not liberal towards God, how can you expect he shou'd be so towards you, and if you continue narrow Hearted towards him, do you not deserve he shou'd return you the same Measure? If you are afraid to do too much, and will always have your Compasses in hand

† Cum sancto sanctus eris: & cum viro innocente, innocens eris; & cum electo electus eris; & cum perverso perversus.

Psalm. 17. 26.

* Cum benignus eris; cum liberali, liberalis eris; cum sincero & candido, sincere & candidè agis & cum perverso, perversè agis.

† Ign. Reg. 19. summ. conj.

* Greg. Naz. Orat. de paupert. amor. & Machab. Egypt. hom. 19.

hand to measure out what you are oblig'd to under pain of sin, and so try whether it be Mortal or Venial; infine, if you design to give God no more, than what precisely you imagine you owe him, you'll shew your self a Niggard, and oblige him to be the more sparing of his blessings towards you; for he will give you only what by his promise he is engag'd to give; that is to say, he will give you those general helps which he affords to every body; such helps as are necessary and sufficient to overcome Temptations, but you may with reason apprehend, that he will not furnish you with that special and efficacious grace he is wont to give, to those who deal more liberally with him; and 'tis to be fear'd, lest by the want thereof, you may come to yield to the Enemies assaults, and fall into some grievous offence.

'Tis in this sense we must understand, the general opinion of Divines and Holy Men, who say that a following sin, is usually the punishment of a former; because by our first sin, we render our selves unworthy of God's particular grace; and thereby come to fall easily into the second: They also say the same of Venial sins, and extend it even to very slight faults, and hold that such a neglect as we often fall into, is alone sufficient to render a Man unworthy of this special and efficacious grace, with which he should have overcome the temptation; for want of which he miserably falls. Some of 'em explicating the words of the Wise Man; * *He who neglects small things, will by little and little come to fall*, give the reason of it; because say they, by this neglect, we deserve to be depriv'd of the extraordinary assistance of God's grace, by the want of which, these cold and careless People, come afterwards to run into great sins. Divines also give the same interpretation to that passage in the *Apocalypse*: † *Because thou art neither hot nor cold, I will begin to vomit thee out of my Mouth*. God has not yet quite cast off the luke-warm Person; but he is upon the point to vomit him out; because of his carelessness, and of the faults he commits with deliberation: Which tho' they seem small, yet they are the occasion that God withdraws his efficacious grace, of which being destitute, a sinner will certainly fall into greater sins, and will be absolutely vomited out, and at last rejected.

Let us then consider well the great reason we have to fear, lest by our neglect and coldness, we render our

Tom. I.

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selves

† Aug. serm. 224. de temp. post. med. & serm. 38. prope init. & in illud. Psal. 66. 5. Et gentes in terra dirigis. Hier. ad Coland. epist. 1. Chrys. in ca. 2. Gen. hom. 2. & hom. 87. in Matth. & serm. de lev. peccat. peric. Bern. serm. 59. in Cant. Isid. lib. 2. de sum. bono. Basil. orat. 3. de jejunio, prope init. & in regul. brevior. q. 4. Greg. lib. 10. Mor. cap. 14. & 3. par. Pastor. adm. 34. Tb. 1. 2. q. 88. art. 3. & alii.

* Qui spernit modica, paulatim decidet. Eccl. 19. 2. † Quia tepidus es, incipiam te vomere ex ore meo. Apoc. 3. 16.

selves incapable and unworthy of this special grace from God. How often do we find our selves tempted and in great danger to fall, and how often are we reduc'd to that pass, that we doubt and fear whether we linger'd and took delight in a sinful object, or no; whether we consented to a bad thought or no; and whether by that consent we did not form a Mortal sin in our Hearts? How great an advantage shou'd we procure in this dubious state or condition, if having deal'd generously and liberally with God, we had deserv'd and earn'd at his hands that special grace, which proceeds from his meer bounty, and wou'd infallibly have supported us against the violence of the Temptation, without which grace we shou'd not only have found our selves in great danger of falling, but in all probability had been actually overcome.

Saint *Chrysostom* observes, that this course is very proper and efficacious for the resisting and overcoming Temptations, when speaking of our Enemy the Devil, and of the continual War he makes against us, he says: † *You know that we have an irreconcilable Enemy, from whom we must expect neither Peace nor Truce, so that if we intend not to be overcome, we must stand continually upon our guard. But what shall we do, that we may not only prevent being surpris'd, but also overthrow our Enemy? Would you know it? Says the Saint, * The only means to overcome him, is to merit and obtain assistance from Heaven, by the Purity and Innocency of our Lives; for by that means, we shall always become Victorious.* Observe also that the Saint says, *this is not only the best, but the only means we have, whereby to effect it:* Saint *Basil* gives us the same advice: † *That Man, says he, that desires and expects assistance from God, must never fail of performing his duty in the best manner he can, and if he carries himself so, the Divine assistance will never fail him; wherefore we must take great care that our own Consciences have nothing to reproach us.* By this Saint *Basil* plainly shews us, that the conclusion we ought to draw from this advice, is to resolve to perform all our Spiritual Exercises, and our other actions with so much attention and exactness, that our own Conscience, do's not accuse us of any failing in 'em; and that by this means we may earn that special grace, which we stand in so great need of for our Salvation. 'Tis therefore plain, that 'tis of great concern to us to be very careful of, and

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† Scitis enim quod hostem habemus perpetuum, & fœderis neficium, unde nobis magna vigilantia opus est.

Chrys. hom. 60. sup. Gen.

* Non aliter autem cum vincemus, quam si per vitam optimam supernum nobis auxilium conciliemus. *Id. ibid.*

† Qui à Deo se optat juvari, is nunquam deserit quod se decet ad officium suum; qui autem hoc facit, is divino auxilio numquam destituitur; quapropter danda in eo opera est, ne ulla in re conscientia nos condemnet. *Basil. in cons. Mon. cap. 1.*

Part. 1. Of the Esteem of Spirituals.

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to set a great value upon small things; if those things may be call'd small, that are capable either of procuring us the greatest happiness, or of drawing upon us the greatest of miseries imaginable. This made the Wise Man say, † *He that fears God, neglects nothing*; because he knows that from small faults, Men fall by little and little into great crimes, and is afraid, that if he deals liberally with God, his Divine Majesty will cease to deal liberally with him.

† Qui times Deum, nihil negligit. Eccl. 7. 19.

To conclude, I say this point is so essential, and so necessary to be observ'd by every good Christian, that we ought to hold it for a general maxim, that as long as we consider the smallest things in Devotion, as matters of great consequence, all will go well with us; and we shall procure the blessing of God by it; and on the other side, if we come to neglect those small things, we shall expose our selves to great danger; for 'tis only by that carelessness and neglect, that sin can find entrance into the Soul of a Religious person. This is what our Blessed Saviour intimated to us, when he sayd, * *He that is faithful in the least will also be faithful in the greater, and he that is unjust in little, will also be unjust in the greater things*. When therefore you desire to know, whether you advance in Vertue, or no, which is a concern you ought often to reflect upon, examin well whether you are exact in small things, or whether you take the liberty to neglect 'em; and if you find that you make no account of 'em, and that your Conscience at the same time do's not reproach you, as it was wont to do, when you were accusom'd to omit 'em, be sure to remedy that neglect with all possible care, as soon as you can. Saint Basil says, † *That the Devil, when he cannot prevail to make us quite forsake our Religion, endeavours all he can, to persuade us at least, not to aim at great perfection, and not to think upon small things; in hopes to deceive us by a vain confidence, that the neglect of such things, cannot deprive us of God's holy grace*. But we on our part must endeavour to act so, that it may be no less impossible for him to divert us from Perfection, than to separate us from Religion; for which end we must always aspire at becoming perfect; and set a great value, and particular esteem, upon the least thing that may contribute to our Perfection.

* Qui fidelis est in minimo, & in majori fidelis est; & qui in modico iniquus est, & in majori iniquus est. Luc. 16. 10.

† Bas. ser. de renunt. saculi istius & spir. perfect.

G 2

CHAP.

C H A P. XI.

That the business and concern of our Spiritual Advancement, is not to be undertaken in general, but in particular; and of how great importance it is to put in execution those good designs, wherewith God inspires us.

^u *Cass. vol. 5.*
cap. 3. & 4.

THE great Masters of Spirit tell us, that one of the best means, that will contribute much to our advancement, is, to make it our chief care to improve our selves not only in our general, but also in our particular Actions. *Cassian* reports † that the Abbot *Moyse*, one day in a Spiritual conference ask'd his Religious, *What it was that they pretended, and aim'd at by all their Praying, Fasting, Watching and other Mortifications?* And when they answer'd; that it was the Kingdom of Heaven, he reply'd, *I know very well, that Heaven is your great object, and last end;* but I ask now, *What is the immediate and particular object you aim at, whereby to arrive at your last and great end?* For as a Husband-man whose principal aim is to reap a plentiful crop of Corn, applies all his care to Cultivate his Land well, and to clear it of all Weeds; because those are necessary means which he must use in order to obtain what he desires: And as a Marchant, who aspires at nothing else, but to grow Rich, applies all his thoughts to consider what particular Commerce may best conduce to encrease his Estate; and then employs all his stock, and his industry in that way of Traffick: So, tho' the main business of a Religious Man be to work his own Salvation, nevertheless 'will not suffice him to undertake it in the gross: 'Twill not be enough for him to

to say in general, I intend to save my Soul; I will be a good Religious Man; or I desire to become Perfect; but he must consider in particular, what Passion, or what Vice stands most in his way, and what particular Vertue he stands chiefly in need of; and he must labor continually about these two Points; so that advancing by little and little, and observing carefully, and reflecting now upon one action, and afterwards upon another, he may the more easily attain to what he pretends. An Ancient Father in the Desert, gave the same advice to a certain Anachoret; who after he had for a long time been very diligent and fervent in his Devotion, grew at last to be negligent in his Spiritual Exercises, insomuch that he became very cold and comfortless in 'em; but at length desiring and laboring to recover his former Fervor, he found himself at a loss, and cou'd not find any means to obtain it; at which time the good Father to comfort and encourage him, told him this Parable. A certain Man, says he, sent his Son, to stub up and cleanse a Field he had, which was all cover'd and over-run with Briers and Thorns; the Son seeing what a great task his Father had set him, lost courage, and fell asleep the first day, and so the second in the same manner; for which his Father reprehending him, told him, Son you must not look upon this work altogether and in a lump, as if you were oblig'd to do it all at once, but you must every day undertake so much as you can easily compass that day, and the Son following his Fathers advice, the whole Field was clear'd in a little time.

But that which most of all hinders our improvement in Piety, and our daily receiving new graces from Almighty God, is, because we do not put those inspirations and good desires he gives us in execution; so that by the ill use we make of his gifts, we are the chief cause why he shuts his hands, and uses the same method with us, in the affair of our Perfection, as a writing Master do's with his Scholars; who till they form their first Letters well, according to the example he gives 'em, will not let 'em have any new Copy. As long as we delay the employing well those graces which God has giv'n us, so long do's he defer the giving of us any new ones, and the more we endeavour to put those good inspirations in practise, which he sends us at our time of Prayer, the more he is inclin'd

to

† M. Avila
lib. 3. de las
ep. fol. 241.

to bestow his Heavenly gifts with greater liberality upon us. Dr. Avila says, † that he who makes good use of those lights which God gives him, shall obtain a new access of lights from God, but he that neglects to make good use of those lights he has already receiv'd, can have no right to ask for new ones; for he may be justly answer'd, wherefore do you desire to know God's Will, since you will not accomplish it in those things wherein you already know it? If you will not practise those good desires which God has given you, how can you expect that he shou'd give you more and greater? With what confidence can you beg in your Prayers, that God shou'd afford you such a thing, which you find you very much want, if you will not correct your self in such faults as you ought most necessarily to amend, and of which you have been so often put in mind, and inspir'd to correct your self? I cannot comprehend how any Man that continues wilfully and with deliberation in one fault, tho' it be but small, can lift up his Eyes, or open his Mouth, to beg of Almighty God, new and extraordinary favors. If we desire and intend to obtain 'em, let us be careful to put in Execution those holy inspirations, he sends us.

'Tis a common opinion, and approv'd by all Holy Men, that he who makes good use of the grace he has receiv'd, deserves to receive new ones; and that on the other side, he who has not well employ'd the first, becomes unworthy of any more. Salomon in his Book of Wisdom gives a very good reason, why the Manna which indur'd and resisted the violence of the Fire, did smelt and corrupt at the appearance of the first Beam of the Sun. * 'Tis O Lord, says he, that all the World might know, that we must be early and prevent the Sun, to reap the fruit of your Blessings; and in punishment of the slothful (who wou'd not prevent the rising Sun, to receive the profit of God's Bounty towards 'em) he permitted, that the first Beam cast upon the Manna, shou'd deprive 'em of their food for all that day. The same is most admirably well represented to us in the Gospel, by the Parable which our Saviour proposes of a Noble Man, who designing to go into a remote Country, to take Possession of a Kingdom, call'd his Servants and divided his Mony amongst 'em, that they might employ and mannage it while he was absent, † and having demanded an account of 'em

* Ut notum
omnibus esset,
quoniam o-
portet prae-
venire Solem ad
benedictionem
tuam.
Sap. 16. 28.

† Luc. 19. 32.

at

at his return, he establish'd 'em Governors of as many Cities, as they had gain'd Talents: He gave the government of ten Cities, to him that had gain'd ten Talents, and to him that had gain'd five Talents, he gave the government of five other Cities; which shews us, that as this Noble Man was pleas'd to recompense the fidelity and industry of his Servants, with such excessive liberality, as to give him that had gain'd ten Talents, the rule of ten Cities; so Almighty God, if we make good use of the inspirations he sends us, and are faithful in corresponding with 'em, will bestow his grace, and blessings upon us in great plenty; and on the other side, in case we do not correspond as we ought, with the grace he first affords us, we shall not only have that grace taken away from us, but shall also be severely punish'd, as the unprofitable Servant was, who had made no profit, of the first Talent he had receiv'd.

They say of *Apelles*, that whatsoever business he had, he never pass'd one day without exercising himself in his own profession, by Painting something or other; and for that end, he always borrow'd some time from all other employments, and to excuse himself from company he was accusom'd to say, *To day I have not as yet, drawn one stroke with my Pencil*; by which means he became a most excellent Painter. In the same manner, you may become an excellent Religious Man, if you suffer no day to pass, without giving some stroke with your Pencil; that is, without making some progress in Virtue: Mortifie your self every day in something or other; and every day correct some one fault or other, you were us'd to commit, and so you will quickly find, that your Life will become daily more and more perfect: When you come to examin your self at Noon, and find that you have done nothing that Morning to improve your self, that you have Mortifi'd your self in nothing, that you have perform'd no act of Humility in those occasions that offer'd themselves; believe that you have lost that time, and resolve not to let the rest of the day pass in the same manner: And you shall find that 'tis impossible to observe this rule, without gaining ground by little and little, and making in time, a very considerable progress in the way of Perfection.

C H A P. XII.

*To attain to Perfection, 'tis necessary that we
shou'd never wittingly and deliberately com-
mit any fault; and that we shou'd
not relent in our labors, and endea-
vours, to become Perfect.*

TO attain to that Perfection, which during our Lives we ought to aspire unto, 'tis of great importance, that we shou'd always be careful, not to commit wilfully any kind of fault; and this being suppos'd, we must understand that there are two sorts of Venial Sins: The one sort, is that into which those who fear God most, do often fall throu' frailty, ignorance, and at unawares; and yet most commonly there is a little negligence mixt with these frailties; but as to such faults as these, they who serve God, and walk in his sight with an upright heart, daily find they have great reason rather to humble, than afflict themselves for 'em, and that God do's not for all that, turn away his Face from 'em, but on the contrary, affords 'em still his Divine grace, and fortifies 'em with a new Spirit, when vpon any of these occasions, they humbly address themselves to him; but there is another sort of Venial Sins, into which those who are slack and cold in God's Service, do wilfully and deliberately fall; and their faults, are a very great obstacle and hinderance, from receiving those graces, which God out of his infinite goodness wou'd otherwise bestow upon us, if we committed not these Sins: Which also are the occasion, that we find no gust or comfort in our Prayer; and that Almighty God ceases to afford us those graces, which he was accusom'd to give; so that if we intend to advance in Christian Perfection, and engage Almighty God to continue his favors towards us, we must be very careful in not committing any wilfull fault, and

and deliberately. Those that we daily commit throu' ignorance, and without reflection, are but too many, and therefore we need not multiply greater faults; what we commit in our Prayer, by the Natural inconstancy, and wandering of our imagination are but too great, without willingly diverting our mind to other objects: And the faults which throu' frailty we often commit, contrary to what is requir'd by the exactness of our Rule and Profession are such, that we need not add our consent, thereby to aggravate our guilt.

Saint *Basil* prescribes us another help to arrive to Perfection, and says, 'twill much contribute, to our advancement in a small time; which is, to make no stop in the way of Vertue. There's a certain sort of People, who have sometimes fits of Zeal and Devotion, but of a sudden make a halt; be sure not to imitate these; but go on constantly in your way; and remember that in your Spiritual carrear, you will become more tir'd in making a halt than if you continu'd your March: For 'tis not the same in Spiritual exercises, as in the Corporal: The Body is weaken'd and spent by continual labor; † *but the more the Soul acts, the more vigor and force it gets*, according to the Latin Proverb, which says, * *that the Bow too much bent breaks, and the mind being left too much relax'd suffers dammage.*

† Caro operando deficit, spiritus operando proficit.
* Arcum frangit intentio, animum remissio.

Saint *Ambrose* says, † that as 'tis far easier to preserve our Innocence, than truly to Repent; so 'tis easier to persevere in the fervor of our Devotion, than to recover it after a short discontinuance. When the Smith has taken his Bar of Iron out of the Fire red hot, to forge it to the shape he desires, he never lets it grow quite cold; but puts it again into the Fire as soon as he can, that it may the sooner grow hot, and fit for the Hammer to work upon as before; in the same manner ought we to take care, that the warmth in our Devotion be not extinguish'd; for if the Heart once grow cold, and begins to harden, we shall find it very hard to warm and soften it a new. For we find by experience, that tho' Men are never so well advanc'd in Vertue, yet if once they come to abate and discontinue their exercises of Piety, they loose in few days, what they had been getting a long time; and when they endeavour to bring themselves to it again, they find such difficulty and contradictions in the attempt, that they seldom or never can attain to that degree of

Amb. lib. un.
de pen. cap. 10.

Tom. I,

H

Perfection,

Perfection, to which they were before arriv'd; on the contrary, they who go on with fervor, and endeavour still to maintain heat in their Devotion, and persevere in their Spiritual Exercises, do not only preserve themselves with ease in that state of perfection they had before attain'd unto, but also advance a great way in a short time. So that they loose no time, nor deminish what they have once got, as negligent and cold People do, who labor by fits, and then give over; whereby they pass all their Life time in doing, and undoing; setting up and pulling down; without ever bringing any of their designs to Perfection. But the Fervent, far from undoing, labor continually without ever thinking of repose; and getting daily new force by means of their continual practise and Exercise, and still finding greater facility even in their greatest undertakings, they advance every day more and more in Vertue; thus both the one and the other, do alike verifie in themselves that saying of the Wise Man; † *The Hand of him that works lastly produces want, but the Hand of the strong Man gets Riches.* * And, *The Soul of those that labor shall grow Fat.*

† Egestatem operata est manus remissa; manus autem fortium autem divitias parat. Prov. 10. 4.

* Anima autem operantium impinguabitur. Prov. 13. 4.

A great Servant of God was wont to compare the Religious who were tepid, and those who were fervent; to two sorts of Courtiers; and sayd, that those luke-warm Religious who imagin'd, that because they were of long standing, they had just reason to give themselves ease, and not to incommode themselves in advancing higher; were like those old Domesticks, who had no longer any employment in the Princes Family, and were allow'd a place in his Palace, only because they had formerly serv'd there, but receiv'd no preferment from the Prince, nor were hardly admitted into his presence. But the fervent Religious, were like those wise and active Young Courtiers, that waited continually, and apply'd all their thoughts to discover what was most pleasing to their Prince, and by their great diligence and care, insinuated themselves so far into his favor and good will, that they rais'd themselves at last to a very great Fortune.

C H A P. XIII.

Of three other means that conduces to our farther advancement in Vertue.

SAINTE *Basil* and several other Holy Men, teach us, that in order to acquire Perfection, 'tis very advantageous, to consider those persons who are most Perfect, and always to propose 'em to our selves, as patterns for our imitation. Saint *Anthony* gave the same advice, and was wont to say, that as the Bee settles upon all sorts of Flowers, and sucks the most exquisit vertue and pure Spirits from each of 'em to make Hony; so a Religious Man ought to observe every one of his Community, and learn from the one Modesty, from another Silence, from a third Fervor, from a fourth Obedience and Resignation, and infine, to copy out that which he finds most commendable in each of 'em, whereby to make a model to form himself after; for so Saint *Anthony* us'd to do himself, and by that means became so great a Saint. And without doubt, good example is of so great an advantage, that 'tis one of the chief benefits we have in Religion. So when Saint *Hierom* advis'd Men to live in a Community, rather than in Solitude, * 'Twas to the end, as he sayd, that they might learn Humility from one, and Patience from another; that one might teach 'em to keep Silence, and another instruct 'em how to become Meek and Tractable. *Charillus* King of *Lacedamon*, being ask'd what sort of Commonwealth he thought the best, That, sayd he, wherein the Citizens live without any quarrels and Sedition, and strive with emulation who shall become most Vertuous. We are all assembl'd in Religion under so happy a form of government, that it differs from, and excels all other governments in the World. For in the government of *Charillus* Men labor'd and apply'd themselves wholly to get

*Basil. ser. de
abbat. rerum.*

* Ut ab alio
discas humili-
tatem, ab alio
patientiam: hic te silen-
tium, ille te
doceat man-
suetudinem.

Wealth, Honor, and Preferment, and you'll scarce find any such pains undertaken in the purchase of vertue. But in Religion all their study, is to deny their own Humor; all their application, is to find the means whereby to grow more Perfect; every one lives in Peace and Charity, without contention, and without noise and murmuration; and what they do all joyn in, is, to strive who shall be most Obedient, most Humble, and most Vertuous. Certainly 'tis no small favor that God has done us, in calling us to a place where Vertue alone finds esteem; where neither Doctor nor Preacher are valu'd for their great Talents in knowledge or Eloquence; but for Humility and Mortification; where every one endeavours to advance in Vertue; and where infine by mutual Example, they encourage one another to live well. Let us then make profit of so fair an opportunity to become Perfect; and making good use of the examples we daily receive from our Brethren, let us reflect that we are oblig'd also to edifie 'em by our example.

This is the second means I am to propose in this Chapter; and the better to know its benefit and importance, we need only consider in what manner our Saviour speaks of it in the Gospel, † *Let your light, says he, so shine before Men, that they may see your good Works and glorifie your Father who is in Heaven.* Every one sufficiently knows what force Example has; a true Religious Man by his example do's more good in his Community, than all the Sermons and Exhortations in the World can do; because Men are much more mov'd with what they see, than with what they hear; and being easily convinc'd that the thing is practicable, when they see another do it; they are mightily encourag'd to undertake it: That flapping of Wings, of which the Prophet *Ezekiel* speaks, when he says, * *that He heard the Voice of the Wings of living Creatures striking one against another,* is properly the good example, by which you touch your Brothers heart, and move it to piety and compunction, and hereby you inspire him with a fervent desire of Perfection.

Saint *Bernard* confesses, that after his first entring into Religion, the very sight of some Religious Men, who were full of Zeal and Charity, nay even the remembrance of 'em, when they were absent or Dead, brought him so great a joy and comfort, and inspir'd him with such

† Sic luceat lux vestra coram hominibus, ut videant opera vestra bona, & glorificent Patrem vestrum qui in cælis est.

Matth. 5. 16.

* Et audivi vocem alarum animalium percutientium alteram ad alteram.

Ezech. 3. 13.

such tender thoughts of God, that oftentimes Tears fell from his Eyes in very great abundance: † *The memory of Josias, says the holy Scripture, spreads a sweet odor, like that of the most exquisite composition of the Perfumer*; such were the good Religious, of whom Saint Bernard speaks: And we ought to endeavour to become such, according to the Words of the Apostle, * *We are the good Odor of JESUS CHRIST.* Let us then in effect be like a Box of Perfume, that freely communicates its sweetness, and both pleases and fortifies all that touch it; and above all, let us be very careful not to give any occasion of Scandal or bad Example to any of our Brethren. A Religious Man of a good and exemplar Life, is a great help to a Community; he may so far edifie all the rest, as to make 'em imitate him; but a bad Religious Man do's a great deal of harm: He alone is capable of ruining a whole Community; and will so much the more easily bring it into disorder; because our inclinations being far more strongly bent to evil than to good, Example is far more powerful to carry us to evil, than to persuade us to what is good.

Almighty God commanded in *Deuteronomy*, that when the People of *Israel*, were ready to joyn Battle with their Enemies, the Captains shou'd cause it to be proclam'd thro'out the whole Army, † *That whosoever was afraid and faint hearted, shou'd be gone, and return home, lest he shou'd impart his fear to his Brethren.* The example of a cold and tepid Religious Man, is of the same bad consequence in Religion; he inspires, his coldness and neglect into the rest, and makes 'em more fearful and feeble in all they undertake to acquire Perfection. Wherefore *Eusebius* says well, * *That those who have chosen to live in a Community, either benefit a great many others by the holiness of their Life, or else hurt 'em by their loose Life and ill conduct.*

We may add a third means to what we have already say'd, which may help much for attaining our end; 'Tis the obligation we have to give good example, not only to our Brethren with whom we daily converse, but also to all others in general; lest the whole Order com's to loose its good Reputation, by reason of the Scandal giv'n by any particular Member: For Men in the World often judge of all Religious by the actions of one of

† Memoria Josie in compositionem odoris facta, opus pigmenti. 2. Cor. 1. 1.

* Christi bonus odor sumus. 2. Cor. 2. 15.

† Quis est homo formidolosus, & corde pavido? vadat, & revertatur in domum suam, ne pavore faciat corda fratrum suorum, sicut ipse timore perterritus est.

Deut. 20. 8.

* Qui inter multos vitam agere constituerunt, aut cum grandi fructu, aut cum grandi periculo, vel etiam diligenter, vel negligenter sunt. Euseb. Emist. lib. 7. ad Mon.

of 'em ; and easily attribute to the whole Body , the disorder which they discover in any particular Member ; as if his fault were a kind of Original Sin , and a defect common to all the rest : Therefore every Religious Man is oblig'd to take great care to edifie his Neighbor , that by this means the reputation of the whole Order may be preserv'd and encreas'd ; and to this end we must imagine that the Eyes of all the World are upon us , † that *We are made a spectacle to the World , to the Angels , and to Men* , and that altho they have no reason to impute the faults of one Man to a whole Order ; yet 'tis certain , that the whole body consists of particular Men ; and that consequently the growth or decay of that body , entirely depends upon the good or ill conduct of each particular Member : Let every one therefore continue firm in his post , like a good Soldier ; let him take care lest the Battallion be broken throu' his fault ; let him take heed lest looseness be introduc'd into Religious discipline by his irregularity ; and infine , let him imagine that in Religion his Mother addresses her self to him , in the same language , the Mother of the *Machabees* address'd her self to her youngest Son , encouraging him to suffer and to Die courageously for the observance of the Law , * *My Son , sayd she , have pity on me , who carry'd you nine Months in my Womb , gave you Milk for three Years , nourish'd , and bred you to this Age you are now in : All the return I desire from you , is that you do not ruin your self and me , and that you employ not those Armes I gave you for the preservation of your self and Neighbor , against your self and me ; and infine , that that which thou'd render you more humble and vertuous , makes you more ungrateful , more proud , and more disorderly.*

† Spectaculum facti sumus mundo , & Angelis , & hominibus .
1 Cor. 4. 9.

* Fili mi , miserere mei , quæ te in utero novem mensibus portavi , & lactu triennio dedi , & alui , & in ætatem istam perduxi .
1 Mach. 7. 27.

C H A P. XIV.

*That we shou'd behave our selves all our Life time
in Religion, after the same manner we did
the first day we enter'd into it.*

AN Ancient Religious Man asking the Abbot, *Agatho*, how he shou'd behave himself in Religion, the good Abbot answer'd him, † *That he shou'd remember how he had behav'd himself the first day, after he had left the World, and was receiv'd into the Convent; and that he shou'd continue to do still, as he had done then; If then you desire to know the most proper means, how to continue always a good Religious Man, and improve much in Vertue; reflect well upon that disposition you were in, when you first left the World, and enter'd into Religion; and endeavour to continue always in the same State. Consider with what Zeal and Courage you then renounc'd all the World cou'd afford you, your Parents, your Friends, Riches, Pleasures, and all the conveniencies of this Life. Persever and retain still the same contempt of the World, and of all its Pleasures, the same forgetfulness of your Parents, and of all other conveniencies of this Life, and in this manner you will become a good Religious Man. Call to mind also with what earnestness and Humility you begg'd to be admitted into Religion, and remember, that the same day you were assur'd thereof, you thought the gates of Heaven had been open'd, to let you in; remember what acknowledgment you then made; and how highly you conceiv'd your self oblig'd both to God, and to Religion. Persist in the same thoughts of Humility and Spiritual comfort; be convinc'd that you are still under the same obligations, as you were the first day; and in this manner you cannot miss of making great progress. In fine, think often with what Modesty and Devotion you behav'd*
your

† Vide qualis fueris primo die, quando existi de sæculo, & receptus fuisti in clauetro; & talis permane semper.

your self at first after your Admittance; remember how Obedient, how Humble, how fervent, how Exact, and how resign'd you were then; continue always the same, and you'll daily improve more and more, and continually encrease in Vertue and Perfection.

This means is thus recommended by holy Men, as I shall shew hereafter; but first 'tis very necessary, well to explicate its meaning: I do not mean hereby, that you need not be more Perfect now, than you were the first day you enter'd into Religion, or that any Ancient Religious Man shou'd content himself with the Vertue of a Novice; for Religious Orders are the Schools of Perfection; he that has frequented 'em longer, ought to have learn'd, and improv'd himself more, than he who enter'd 'em later; and as in Human Sciences, he that has Study'd ten Years, ought to know more than he who newly begins his Studies; so a Religious Man who has labor'd for a long time to advance himself in Vertue, ought without doubt to have made greater progress in his profession, than one who is but newly enter'd into Religion: But, as a Young Student, who at first was very diligent in his Studies, and comes to grow idle, is told that if he pretends to become Learn'd, he must continue to take his business still as much to Heart, as he did at the beginning; so what I intend, by that which is sayd before, is, that you shou'd continue in your self the same fervor, you brought with you when you first enter'd into Religion, and put your self into the way of Vertue: With what Zeal and Resolution, did you then begin to serve God? Nothing cou'd then put a stop to you, nothing seem'd hard; Re-assume the same fervor now; pursue your great affair with the same courage, and by this means you will make great progress in Vertue; this is that which Holy Men wou'd have us understand, by the expedient I last spoke of.

Saint *Abbanasius* tells us that Saint *Anthony*, being desir'd by his Disciples to give 'em some advice, concerning their Spiritual advancement, began his Discourse to them in these words; † *What I must first recommend to you all in general, is, that you never relent in that fervor, with which you first embrac'd a Religious Life; but that you still go on, always encreasing it, as if you did but now begin.* He repeated the same advice to them upon several, other occasions, and the better to imprint it in their

† Hoc sit primum cunctis, & commune mandatum; nullum in arrepti propositi vigore lassescere, sed quasi incipientem debere semper augere quod coeperit. *Arban. & Surin, tom. 1. pag. 386.*

their minds, when he was near his Death, he enjoyn'd 'em the same thing, as his last Will and Testament, in such Pathetick words, as express'd in him, the tenderness of a Father. † As to me, says he, my dear Children, I am shortly, entering into the way of my fore-fathers, according to the Scripture expression; for our Lord already calls me to him, and I have a longing desire to see my Heavenly Country: But before I go, I must mind ye of one thing. That if ye will not loose the fruit of all the time ye have already spent, and of all the pains and hard labor, ye have undergone, ever since ye enter'd into Religion; you must imagine that ye begin only, to day, to embrace a Religious Life: And must live so, that the Fervor and Zeal which ye had at your first entrance, may daily increase and gather new strength. If therefore you have a desire to advance in Vertue, bear this continually in your mind; and suppose that you are every day to begin anew, and always to continue that same fervor, with which at first you began; by which means you will find it very easie to become a good Religious Man.

* Ego quidem, filioſi, ſecundum e-
loquia Scrip-
turarum, gra-
dior viam Pa-
trum. Jam e-
nim Dominus
me invitat,
jam cupio vi-
dere cœleſtia.
Sed vos, ô
viſcera mea,
admoneo, ne
tanti temporis
laborem re-
pentē perdatiſ.
Hodie vos re-
ligioſum ſtu-
dium arripuiſſe
arbitramini, ut
ceptæ volun-
tatiſ Fortitudo
ſuccreſcat.

Saint Austin proposes another means, of which we have treated in one of the precedent Chapters. * Forger, says he, all that is past, and imagine that every day you do but begin. But to return to what we have cited of Saint Anthony, he was us'd to explicate it by a familiar example, and sayd, that We ought to apply the same care and diligence in God's service, as a good Servant does, in the concerns of his Master. A good Servant, tho he has serv'd his Master many Years, and taken great pains and care in his affairs, yet he never refuses to do whatever lies in his power for him; but on the contrary rejoyces to receive his Masters commands, and performs 'em with the same willingness and readineſs, as he did the first day, he enter'd into his service. This Saint Bernard himself practis'd, he believ'd that all other Religious Men were arriv'd at the height of Perfection, and being come to the end of their course, they might very well diſpenſe with themselves in many things: (which is indeed an excellent antidote against judging rashly of others) But as for himself, he always imagin'd that he was as yet but a Novice, and that 'twas not for him to take upon him the same liberty, nor to use the same priviledges, which others might do; and for that reason he never abated any thing of the exactneſs and rigor of

† Oblivisce-
re ergo omnia
præteritum, &
quotidie in-
choare te
puta.
Aug. cap. 143.
ad Dem. viiij.

his Rule; nor exempted himself from any of the meanest Offices of his Monastery. He was always the most forward in doing whatsoever Obedience prescrib'd; the first in sweeping the Cloyster, the first in washing the Dishes; and when it happen'd that he was not well vers'd, or could not do something he saw others do; he presently endeavour'd to repair that defect, by taking some other work in hand, that was far meaner, than what his Brethren were employ'd about: He either took a Spade to dig the Garden, or an Axe to cleave Wood, which afterwards he carry'd to the Kitchin; and took great delight in these Offices, because he really believ'd he had very great need of practising 'em for his Spiritual advancement. There are many now a days not of his mind, who when they are employ'd in such Offices, say, that good example may perhaps require it, but otherwise they do not think these practises necessary. I do not say, but that 'tis good to do such things for the example and edification of others; but that were better to believe, that we ought to do them for our own advancement; seeing Saint *Bernard* was persuaded, that he had need of 'em for his.

But to clear that which we have already cited out of Saint *Anthony*, we must observe one thing more; which is, that the Saint was not satisfi'd, that we shou'd abate any thing of that fervor we brought at first; but requir'd that we shou'd continually endeavour to encrease it, by growing still better and better, and as if we did then only begin: Just as a Man who is but newly enter'd into God's service, and sees hitherto he has done nothing else but offended him, add's therefore every day penance upon penance, in order to make satisfaction for his past Offences, and render himself worthy of reward for the future. In the same manner, ought we daily to apply our selves, to gain, and lay up new Treasures for Heaven, as if hitherto, we had gather'd nothing, but rather done our best to waste, and loose 'em.

This is the means Saint *Gregory* thinks most convenient for all sorts of People, nay even for the most Perfect; and as Perfect as the holy Prophet *David* was, he did not for all that, forbear to make use of it; as he signifies himself in these words, † *I sayd to my self, now I do but begin*: He had so much fervor and zeal for God's service, that even in his Old Age, he continu'd the same fervent desire and diligence

Sed quasi
incipientem
debere semper
augere quod
coeperit.

Greg. lib. 22.
Mor. cap. 2.

† Et dixi:
Nunc coepi.
Psal. 76. 11.

to serve God, as if he had but then began to serve him: And 'tis clear by the saying of the Wise Man, *† When a Man shall have finish'd his task, then he shall begin anew*; the more the true Servants of God advance and approach to their end, which is Perfection; the more they encrease in fervor, and their activity is redoubl'd. * For as Saint Gregory says, *Men who are digging for a great Treasure, the deeper they have digg'd, the more earnestly and diligently they go on still in their work; for hoping they are not far from what they look'd for, they imagine that a little more pains will bring 'em to it; and by these hopes they encourage themselves to work afresh, without being tir'd: In like manner those who truly take to heart the great affair of their Salvation, the farther they are advanc'd in the way of Perfection, and the nearer they approach, they are still the more pressing to arrive to it. There's but a little Earth that hides your Treasure from you, dig a little farther and you'll discover it, take courage make hast, † And labor so much the harder, as you see the day nearer to approach, as the Apostle Counsels the Hebrew's, as if he wou'd say, That the nearer we draw towards our end, the harder we ought to labor. When a Stone falls down from above, the nearer it draws towards its Center, the quicker it moves; till it arrives to it: So when a Man walks diligently in the way of God, and proposes no other end to himself, but to please him alone, the more he advances in Perfection, and approaches to him, who is his last Center, and his last end, and the more he hastens, and labors to arrive thither: Those who live thus, says Saint Basil, are perfectly such as the Apostle wou'd have 'em be, * Perpetually careful, most fervent in Spirit, knowing that 'tis God whom they serve, There are certain Religious, who have a great deal of fervor in the beginning, during the first Year of their Probation; but as soon as that is over, they begin to relent, and rather become tepid and negligent; than zealous and fervent; for those who are truly zealous, will never slacken, or relent in their Devotion; but will always keep up the same fervor for their Religious duties; and instead of being tir'd in God's service, they desire nothing so much, as to serve him still better and better, according to those words of the Royal Prophet, † He who fears the Lord, will have great delight in his Commandments.*

† Cum consummaverit homo, tunc incipiet. Eccl. 18. 6.

* Quasi effodientes thesaurum. Matth. 13. 44. Greg. lib. 5. Mor. c. 3.

† Et tanto magis, quanto videritis appropinquatem diem. Ad Hebr. 10. 25.

* Basil. in reg. brev. inter 259. Sollicitudine non pigri, spiritu ferventes, Domino servientes. Ad Rom. 12. 12.

† Qui timet Dominum, in mandatis ejus volet nimis. Psal. 112. 1.

CHAP. XV.

That 'tis very advantageous to consider, and
ask our selves often, for what end
we enter'd into Religion.

† Hoc semper
in corde, fre-
quenter etiam
in ore habebat:
Bernardus, Bernar-
de, Bernarde,
ad quid venisti?
Sur. li. 1. ca. 4. Vit. 3. Bern.

ANother means, which may be a great help to us, in order to acquire Perfection, is that which Saint Bernard made use of himself. He had always in his thoughts, says the Author of his Life, † and very often in his Mouth, these words, Bernard, Bernard, for what art thou come higher? Saint Arsenius often ask'd himself the same question, and often entering into himself, he demanded an account, of his own Actions, Arsenius, sayd he, wherefore hast thou left the World? What was thy intention in quitting it, and in putting thy self into Religion? Was it not to apply thy self wholly to please God? And not to be at all solicitous, to procure the esteem and the good will of Men? Be serious then and diligent, in carrying on the design thou badst at that time, and value not what opinion Men may have of thee. All desire of Honor, Praise, and Vanity, is properly speaking, that World thou hast renounc'd, do not let thy heart be seiz'd anew with these follies, for 'twill signifie nothing, to keep thy Body here shut up in a Cloyster, if thy heart still sighs and longs for the esteem and applause of Men, and so hurries thee continually back again to the World: Behold then how those great Saints encourag'd, and fortify'd themselves; and so shou'd we in like manner animate and strengthen our selves, against all the difficulties we can meet with in Religion. When you find a repugnance to obey your Superior in what he orders, encourage your self by these or the like words: Wherefore art thou enter'd into Religion? Was it to do thy own Will? Or rather, was it not to submit it to the Will of others? Wherefore

fore dost thou then pretend to follow thy own? When ever you find that any ordinary effects of Poverty, molest you, encourage your self in these terms; *Art thou come hither to seek thy own ease and commodities, and not to suffer the least want of any thing? Dost thou not remember that thou cam'st to Religion to be poor, and to suffer the want of many things, as one truly poor? Wherefore then dost thou complain?* When you imagine others have not a sufficient regard and esteem for you, rather comfort your self by saying often; *Art thou come into Religion to be respected, or rather art thou not come hither to be intirely neglected, and forgot by all Men? Not at all regarding nor valuing the opinion and esteem of the World. Why dost thou now refuse that which thou cam'st hither to seek? Wherefore wilt thou run after that which thou hast once quitted? Thou cam'st not to do thy own Will, but to be truly poor, to live in want of all sorts of conveniencies, and to desire to be neglected, and scorn'd by Men; this is to be a true Religious Man, this is to be dead to the World, and to live wholly to God.*

Let us then often call to mind, that 'tis for this end we enter'd into Religion, and that 'twill not at all profit us to be in Religion, unless we perform what we came for; for 'tis not the place, but our good Lives, that must make us Saints. The great Saint *Austin*, treats this point excellently well in a Sermon, wherein he address'es himself to those Religious who liv'd in the Desert. † *Behold, says he, we are got into Solitude, we are in the Desert: Yet, 'tis not the Place, but our Good Works that can make us Saints, 'tis these will sanctifie the place, and us too. Do not then trust to the holiness of the place; we may Sin in all places, and may every where meet with our Damnation: * For the Angels sinn'd in Heaven, Adam in Paradise; and you know there was no place cou'd be more holy then these? 'Tis not then the place that makes the Saints; † for if the place cou'd sanctifie those that live in it, neither Man nor Angels cou'd ever have fallen from their Dignities. I say the same to you:*

* Do not imagine that all the work is done, and that you are already got out of all danger, because you are become a Religious Man; for 'twill not serve your turn to be Religious, unless you do those things, for which you have enter'd into Religion; for you are not come thither,

† Ecce in solitudine sumus. In eremo sumus. Locus tamen non facit sanctos, sed operatio bona locum sanctificabit, & nos. Aug. ser. 27. ad frat. in. Erem.

* Peccavit enim Angelus in celo; peccavit Adam in Paradiso: Et tamen nullus locus sanctior illis erat. † Si enim habitatorem loca beate possent, nec homo, nec Angelus a dignitate corruerent.

thither, to be a Man of great Learning, nor to become a great Preacher, but only and purely to become a true and good Religious Man, and to aspire continually after Perfection. It imports but little whether you are more or less Learn'd, or whether you Preach with greater or less Eloquence; but that which is of the greatest importance, is that you become a good and Perfect Religious Man. And if that be not the thing we aim at, and labor to attain unto, what is it we do? And what have we done all this while, if we have not done this? And to what have we apply'd our minds, if we have not study'd and endeavour'd to attain to that, for which only, and for no other end, we are come hither? Wherefore Examine your own Conscience, and ask your self often this question; * *Friend for what art thou come hither? What Art, or what Profession, cou'd I have made choice of, wherein I shou'd not have render'd my self perfect, during the same time I have been in Religion? I have made choice of the Profession of being Religious, and hitherto I have advanc'd little or nothing in it: So many Years are now past, since I was admitted into this School of Vertue, and I have not yet learnt the first Rudiments of it; I am yet to learn the smallest and least degree of Humility. Others become good Philosophers, and good Divines in seaven Years space; and I, after so many Years, have not yet learn'd to be a good Religious Man. How easie were it notwithstanding for us to be so, if we wou'd but apply the same care and labor to acquire true Vertue, which we take to become eminent in Learning?*

Many, says Saint Bernard, + run after the splendor and vanity of Human Learning; and how very few are there, that study the Purity and Holiness of a good Life? But if Men wou'd apply themselves with the same fervor in Vertue, as they toile to be eminent in prophane Sciences, they wou'd find that the acquisition of it, were far more easie, and the possession of it, infinitely more advantageous; notwithstanding we do so very little to gain it. Whereas had we but the same zeal and care to acquire the knowledge of the Crofs for the affair of our Salvation, as we have for Human knowledge, only to improve, and cultivate our minds thereby; we shou'd not fall so short of our aim. Saint *Dorotheus*, * Writing upon this subject, says very well, that he often made a reflection, which much improv'd him; when

* Amice, ad
quid venisti?
Matth. 26. 30.

+ Multi quæ-
runt scienti-
am, pauci
verò consci-
entiam. Si
verò tanto
studio & soli-
tudine quæ-
reretur con-
scientia, quan-
tò quæritur
facularis, &
vana scientia,
& citius ap-
prehenderetur,
& utilis
retineretur.
Bern. de inter-
dono. c. 21. &
lib. de consi-
ca. 8.

* Dorotheus,
Dei. 10.

when I Study'd in the World, says he, I took my Studies so much to heart, that I thought of nothing else; and had it not been for one of my Friends, that took care to provide me something to eat, and to call me at dinner-time, I had never thought of eating. The vehement desire I had to learn, went so far; that when I was at Table, I had my Book always open before me, that I might eat and study at the same time; and at Night when I came from School, I presently lighted my Candle, and Study'd till mid-night; and when I lay'd down to sleep, I took my Book into my Bed, and after I had slept a while, I fell to reading again, and was so wholly taken up with this Passion of studying, that I cou'd take no delight in any thing else: Since I came to be a Religious Man, I have often reflected, and sayd to my self; † If thou didst heretofore take so much pains, and wert so zealous to acquire Eloquence, what great pains and care oughtest thou not to take now, in order to acquire true Vertue? * And this very thought, says he, was a great help to me; and gave me fresh Courage, and new Strengthen.

Let us encourage our selves by the same consideration, and remember that 'tis of greater concern to become good Religious Men, than to become great and very Learn'd Orators. Let all our aim and application therefore be, how to attain to the knowledge and love of God, which is the greatest, and indeed our only affair, in this Life. All the time that our Blessed Saviour liv'd amongst us, he had no other design or thought, but to manifest the tender Love he had for us, and to procure us the greatest happiness we were capable of receiving; and to that end he refus'd not to shed his Blood, and even to lay down his Life: And shall we think it much, in return of so great goodness, to make it our chief business to love and serve him, and always to advance his Honor and Glory? * Wherefore lift up your hands that hang down as if tir'd, and stretch out your loose knees: † let us make hast to arrive at that place of rest, and let us not stop till we get to * Horeb, the Mountain of God, that is to say, the highest pitch of Glory and Perfection: And as a Traveller that has slept, till late in the Morning, makes hast to repair the time he had lost, by mending his pace till he overtake his Company, that were got before

† Si tantus labor, tantus-
que fervor
fuit tibi in
adipiscenda
eloquentia,
quantò major
tibi nunc ad-
hibenda est
cura, ut veras
virtutes acqui-
rere valeas?
* Et hæc, re-
non modicas
vires corpori.

* Propter
quod remissas
manus, & so-
luta genua
erigite. Ad
Heb. 12. 11.
† Festinemus
ingredi in
illam requiem.
Ad Heb. 4. 11.
* Uique ad
montem Dei
Horeb. 3 Reg.
19. 8.
Rom. to. 2. apul.
lib. 2. de prof.
Relig. c. 1.

before; so shou'd we make hast, and never stop in our course, till we have repair'd the time we have lost by our negligence. 'Tis to this end, that each of us shou'd always have these thoughts in our mind: My Companions and Brethren are already got far in on their Journey, and I alone still lag behind, notwithstanding I began my Journey first, and enter'd into Religion before 'em. How great a happiness and advantage wou'd it prove to us, if we did truly grieve for all the time we have lost? And what an encouragement wou'd it give us for the future, to run with more diligence, and make hast without any remissness?

Dion. Cart. arr.
30. de quatuor
noviss. & in vi-
sit Pat. p. 2.
§ 203.

* Salvare
volo animam
meam.

Denis the Carthusian † reports a passage which he takes out of the Lives of the Ancient Fathers, saying, that a certain Woman finding her Son desirous to become a Religious Man, endeavour'd all she cou'd to hinder his executing this good design, laying before him all the thought might serve to hinder it; but the Young Man continuing still firm in his holy Resolution, made no other answer, to all the difficulties and objections his Mother urg'd, but only this; * *I will save my Soul.* At last, his Mother seeing she cou'd not prevail with him, neither by reason nor importunity; left him to his own choice; and so the Young Man took the Habit of Religion. But his first fervor coming afterwards to cool, he began to live so loosely, that they cou'd scarce find any mark of that Zeal, he had at first shewn for Heavenly things: Soon after his Mother dy'd, and he fell sick of a very dangerous Feaver, in which, lying in a Trance, he imagin'd, that he was carry'd before God's great Tribunal, where he saw his Mother with many others, expecting the Sentence of their Condemnation; and that his Mother looking upon him, and perceiving that he was of the number of those, who were to be Condemn'd, *Alas Son,* sayd she, *what is become of that good resolution, and that sentence you so often heretofore repeated to me, I will save my Soul, was it to become a lost Soul, that you made your self a Religious Man?* Which reproach of his Mother, put him into so great a confusion, that he cou'd not tell what to reply: At last being come to himself out of this great fit, and God having permitted him to recover of that Sicknes, he began to consider, that the Vision he had had, was certainly a warning from God; which wrought such a change in him, that he spent

spent all the rest of his Life in Tears, and continual Pen-
nance. Many people endeavour'd to persuade him to mo-
derate, and abate some part of his great Austerities, and
Mortifications, least he shou'd destroy his health by them,
but he reject'd all their advice, saying, *Alas, if I cou'd
not bear those reproaches of my Mother, how shall I be
able to bear those reproaches that will be made me by
JESUS CHRIST, and his blessed Angels, at the terrible
Day of Judgment.*

C H A P. XVI.

Of some other things that may much help
us to advance in Vertue, and
acquire Perfection.

† **B**E ye perfect, as your Heavenly Father is perfect, says our blessed Saviour in that admirable Sermon, he made to his Disciples upon the Mount: Upon which words Saint Cyprian, discoursing thus excellently says: * If Men take a great Satisfaction in seeing their Children resemble 'em; and if a Father is never more pleas'd than when all his Sons features are like his own; how much greater joy will our Eternal Father take, when we are so happily regenerated in Spirit; that by all our actions, and by our good behaviour, we are truly known to be his Children; what Palm of Justice, and what Crown of Glory will it be to you, that God shall have no cause to say, I have nourish'd, and brought up Children, and they have scorn'd me? But that on the contrary, all your actions tend and turn to the glory of your Heavenly Father: For 'tis truly his glory, to have Children who resemble him after such a manner, as that by them he may come to be honor'd, known and glorifi'd.

† Errote perfecti, sicut & Pater vester celestis perfectus est. *Matth. 5. 43.*

* Si hominibus laetum est & gloriosum, filios habere consimiles, & tunc magis generasse delectat, si ad patrem lineamentis partibus sobolis successe respondet; quanto magis in Deo Patre laetitia est, cum quis sic spiritualiter nascitur, ut actibus ejus & laudibus divina generositas praedicetur? Quae justitiae palma est, quae corona esse te talem de quo *Cyp. Serm. 2.*

Deus non dicat: Filios enutrivit, & exaltavit: ipsi autem spreverunt me. *Isa. 1. 2.*
de zelo & livore.

† Cogitemus
nos tanto fi-
niliiores Deo,
quanto esse
poterimus
ejus participa-
tionis justiti-
as. Aug. ep.
85. ad Conſens.

* Hæc est
enim voluntas
Dei, sanctifi-
catio vestra.
† ad Theſ. 4.3.
† Sancti ci-
vis, quoniam
ego Sanctus
sum.
† Per. 1. 16.
* Filius ſpi-
ritus lætificat
patrem, filius
vero ſpiritus
matriſtia eſt
matriſ ſux.
Prov. 10. 1.

† Eſtote imi-
tatores Dei,
ſicut ſili
chariſſimi.
Ad Epheſ. 5. 1.
* Videte qua-
lem charita-
tem debet no-
bis Patet, ut
Filius Dei no-
minetur, &
ſumus.
† Joan. 3. 1.

† Aug. in ep.
243. ca. 19.

But how will it be poſſible for us to render our ſelves like to our Heavenly Father? Saint *Auſtin* teaches us in theſe words, † *Let us remember*, ſays he, *that the more juſt we become, and the more united with God's Will, the better we ſhall reſemble him; and that the more holy, and the more perfect we are, the greater reſemblance we ſhall have with our Heavenly Father.* And 'tis for this reaſon, that our Saviour ſo earneſtly wiſhes and deſires our holineſs and perfection, and ſo often recom- mends it to us; ſometimes by himſelf in Saint *Matthew*, in the paſſage we have already alledg'd; telling us alſo the ſame thing by the Mouth of Saint *Paul* in theſe words, * *That which God deſires of you, is, that you be Sanctiſ'd*: And alſo by the Prince of the Apoſtles, ſaying, † *You muſt be holy, becauſe I am holy.* 'Tis a very great comfort to Parents, to have wiſe and diſcreet Children; this truth the Holy Ghost tells us by *Salomon*, who ſays, * *that A wiſe Son brings great joy to his Father: But a fooliſh Son, cauſes great grief to his Mother.* If then there were no other end, but to pleaſe Almighty God, whoſe ſatisfaction, honor, and glory, ſhou'd be the chief Motive of all our Actions; we ought continually to aſpire to Perfection. But altho' theſe reaſons, may ſeem ſufficient to make us embrace it, yet I ſhall ſtill propoſe ſeveral other means, which may ſerve to facilitate the attaining it.

The reaſon, why in Holy Scripture we are ſo often call'd the Children of God, either by the Mouths of the Prophets, who very often repeat this ſaying, *I will be your Father, and ye ſhall be my Children*; or by Saint *Paul*, who ex- horts us to be † *Followers of God, as his moſt dear Chil- dren*; or by Saint *John*, when he tells us, * *See what Love the Heavenly Father has had for us, inſomuch that he wou'd have us call'd, and be effectually the Sons of God*; and alſo in many other places to the ſame purpoſe. The reaſon, I ſay, why the ſame thing is repeated to us ſo often in Holy Scripture, is, as Saint *Auſtin* ſays, † *To the end that ſeeing, and conſidering the dignity and excellency of our Origin, we may conceive and entertain a greater eſteem and higher value of what we are; and conſequently take greater care not to do any thing unworthy of our Noble Extraction.* We uſe great care, ſays the ſame Father, to preſerve a rich Suite of Clothes, and to ſee that it be not ſpotted: And we look carefully to our Jewels, and other things of great value: So alſo, when Holy Scripture tells us of our dignity; when it minds us that we are the

Part. 1. Of the Esteem of Spirituals.

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the Sons of God, and that God himself is our Father; 'tis to the end we should take great care to preserve our hearts pure and clean; and that we behave our selves in all our Actions, so as becomes those who have the honor to bear the Character of the Sons of God, and never degenerate from those noble and high Thoughts and Resolutions, with which that great dignity ought to inspire us. The saying also of Saint Leo Pope suit's well to our purpose, * Reflect, says he, O Christian, what thy dignity is; and seeing thou art made partaker of the Divine Nature, suffer not thy self to fall back into thy ancient baseness; adhering too much to the things of this life; reflect on that Head and Body, whereof thou hast the honor to be a Member. Saint Paul represented the same thing heretofore to the Athenians, telling 'em, † That we descended from God; and 'tis from him we derive our Origin. Whereby he endeavour'd to encourage 'em to entertain such thoughts and resolutions, as became Men of so noble an Extraction. But that we may still make a fuller and more particular application of what is here sayd, and of the comparison of the rich Robes alledg'd by Saint Austin, let us consider, that as the smallest spot is more indecent in a fine Robe; and that the richer the Stuff is, the more the spot appears, insomuch that what appears very foul upon Cloth of Gold or Silver, can hardly be perceiv'd upon coarser Stuff; so the stain of a Venial Sin, nay many times, even that of a Mortal Sin, is scarce taken notice of amongst Secular People, or at least 'tis look'd upon but as a small oversight; there being so great and general a corruption in the World: But in Religious Men, who are the Children and Darlings of God, the least Imperfection is very considerable; the least Immodesty, the least Murmuring, the least Impatient or hasty Word amongst these, is a very great offence, and gives great occasion of Scandal amongst us; but amongst Secular Persons, there is so little account made of such things, that often times they never reflect, nor take any notice of 'em. It never troubles us to have our Feet dirty, but the least dust that gets into the apple of our Eye, puts us to very great pain. Men in the World are like the Feet of the Mystical Body of the Church, and Religious Men resemble the Eyes of the same Body; so that the least fault in a Religious Man, is of very great, and very bad consequence; because it works a far worse effect in him, than it can do in a Secular Person; and for this reason a Religious Man lies

* Agnosce, o Christiane, dignitatem tuam, & divine consortis naturam, noli in veterem vilis degeneri conversatione redire. Memen- to cujus capitis, & cujus corporis sis membrum. S. Leo Pap. ser. I. de Nat. Dom.

† Ipsius enim & genus sumus. Genus ergo cum sumus Dei. Agg. 17. 28, 29.

under a greater obligation of warching, and taking care of all his Actions, than others do.

Another reason, which we have already cited in one of the precedent Chapters, that may still add new encouragement, is, that we shou'd always imagine we have a great way to go, and that as yet we have advanc'd very little: This is insinuated to us by those words of our Blessed Saviour, *Be ye Perfect as your Heavenly Father is Perfect*; for what think you, do's our Saviour mean by saying so? Can it be, that we shou'd ever be able to come near the Perfection of our Heavenly Father? † *Can any Man be just in comparison of God?* No certainly, whatever degree of Perfection we can possibly arrive to, there will still remain an infinite distance between his Perfection and ours: And yet our Saviour bid's us *be Perfect as our Heavenly Father is Perfect*, to let us understand that in the progress of Vertue, there are no bounds, and therefore we shou'd never be satisfi'd with what we have already done, but labor continually to acquire what we still want. 'Twas heretofore a usual saying with Holy Men, and with a great deal of reason, that a most certain sign of a Mans coming far short of being Perfect, was, that he thought himself so far advanc'd in the way of a Spiritual Life: For the farther a Man go's, the plainer he discovers, that he is but a very little advanc'd. Saint Bonaventure, * says, *That the higher a Man climb's up a Hill, the larger a Country he discovers; so in the Mountain of Perfection also, the nearer we come to the top, the greater we perceive the extent of Vertue to be.* When we contemplate a high Mountain at a distance, we imagine that it reaches so near Heaven, that were we upon the top thereof, we fancy we might be able to touch the Clouds with our hand; but having Travell'd on, and got up to the very top, we find that we are still much short of Heaven; just so it happens with those who Travel in the way of Perfection, and advance perpetually in the knowledge and love of God. Saint Cyprian explicating the words of the Psalmist, † *Man shall arrive at the greatest height that his Heart is capable of, and God will still be more and more Exalted*, says, *That the higher our Souls are by degrees rais'd to the knowledge of God, the farther he appears still exalted above us, whatever knowledge of God you have attain'd, and how great soever your love is for him, there remains still infinite degrees of knowledge and love of him, beyond*

† Numquid
homo compa-
ratione Dei
iustificabitur?
Job. 4. 17.

* Bonav. tom.
2. Opusc. l. 2.
de prof. Relig.
ca. 21.

† Cyp. de
oper. Christi
ad Cornel. Pap.
in Prologo.
Accedet homo
ad cor altum,
& exaltabitur
Deus, Ps. 63. 8.

you'd what you have already acquir'd; infinite, there will still remain a great way to climb up, in the path that leads towards Perfection; and whosoever imagines that he is got to the top, is yet very far from it, which makes him so easily believe he can even reach the Heavens with his hand.

This may clearly be understood, by the experience we have in Human Sciences; the more a Man knows, the more things he finds he has still to learn: Which made the wisest of all the Philosophers say, † *All that I know, is, that I know nothing*: And an excellent Musician was wont to say, that it griev'd him to find he understood nothing in Musick; because he discover'd in that Science, things of so vast an extent, that he perceiv'd he cou'd never arrive to any Perfection in it. On the other side, Ignorant People, who are not aware of their great indigence, and cannot discover how much knowledge they still want, easily imagine that they know a great deal: Just so it is in the knowledge of God, those who are best vers'd in Perfection, know they have a great way still to go, before they can arrive to their end; and therefore the more they improve in this knowledge, the more humble they become; because according to that proportion or progress they make in other Vertues, they make the same also in the Vertue of Humility, and in the knowledge and contempt of themselves; which are things inseparable; the one from the other; because according to that degree of knowledge of the Goodness and Majesty of God they arrive unto, they come also in a greater degree to discover their own wants, and to acknowledge their own Indigence and Misery.

* *One Abyfs invokes another*, says the Royal Prophet: The great Abyfs of the knowledge of God, and of his goodness and infinite Majesty, discovers to us the depth of our own misery; and 'tis by the beams of this Divine light, that we best perceive the many atoms of our imperfections, and how much we still want of becoming perfect. But he who is yet but a beginner in the practise of Vertue, by not knowing how many helps he still wants to attain it, is apt to fancy that he is already, in a very high degree become Master of it: As it many times happens with a Man that has little or no Skill in Painting, when he sees a Picture, he presently admires it, and discovers no fault; but if an excellent Painter happens to view it, and consider it attentively; he'll observe many defects: The same falls out in Spiritual matters: He who has not attain'd to the Art of self-know-

ledge,

† Socrat. ref.
Laert. in vita
eius.

* Abyffus
abyffum invo-
cat. Pf. 41. 8.

ledge, cannot perceive the faults which lie conceal'd in the Image of his own Soul; whereas another Man who is better Skill'd in that Art, wou'd quickly discover 'em.

Wherefore let this serve daily to inflame us, with a continual desire of acquiring that Vertue we still want; for, † *Blessed are those who hunger and thirst after Justice*; that is to say, as Saint Hierom explicates it, such as never think themselves perfect enough, but always labor to improve in Vertue. Thus did the Royal Prophet, when he sayd to Almighty God: * *Wash me still more and more from my Iniquity, and cleanse me from my Sin*, as if he wou'd have say'd: 'Tis not enough O Lord, that I thou'd be only wash'd; one washing, and one cleansing is not sufficient for me, † *But I beseech thee to wash me, so as I may become whiter than Snow*. Let us cry to Almighty God in the same manner: *Wash me, O Lord, still more and more*. Give me more Humility, Patience, and Charity; more Mortification, and a more perfect and absolute Resignation to your Holy Will in all things.

† Hieron. in
hunc loc. Beati
qui esuriunt
& sitiunt ju-
stitiam.
Matth. 5. 6.

* Amplius
lava me ab
iniquitate mea,
& a peccato
meo munda
me. Ps. 50. 4.

† Lavabis me,
& super ni-
vem dealba-
bor. Ibid. 9.

CH A P. XVII.

Of the perseverance we ought to have in Vertue.

SAINTE Austin explicating the words of Saint Paul, * *No one is Crown'd, but he who lawfully fights*, says, that to fight lawfully, is to fight with perseverance to the end, and that only those who fight in this manner deserve a Crown. And upon this occasion, he alledges what Saint Hierom also says, that † *Many begin well, but few end well*: Of which we have a great example in the Israelites. Holy Scripture observes, that there went out of Egypt about Six Hundred Thousand Men, besides Women and Children; and that nevertheless, of all that great number, there were but two that enter'd into the Land of Promise. * 'Tis then, adds the Saint, *no great matter to begin, but the chief thing is to perfect what we have begun; for 'tis in that alone, that perfection consists*. Saint Ephrem brings a very pat comparison to this Subject, saying, † *As when you build a House, the greatest difficulty is not only in laying the Foundation, but in raising*

* Aug. ser. 8.
ad frat. in
Fremo sup. il-
lud: Non co-
ronator, nisi
qui legitime
certaverit.

2 ad Tim. 2. 5.
† Corripisse
multorum est,
ad culmen per-
venisse, pau-
corum. Hier.
lib. 1. cont.
Jovin. & Num.
1. 46. & ca. 14.
30.

* Non est
igitur mag-
num inchoare
quod bonum
est; sed con-
summare, hoc
solum per-
fectum est.
Aug. loco sup.
cit.

† S. Ephr.
exhort. ad
pietatem.

raising the building to its perfect height; and that the higher the building is rais'd, the more the labor and expences encrease: So, in the Spiritual building, the hardest task is not to lay the Foundation, but to carry your Work on to perfection: 'Twill avail us nothing to have begun well, unless we also end well. In Christians, says Saint Hierom, * We consider not how they begin, but how they end. Saint Paul began ill, but ended well; Judas began well, and ended ill. What did it avail him to have been an Apostle of JESUS CHRIST, and to have wrought Miracles? Wherefore what will your good beginnings profit, if a miserable end contradicts, and gives 'em the Lye? 'Tis to persevance only, that the Crown is promis'd; † He who shall persevere to the end, says the Son of God, shall be sav'd. Jacob saw Almighty God, not at the foot, nor in the middle, but at the top of the Ladder; to let us know, says Saint Hierom, * that, 'Tis not enough to begin well, nor yet to continue to do well only for a time, unless we hold on and persevere to the end. † What do's it avail, says Saint Bernard, to follow JESUS CHRIST, unless we overtake him at last. Wherefore Saint Paul bids us, Run so, as that at last we may gain the Prize. Let thy Race O Christian, and thy progress in Vertue have no other bounds, than what JESUS CHRIST prescrib'd to himself: He render'd himself Obedient even to Death. 'Tis in vain for you to run, unless you continue your Race to the last moment of your Life: Without this you'll never get the Prize.

quit, obediens usque ad mortem. Quantumlibet ergo cucurreris, si usque ad mortem non perveneris, bravium non apprehendes. Bern. ep. 133. ad Ab. Garin.

The Son of God gives us a particular warning of this, when he assures us, * that Whoever sets his hand to the Plow, and looks back, is not fit for the Kingdom of Heaven: As also when at another time, he bids us † Remember Lots Wife. What was it she did? God having brought her out of Sodom, in order to save her from the fire which consum'd that City, she stop'd upon the way, and turn'd to look behind her, and immediately in the very place where she turn'd her head, she was chang'd into a Statue of Salt. Wou'd you know, * says Saint Austin, † what this signifies? Salt seasons and preserves every thing, and our Saviour wou'd have us remember Lot's Wife, to the end, that reflecting upon what happen'd to her we may preserve our selves with that Salt, which her transformati-

* Non quæ-
runtur in
Christianis
initia, sed
finis. Paulus
male cepit,
sed bene fini-
vit. Jude lau-
dantur exor-
dia; sed finis
proditione
damnatur.
Hier. ep. ad
Furiam. v. d.
† Qui perse-
veraverit us-
que in finem,
hic salvus erit.
Matth. 24. 13.
* Hier. ubi
sup.

† Quid pro-
dest Christum
sequi, si non
consequat
consequi? Ideo Paulus
aiebat: Sic
currite, ut com-
prehendatis.
1. Cor. 9. 24.
Tibi tu
Christiane, si-
ge rui curtilis,
profectuque
metam, ubi
Christus po-
suit suam.
Factus est, in-

* Nemo mite-
ns manum
suam ad ara-
trum, & respi-
ciens retro, ap-
tus est regno
Dei. Luc. 9. 62.
† Memores
essete Uxoris
Lot. Luc. 17. 32.

† Aug. sup.
illud Psalmice.
Vovete & red-
dite. Ps. 118.

on

on do's furnish us withal; that is to say, that taking warning by the example of her punishment, we may go on and persevere in that good course of Life, into which we are enter'd, without stopping or looking behind us; for fear lest we shou'd be turn'd also into Statues, from which others may take Salt, for their own preservation: Alas how many are there now a days, who serve us for Statues of Salt, like that of *Lor's Wife*? How many are there whose fall may serve us for a warning, and become of very great advantage to us, in order to our Eternal Salvation? Let us then be wise at other Mens cost, and let us endeavour to do nothing, that may make others become wise at our own expences.

Saint *Austin* and Saint *Hierom* farther add, and say, * that To begin well and end ill, is to make a Monster, as if a Painter after he had drawn the head of a Man, shou'd add to it the neck of a Horse; Saint *Paul* writing to the *Galatians*, reprehends 'em very severely for proceeding after this manner, † What, says he, are you grown to such a height of folly, as that having once begun well in the Spirit, you will need's end in the Flesh, senceless Men! Who has bewitch'd you, thus to Rebel against Truth?

But to the end we may obtain God's holy Grace to persevere in doing well, we must strive to lay at first, a good Foundation of Vertue and Mortification; for if the Foundation be weak, the building will quickly come to lean, and so fall to the Ground. That fruit into which the Worm is once crept, will never ripen; but soon falls from the Tree; whilst that which is sound, stick's fast to the branch, till 'tis perfectly ripe; in the same manner if your Vertue be not solid, and your Heart not wholly possess'd by God, and if you still cherish the same Worm of Presumption, of Pride, of Impatience, or any other Irregular Passion; that Worm will by degrees corrupt your Heart, and consume all its best juice and substance; and to speak more clearly, you'll run the danger of not persevering. † Wherefore 'tis very necessary, to confirm and fortifie your heart by Grace, and in time to lay a solid foundation of true Vertue.

Albertus Magnus, * explicating by what means we ought to confirm our selves in Vertue, to be the better able to persevere, says, that a true Christian ought to be so well grounded in Vertue, and have it so firmly rooted in his Heart, that it may be always in his power to practise it, without any

* Aug. ser.
8. ad fr. in
Frem. Hieron.
sup. illa verba
Mat. 10. 22.
Qui autem
perseveraverit.
Cum enim sic
agitur, huma-
no capiti cer-
vicem pector
equinam jun-
git.

† Sic stulti
estis, ut cum
spiritu coepe-
ritis, nunc
carne consum-
memini. In-
fensati Ga'late,
quis vos fasci-
navit non
obedire veri-
tati?
Ad Gal. 3. 3.
et ibid 7. 1.

† Optimum
est enim gra-
tia stabilire
cor.
Ad Heb. 13. 9.

* Alb. Mag.
in Buchir. de
veni, perfectis-
que virtutibus,
cap. 13.

any dependance upon what other Men can say or do to us. There are a sort of People that outwardly seem to have the Spirit of Meekness and Humility, so long as nothing thwarts 'em, and all things happen to their minds, but upon the least cross accident that occurs, this peace vanishes, and they presently take fire, and discover what they are: Such Men as these, says *Albertus*, have not the Vertue of Peace and Humility in their own, but in other Mens minds and humors; so that if your Vertue be such as this, it belongs to others and not to you, since it lies in their power to give, or take it from you, whensoever they please. But your Vertue if it be true, must be your own, and not of anothers growth, and the fund ought always to be at your own disposal, without any dependance upon another. We may make a very just comparison of such persons as these, to a standing Puddle, which yields no bad smell or vapor, so long as you do not trouble it; but when once you come to stir the Water; it sends forth so intolerable a stench as is enough to poyson the standers by; just so it is with these Men; as long as you leave 'em to themselves, as long as no body vexes 'em, they are in a profound peace, they seem as quiet as a standing Water that offends no body, but as soon as they are molested or the least mov'd, presently such pernicious vapors are rais'd, as give great Scandal, and very ill Example to their Neighbours. † *Touch the Mountains*, says the Psalmist, *and they will Smoak*.

† *Tango montes, & fumigabunt. Psal. 143. 5.*

C H A P. XVIII.

Of Spiritual Exhortations, and what is requisite to profit by them.

AMongst the many helps that Religion furnishes us withal, for our better assistance and encouragement in our Spiritual progress, one of the chiefest is that of Sermons, and Spiritual Exhortations; wherefore I here intend to shew how, and in what manner we ought to hear 'em, so as to profit thereby; and what I shall say, relating to our selves in particular, may also serve as a general instruction, to all sorts of persons, and teach 'em how to profit by the hearing of Sermons.

Tom. I.

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The first disposition necessary for that end, is, that we do not frequent Sermons, out of custom, nor merely, because 'tis part of a Christian's duty to do so, but hear 'em with a true and earnest desire to profit by them. Let us consider with what zeal, the Ancient Fathers in the Desert, where wont to resort to these Spiritual Banquets, and what store of good provisions they carry'd back with 'em to their Cells: With the like Fervor we ought to go to those Exhortations that are made for us, and then they cannot fail of doing as great good to our Souls; as good Meat do's to our Bodies, which nourishes and strengthens him that sits down to Table with a good appetite. Saint *Chrysostom* observes, that as hunger is a sign of the Bodies being in good health, so a longing desire of being nourish'd with the Word of God, is a certain sign of a good and happy disposition of the Soul: But if you do not thirst after the Divine Word, nor find any gust in it, 'tis a certain sign, that you are sick; and that your Soul is in a very dangerous condition; seeing it loathes that food, which is only proper for its nourishment. Besides, if we frequented all Exhortations with this intent only of hearing the Preacher discourse of Almighty God; that alone would suffice to make us run joyfully to hear him; for, Naturally a Man is glad to hear another speak well of one he loves. So if you have a true love for God, you cannot but be overjoy'd to hear the Preacher speak well of him; † for, as our Blessed Saviour says, *He who is of God, hears the Word of God, and the reason why you desire not to hear it, is because you are not of God.*

† Qui ex Deo est, verba Dei audit. Propterea vos non auditis, quia ex Deo non estis.

* *Joan.* 8. 47.

In the second place, if we intend to benefit our selves, by the Sermons we hear, we must not hear 'em with a Spirit of curiosity; as for example, to observe the good language, the graceful action and pronounciation, the quaint and new conceits of the Preacher, together with the manner how he delivers 'em; for 'tis this, for which with great reason we blame many Secular persons, and which is the occasion of their profiting so little by Sermons; but instead of minding such things as these, we must apply our selves wholly to attend to the substance of the discourse: What would you say of a sick Man, that were going to be let blood, who instead of letting the Surgeon open his Vein, thou'd amuse himself in looking upon the Lancet, and admiring its workmanship? Would you not persuade him to forbear that idle

idle curiosity, and tell him that 'tis his business to be let blood; that what he was to mind now, was to have his Vein open'd; and that the rest was little or nothing to the purpose. The case is the same with those, who neglecting to attend to what is most essential in a Sermon, and what they do stand most of all in need of, for the getting Spiritual food and nourishment for their Souls, to amend their Lives; stop at the outward rine, and attend, no farther than to the invention and division of the discourse, to the neatness and pureness of the expressions, and only to that which is an idle ornament, and a vain artifice of Eloquence. Such Men as these may justly be compar'd to a Sieve or Bouncer; that retains only the Chaff and Bran, and lets all the Corn and Meal pass throu' 'em. Holy Scripture tells us, that when * *Esdras* read the Law of God to the People of *Israel*, all the People were so mov'd at it, that reflecting upon their past Lives; they wept most bitterly, comparing their actions with the Law of God, which ought to have been their Rule, and was deliver'd to them for that end. Inasmuch that the Levites had much to do to appease their sighing and groaning. 'Tis after this manner we ought to hear Sermons, with a wholesome and profitable confusion for our faults; by comparing our lives with the Doctrin we hear Preach'd; examining the difference there is between what we are, and what we ought to be; by considering infine, how far we are from the Perfection, propos'd to us to practise.

* 2 Esdr. c. 3.

A third point, that will still more and more confirm the precedent, which being presuppos'd, will serve us also for an excellent precaution against the spirit of Curiosity, and put us into a better disposition of profiting by what we shall hear, is this, which all the World ought to believe, that Exhortations are not made to discover to us any new extraordinary duties, but only to renew in us the memory of those that are more common and ordinary; thereby to inspire us with more fervor to put 'em in practise. In effect, 'tis particularly upon this account, that Saint *Ignatius* † requir'd so frequent Exhortations amongst us; for in the third part of the Constitutions, after he had establish'd the Rules set down in the Summary; Let there be, says he, some one appointed, who every week or at least every fortnight, may renew the memory of these Rules, and other such like instructions, lest the weakness of our Nature may cause us to forget 'em; and hereby we come at last to neglect and leave off their practise. Father *Natalis*

† 3 p. Const. cap. 1. §. 25.

takes notice of this by the by, in his remarks upon the Constitutions; saying, that tho' the Constitutions speak only of eight or fifteen days, yet notwithstanding, the custom, which is observ'd thro'out the whole Society, is to make these Exhortations, regularly every week; and doubtless none cou'd speak with more certainty in this point, than he, who having visited almost all the Houses of the Society, knew perfectly well all their practises; and the manner how they perform'd these Exhortations, by entertaining us with such things as we knew very well before; because the facility we have in forgetting 'em, is the reason that they cannot be too often set before our Eyes. But suppose we remember 'em never so well, yet it wou'd be in vain that our Memories shou'd be faithful, if our Wills be not also fervent; and therefore 'tis to warm and animate us, that the obligations we have contracted by our Profession, and the End for which we came to Religion, are so often repeated and inculcated to us. The opinion of Saint *Austin*, is very true, that † *The Understanding is quick and ready, but the motion of the Will is very slow*: Wherefore we ought often to touch and treat upon the same matter, and in a manner rivet it in our minds; as Saint

† *Prævolat intellectus: sequitur tardus, vel nullus affectus.*
Aug.

* *de cætero, fratres mei, gaudete in Domino: eadem vobis scribere mihi quidem non pigrum, vobis autem necessarium.*
Ad Phil. 3. 1.

Paul endeavour'd when he writ to the *Philippians*, saying, * *Moreover my Brethren, rejoyce in our Lord: 'tis no pain at all to me, but for you 'tis very necessary, that I often write and repeat the same things to you.* The Apostle having been rapt to the third Heaven, without doubt, wanted not matter; he had new things enough, and very elevated too, to tell 'em of: Yet for all this, he believ'd himself oblig'd to repeat only those things, wherewith he had before entertain'd 'em; because he knew these were more necessary for 'em than the others. And this ought to be the particular aim of him who makes an Exhortation or Sermon: He ought not to think of what may make himself appear more Eloquent, or more Profound; for hereby he wou'd rather Preach himself, than Preach to others: But he shou'd consider what will occasion most profit to his Auditors, and propose only those things whereby they may reap most profit; thus they will not become weary of hearing those common things, they already know; because they will presently perceive, that either they neglect to perform 'em, or at least do not practise 'em with all possible perfection; and therefore 'tis always necessary they shou'd be put in mind of 'em.

In the fourth place, 'twill be of very great profit, that whatever is sayd in Exhortations, be receiv'd by us as particularly

cularly sayd to our selves, and not as a thing which regards others: And let us not act herein as Worldly Persons ordinarily do, when they hear a Sermon. A Preacher addressees himself to them, for example, in this manner, you are like, says he, to those, whose employment it is to carve at great Mens Tables, and distribute to others, without taking any Meat for themselves. When you hear me say this, you cry out, An excellent reflection indeed, and very proper for such a one: This suit's very well with one of my acquaintance: If such a one were here, O how 'twou'd tell him his own! And notwithstanding after all this carving to others, you keep nothing for your self. In this Banquet of the Word of God, I wou'd have all of you to be of the number of the Guests, and not of the Carvers. † *All that a prudent Man shall hear, that is good and profitable, he will practise;* says Ecclesiastes, *and will apply it to himself: But a vain ambitious Man will not hear but with disgust, and will cast it behind his back:* Let us then endeavour to be of the number of these Guests; of the number of these Wise Men; who so take to themselves what is sayd, as if 'twere spoken to them alone, and to none else. For perhaps that which seems to you, to be very well apply'd to another, may be better apply'd to your self; if you knew your self better than you do; and if you were not like those, who can * *Perceive a Mote in their Neighbors Eye, yet see not a Beam in their Own.* But thò, if in effect there shou'd be nothing in what is sayd, which any way touches or concerns you at present, yet neglect not to hoard it up in your mind for the future; perhaps you will soon come to stand in need of it, and by this means you can never fail always to take what is sayd, as address'd only to your self.

In the fifth place, the better to clear what we have sayd, 'tis fit that every one shou'd presuppose, that oftentimes in Exhortations the Preacher reprehends certain faults, not as thò he actually believ'd 'em practis'd by any of his Auditors; but only with a design to hinder their practise, or the introducing such imperfections for the future. The Physick that by precaution is giv'n to prevent diseases, is no less advantageous than that which is giv'n to cure 'em. Wherefore in our Exhortations, we ought to have regard to this, following the Counsel of the wise Man, † *Before sickness comes, make use of remedies.* And as we ordinarily strive to apply the remedy before the disease be form'd, or come to a head; so we Exhort to Vertue and Perfection; we blame Vice and Remif-

† Verbum sapiens quodcumque audit sciens, laudabit, & ad se adjiciet: audit luxuriosus, & displicebit illi, & projiciet illud post dorsum suum.
Ecc. 21. 18.

* Matth. 7. 3;

† Ante languorem adhibe medicinam.
Ecc. 18. 20.

ness;

ness; to the end that every one being advertis'd of the danger he is in; he may the better stand upon his guard, and take care of falling: Moreover as to the Preacher, he ought not to note, or point out any one in particular: For this wou'd be a great imprudence in him, because he wou'd reap hereby less fruit, and give great occasion of scandal. Wherefore 'twou'd be very ill done, to think, and still worse to express, that this was sayd for such a one, this for another; and 'twou'd be a very rash judgment in the Preacher even to harbor so uncharitable and unreasonable an imagination. But tho' both on the Preacher's and the Auditor's side, there ought to be a great circumspection in this matter, and that 'tis always very good that every one takes what is sayd, as sayd to himself, yet I wou'd not that any one shou'd frame to himself; that the Preacher had a design to mark him out, or have a particular sting at him; for such a thought as this must never enter into our minds: But what I desire is, that laying our hands upon our Hearts, we confront our life and actions with the Doctrine he Preaches, and say to our selves, Certainly what he says, may very well be address'd to me; I have great need of this advertisement; 'tis God has put this into his Mouth for my good. And in this manner we shall let nothing pass, out of which we may not draw some fruit, either for our amendment, or our greater Perfection. The Gospel takes notice, that after the discourse our Saviour had had with the Samaritan, he sayd, to all the met with, † *Come and see a Man who has told me all things that I have ever done.* When the Preacher speaks in this manner to his Auditors, and tells 'em what passes in their Hearts; then he may securely judge that he effectually makes a good Sermon, and that his Exhortation becomes fruitful.

In the last place, we ought to be convinc'd that the Word of God is the nourishment and sustenance of the Soul; and therefore we shou'd always endeavour, in every Exhortation we hear, to carry something away with us, and conserve and lay it up in our Hearts, whereby we may receive more strength and force to begin anew: * *The grain which is sown in good ground, says our Saviour, signifies those who hear the Word of God with a heart well dispos'd; and retain the same, and make it bring forth good fruit in due season.* Saint Gregory Explicating this passage says, † that the Body is in a very ill disposition of health, when the Stomach cannot keep or retain any nourishment, but casts up whatever it takes: In the same manner, the Soul is in a dangerous state, when the Heart

† Venite, & videte hominem, qui dixit mihi omnia quæcumque feci.

Jean. 4. 29.

* Quod autem in bonam terram: Hi sunt, qui in corde bono, & optimo audientes verbum retinent, & fructum afferunt in patientia.

Luc. 8. 15.

† Greg. Hom. 35. sup. Ev.

Heart retains not the word of God. The Royal Prophet knew this truth very well, when he sayd, † *I have hid thy words in the bottom of my heart, to the end I may not sin against thee.* And in effect, how often do's it happen that we are Tempted, and are in danger of yielding to the Temptation, and that then remembring only some passage of Scripture, or some holy maxim we heard in a Sermon, we regain new strength, and draw from it very powerful assistance? And we know that by three passages of Scripture, our Saviour overcame those three Temptations, wherewith the Enemy set upon him.

By all that has been sayd, tis easie to comprehend, in how great an Error those are, and what prejudice they do themselves, who go to Sermons and Exhortations for fashion sake; or suffer themselves to be overcome with sleep and distractions during that time. * *The Devil, says our Saviour in the Gospel, comes and snatches the Word of God out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be sav'd.* And 'tis after this manner, that the Parable of the Grain is unhappily verifi'd in them; which was eaten by the Birds as soon as it was sow'd: Perhaps one word which you lost when you were asleep or distracted, would have contributed very much to your Spiritual advancement; and for this reason the Devil, who nourishes a Mortal envy and hatred against you, endeavours by all means possible to hinder this good seed from taking root in your Heart. Saint *Anstin* says, † *That the Word of God is like a fish-hook, which never takes, but when 'tis taken; and as the fish remains a prize to the hook; so we remain a prize to the Word of God, when we take and receive it.* And for this reason the Devil uses all his power to hinder us from receiving it, lest our Heart shou'd thereby become engag'd, and we never be able to get loose or free our selves. Let us endeavour therefore to go to Sermons and Exhortations with so requisite a disposition as this is; and to hear the Word of God in such sort, that it takes root in our Heart, and produces the fruit of justice. * *Practise it, says Saint James, and be not content to hear it only, thereby deceiving your selves; for he who hears the Word of God and practises it not, is like a Man that considers his face in a glass: He views himself, and goes his way, and soon forgets what kind of Man he was.* † *Those who hear the Law, says Saint Paul, are not just before God, but those who practise it shall be justifi'd.*

In a Book call'd the *Spiritual Meadow*, * compos'd by John *Evirat*; or, according to some, by Saint *Sophronius* Patriarch of *Jerusalem*, which is cited with great commendation in the

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† In corde meo abscondi eloquia tua, ut non peccem tibi. Ps. 119. 11.

Matth. 4.

* Venit diabolus, & tollit verbum de corde eorum, ne credentes salvi fiant. Luc. 8. 12.

† Quod tunc capit quando capitur. Aug.

* Efficere factores verbi, & non auditores tantum, fallentes vosmetipsos, quia si quis auditor est verbi, & non factor, hic comparabitur viro consideranti vultum nativitatis suae in speculo: Consideravit enim se, & abiit, & statim oblitus est qualis fuerit. Jac. 1. 22 ad 25.

† Non enim auditores legis iusti sunt apud Deum, sed factores, quibus iustificabuntur. Ad. Rom. 2. 13.

* Prax. spir. Refert etiam Theodoretus in bist. Relig.



second Council of *Nice*, we read that a holy Man call'd *Eusebius* sitting one day in the field with another Anchorer, call'd *Amianus*, and this *Amianus* reading one of the Books of the Gospel, which the other explicated, it happen'd that *Eusebius* cast his Eyes upon the Laborers, who till'd the ground in a field hard by, and at the same time this distraction hinder'd him from attending to what was read; so that *Amianus* lighting by chance upon a very hard passage, ask'd him its explication: *Eusebius*, who had not attended, desir'd him to read it the second time; whereby *Amianus* came to know he had been distracted, and repeating it, told him it was no wonder he had not heard the words of the Gospel, since he had distracted himself by looking upon the Work-men. *Eusebius* remain'd so confounded at this check, that for the future he strictly prohibited his Eyes from beholding either that Plain, or the Stars of Heaven any more; and presently rising up, he took a little by path, and retir'd himself into a poor Cell which he never afterwards quitted; living more than forty Years in this strait Prison, to which he had condemn'd himself; confirming this his Resolution by such a kind of necessity, as might force him to keep it: For he bound his Reins with a girdle of Iron, and put another of a greater weight about his Neck, and then joyn'd these two together by a great Chain, which he fasten'd to the Earth; to the end he might always be constrain'd to remain in such a bending or bowing posture; that he cou'd not go into the fields round about him, nor so much as look upon 'em, nor even lift up his Eyes to Heaven. This was the manner wherewith this holy Man chastis'd himself for one light inadvertency, for one single dissipation of mind, whilst the other read the Word of God. Is not this sufficient to give us an extream confusion, for the little concern we have for all those distractions, that daily happen to us in the like occasions?



THE SECOND TREATISE OF

The Perfection of our Ordinary Actions.

CHAP. I.

*That our Advancement and Perfection
consists in the well performance of our
Ordinary Actions.*

PERFORM well, what is just : says our Lord to his Elect People in *Deuteronomy*. 'Tis not sufficient for our advancement and perfection, that we perform our Actions, but we must perform them well; in like manner, 'tis not enough to be a Religious Man; but we must endeavour to be a good one. Saint *Hierom*

understanding that Saint *Paulinus* prais'd him very much, for living in the place where our Saviour **JESUS CHRIST** wrought the Mysteries of our Redemption, writ thus to him,

* *Not the living in Jerusalem, but the living well in Jerusalem is a subject worthy of praise: Which saying, became afterwards a Proverb amongst the Religious, and*

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shew'd

† Juxta quod
justum est,
persequeris.
Deut. 16. 20.

* Non Yeru-
solyms fuisse,
sed Jerosoly-
mis bene vi-
xisse laudan-
dum est.
*Hieron. ep. ad
Paul. de insit.
Memach.*

shew'd 'em, that 'twas not sufficient for their Salvation, to live in a Monastery; nor that the place, nor the Habit, but Purity and Sanctity of Life, makes a true Religious Man. Wherefore, the chief point consists not in being Religious, but in being a good one; not in performing the exercises of Religion, but in performing 'em well: † *He did all things well*, sayd the People speaking of Jesus CHRIST, and 'tis truly in this well that our well-being consists.

'Tis certain, that the good or bad state of our Souls, depend upon our good or bad Works; because, such as our works are, such shall we also be; since they alone discover what we are. The Tree is known by its fruit; and according to Saint Austin, * *Man is a Tree, and his works the fruit, and therefore by the fruit of his works, we may soon perceive what every Man is.* Our Saviour also speaking of Hypocrites and false Prophets, says, † *You may know them by their Fruits*; and on the other side speaking of himself, * *The works*, says he, *which I do in the Name of my Father, give Testimony of me; and if you will not believe me, believe at least my Works; they tell you who I am.* But our Actions do not only discover, what we are in this Life; but also foretell, what we must be in the next; for as we are in this Life, such we shall for ever be in the Life to come: Because, God will recompence every one according to his Works, as the Holy Scripture teaches us, in divers places of the Old and New Testament. † *You O Lord*, says the Psalmist, *will render to every one according to his Works*: And Saint Paul writing to the Romans, * *Whatever any Man*, says he, *shall have sown in this Life, that shall he reap, after his Death, in the next.*

But let us descend to particulars, and see what those Actions are, upon which all our good, and all our advancement and Perfection depend. I say, these are no other than our common and ordinary Actions, such as we daily perform: 'Tis, to make our Prayer well, and ordinary Exams, which we are daily accusom'd to make; to hear, or say Mass with due respect; to retire the Divine Office, and Vocal Prayers with fervor and attention; to exercise our selves continually in Penance and Mortification, to acquit our selves well of our charge, and of what Obedience imposes upon us; infine, 'tis the well performance of the most frequent, and familiar Actions of our Life;

in

† Bene omnia fecit.
Matth. 7. 37.

* Aug. de serm. Dom. in monte secund. Matth. lib. 2. cap. 28.

† A fructibus eorum cognoscetis eos.
Matth. 7. 16.

* Opera que ego facio in nomine Patris mei, hæc testimonium perhibent de me. Etsi mihi non vultis credere, operibus credite.
Joan. 10. 25. & 38.

† Quia tu reddes unicuique juxta opera sua.
1^a Cor. 6. 13.

* Quæ seminat homo, hæc & metet.
Ad Gal. 6. 8.

in which our advancement and perfection consists. We shall soon become perfect, if we perform these perfectly well; we shall still remain imperfect, if we perform 'em imperfectly; this then is all, that properly mak's the difference between a perfect and imperfect Religious Man. For our perfection proceed's not from our doing more things than another do's, but from our doing 'em better; and proportionably to the manner that every one works, every one will infallibly become more or less perfect.

The Son of God, tell's us in the Parable of the Sower, † That the grain which was sow'd in good grounds, in one place render'd thirty, in another sixty, and in another a hundred fold. Whereby, as the Saints expound this parable, our Saviour wou'd manifest to us, the three different degrees of those that serve God; that is to say, those that begin, tho'e that have made some progress, and those that are arriv'd to the height of Perfection. We all sow the same grain; because we all perform the same Actions, and observe the same Rule; all of us have the same hours for Prayer, and Examin's; and from Morning till Night, we are all employ'd according to the prescription of Obedience. Yet for all this, * What difference is there between Man and Man, between one Religious, and another? In some, the works they sow, produce a hundred fold; because they perform 'em with an extream fervor of Spirit, and a very great purity of intention; and these are such as are Perfect: In some others they render sixty, and these are they who still advance in the way, but are not yet arriv'd to Perfection: And others reap only thirty for one, and these are beginners only in God's Service. Let every one therefore see, to which of these degrees he is arriv'd: See if you be not amongst those, who render only thirty fold; and God grant, that none of us find our selves of the number of them, of whom the Apostle Saint Paul makes mention: † They have gather'd together, says he, and built upon the foundation of Faith, with Wood and Straw; to burn in the Day of our Lord. Take care therefore you do nothing out of ostentation, out of human respects, to please Men, or gain their esteem; for this were to make a building of Wood or Straw, to burn, at least, in Purgatory: But endeavour to perform all your Actions with the greatest perfection you are able; whereby, you will, as Saint Paul lays, Erect a Structure, all of Gold, Silver, and Precious Stones;

† Matth. 13.
8. & 23.

* Homini
homo quid
præstat?

† 1. Ad Cor.
3. 12. 13.

The truth of what I have already sayd, will more clearly be comprehended, by establishing this Maxim, that our advancement and perfection consist in two things; *In doing what God would have us; and in doing it, as he would have us perform it;* for 'tis certain that these two points comprehend all Perfection. As to the first, all Religious by God's great Mercy are hereunto arriv'd; and 'tis without doubt one of the greatest advantages and comforts that Religious persons have; that they are secure that whatsoever they do by Obedience, is without doubt, what God would have 'em to do. This proposition is a kind of Religious Maxim, intirely conformable to the Doctrin of Saints, and the Gospel it self; as I shall prove more amply, when I speak of Obedience. † *He who hears you, hears me,* says our Saviour. So that by obeying our Superior we obey God, and perform his Divine Will; because 'tis what he precisely demands of us. And as to the second point, which is, that perfection consists in doing the things that God Commands, as he would have us perform 'em; as it cannot be doubted, but that he would have us do them with all possible perfection, so 'tis not at all necessary to enlarge farther hereupon, or prove a truth so evident in it self. 'Tis recounted in the Chronicles of the *Cistercian Order*, that Saint Bernard being with his Religious at Mattins, saw a great many Angels, who noted, and writ down the actions of each one of his Religious, and in what manner they perform'd 'em; and according to the greater or less attention and fervor in their Singing or Praying, they noted the action either in Letters of Gold or Silver, or else with Ink or Water: But of some they writ nothing at all; who being only present in Body, but absent in Spirit, let themselves be carry'd away with vain and unprofitable thoughts. He perceiv'd also that the Angels, chiefly at the *Te Deum*, were very much concern'd that the Religious shou'd sing it devoutly, and he saw as it were flames, come out of the Mouth's of those who perform'd it with Fervor. Let each one reflect upon himself, and take notice after what manner he makes his Prayer; to see whether it deserves to be written in Gold or Silver Letters, or with Ink or Water; or infine, not to be noted at all. Let him observe whether the flames of his Heart, issue out of his Mouth by fervorous aspirations, or whether he yawnes out of laziness and disgust; and infine, let him reflect,

† Qui vos
audit, me
audit.
Luc. 10. 16.

reflect, whether he be there present in Body only, but elsewhere in Mind, having it dissipated with the thoughts of his Studies, with the care of his Affairs, or with other things, still more to be condemn'd.

C H A P. II.

That Perfection consists in such easie matters, that we ought to be extreamly encourag'd to labor to attain it.

WHEN Father *Natalis*, a Man Famous, in the Society of *JESUS*; both for Learning and Vertue, visited the Provinces of *Spain*, he recommended nothing more than a continual inculcating this truth; that all our advancement and Perfection, consisted not in the performance of very extraordinary things, or in the being employ'd in the highest and most laborious Offices of Religion, but only in doing our ordinary Actions well, and in acquitting our selves well in whatsoever Obedience employs us, be it never so mean or easie. For 'tis this, that God requires of us, and consequently 'tis upon this alone we are to fix our Eyes, if we desire to please him, and to acquire our End. Wherefore let us now see, and examen at how easie a rate we may become Perfect; because this may be compass'd without doing any thing else, than what we every day perform: And we shall without doubt find, that this ought to be a very great comfort to every one of us, and a great motive for our encouragement: To which perfect on if we cou'd not arrive but by the exercise of some great Employments, by extraordinary elevations of Spirit, and by sublime Meditations, we might have some thing to plead for our excuse, alledging our incapacity, and declaring we are not able to fly so high. Were it exacted of you that you daily disciplin'd your self to Bloud, fasted
with

with Bread and Water; went bare-foot, and wore a continual hair-cloth: You might answer that you have not strength sufficient to undergo these Mortifications. But 'tis not this, that is desir'd of you; 'tis not this, upon which your Perfection depends: But it consists only in the performing well, the same actions you do; by this you may render your self perfect if you please; all the expences is already made; there's no necessity of adding any other actions than those you do. Who will not therefore encourage himself to acquire perfection, since 'tis thus within our reach, and consists only in such ordinary and easie things? God the better to excite his People to serve him, and to fulfil his Law, spoke to them in this manner: † *The Commandement which I give you to day, consists not in any thing above your reach, nor is it far from you; 'tis not in Heaven, whereby you might excuse your self, saying, who is able to ascend to Heaven, to fetch it from thence, to the end that we may hear, and fulfil it? Nor is it any thing on the other side the Sea, so that one may complain and say, who of us is able to pass the Seas, to go to fetch it, to the end that we may hear, and perform what is requir'd of us? But 'tis a thing very near you, a Precept with which you often entertain your selves, which you have often in your Mouth, of which the execution depends upon no other, than your own Heart.* We may say the same of the perfection we speak of; and this is also the same means that Saint Antony * us'd, to exhort his Disciples thereunto. "The Greeks, says he, who gave themselves to the study of Wisdom, undertook great Voyages, both by Sea and Land, underwent great labors and hardships; and expos'd themselves to very great dangers to obtain it: But you, to acquire Vertue, which is true Wisdom, are not oblig'd to go so far, nor to expose your selves to so great danger; you need not even go out of your Cell's, for there you will find it, or rather, † *The Kingdom of God is within your selves; 'tis in such things as are most familiar to you, and that you do every day, in which your perfection consists.*

When, those times approach that are more particularly Consecrated to Devotion, as for example, Advent, Lent, Pentecost, and Renovation of Vows, 'tis then that ordinarily in our Spiritual Conferences, we ask what means we may best make use of to prepare our selves, to be born again

† Mandatum hoc, quod ego præcipio tibi hodie, non supra te est, nec procul positum, nec in cælo situm, ut possis dicere: Quis nostrum valet ad cælum ascendere, ut deferat illud ad nos, ut audiamus, atque opere compleamur? Nec trans mare positum, ut cauteris, & dicas: Quis ex nobis poterit transire: are mare, & illud ad nos usque deferre, ut possimus audire, & facere quod præceptum est. Sed juxta te est sermo valde in ore tuo, & in corde tuo, ut facias illum.

Deut. 30. 11. ad 15.

* Ant. Abb.

† Regnum Dei intra vos est. Luc. 17. 21.

again with JESUS CHRIST, to Die and Rise with him, to receive the Holy Ghost, and to Renew our Vows; and then our Directors fail not to suggest an infinity of most wholesom and proper means, to obtain these ends: But the most important of all, and that in which we ought most to confide, is, what we speak of at present; that is, the perfecting our selves in those things, we are accusom'd to perform. Correct every Day those faults and imperfections you commit, and Daily apply your self to perform 'em better and better; and this will be an excellent preparation to compass all you desire: Infine, apply your self chiefly to this, and look upon all other things, as means only to help you to perform it.

C H A P. III.

In what the goodness and perfection of our Actions consist, and some means, to help us to perform 'em well.

LET us now see in what the goodness of our Actions consists, to the end that thereby we may better come to know the means of performing 'em well. I say, they consist in two things; of which the first and chiefest is, that we Act purely for God. Saint Ambrose * ask's the reason why God in the Creation of the World, after he had Created the living Creatures, and all other Corporal things, prais'd 'em at the same instant? † He Created the Plants, and Trees; says the Scripture; and he saw that 'twas good: He Created the Beasts upon the Earth, the Birds also, and Fishes; and he saw that 'twas good: He Created the Heavens, and Stars, the Sun, and Moon; and he saw that 'twas good: Infine. he prais'd every thing he Created, as soon as he had perfect'd its Creation. But as soon as he had Created Man, he seem's to leave him alone without praise, because he added not presently He saw that he was good, as he had sayd of the rest.

What

* Ambros. lib.
de inst. Virg.
ad Euseb. c. 3.

† Et vidit
Deus, quod
esset bonum,
Gen. 1. 10. 12.
&c.

What Mystery is there in this? And what can be the cause of this difference that God mak's? The cause, says this great Saint is this; *That the beauty and goodness of Beasts and Corporal things, consist entirely in their outward appearance; and that there is nothing at all, besides what presently appears outwardly to the Eye, that is perfect in them; and therefore they may be prais'd as soon as they are seen. But the goodness and perfection of Man consist not in the exterior, but in what lies inwardly hid: † All the glory of the Kings Daughter is from within, 'tis this which is pleasing in God's sight: * For Man sees only what outwardly appears,* says our Lord to Samuel, *but God penetrates to the bottom of the Heart.* He sees with what Intention every one performs each Action; and 'tis upon this account, that he did not praise Man, as he did all other Creatures, as soon as he had Created him. The Intention is the foundation of the goodness of all our Action: The foundations are not seen, and yet they alone sustain the whole Edifice; our Intention also do's the same.

The second thing requir'd for the Perfection of all our Actions, is, that we do what we can, to perform 'em well. 'Tis not enough that your Intention is good, nor to say, that you do this for God: But the better to please him, you must endeavour to perform it after the best manner possible. The first means therefore to perform our Actions well, is to perform 'em purely for God: For hereby, tho' our Superiors do not behold us, and tho' Men cannot see every thing we do, yet the desire we have to please God, will make us force our selves to perform all our Actions with all the Perfection we are able, and infinite to imitate those who truly work for God. Saint Ignatius, once ask'd a Brother, whom he saw perform his Office very negligently; *Dear Brother, for whom do you do that? For the Love of God,* answer'd the Brother. *Then I assure you,* reply'd the Saint, *if you do so hereafter, I shall give you a severe Penance: For if you did it for Men, 'twere no great fault to do it with so little care as you do, but since you do it for so great a Master, with so great carelessness, it cannot be excus'd.*

The second means, which the Saints propose as most efficacious, is always to walk in God's Presence. And Seneca himself says, *† That when we desire to be Vertuous, and to do all things very well, we ought to imagine our selves* in

† Omnis gloria ejus fi-
lii Regis ab-
intus.

Ps. 44. 15.
* Homo e-
nim videt ea
quæ parent;
Dominus au-
tem intuetur
cor.
Reg. 16. 7.

† Sic vive
tamquam sub
alicujus boni

in the presence of some person of great Quality. And accustom our selves to say and do all things, as we should do or say, were we actually in his presence. And if this may be sufficient to oblige us to perform our duty exactly, of what efficacy will it be, to place our selves always in God's presence, and think every moment that he sees us; especially, since this is not a meer imagination, but a real truth, as the Scripture teaches us in divers places? † *The Eyes of our Lord are more glorious than the Sun, looking round about upon all the ways of Men, and upon the bottom of the Abyss; and penetrating the most secret corners of Mans Heart.*

We shall hereafter in another place, treat expressly of the Presence of God; where we shall make appear how profitable a thing it is, and how much recommended by the Saints, to put our selves always in God's presence: What we ought to draw from this subject at present, is, to consider how much it will help us to perform our ordinary Actions well. And tho' 'tis of so great importance, as we shall prove in its due place, yet we ought not in this continual reflection which we make upon God's Presence, to have that for the chief mark we aim at, but only look upon it as a very proper means or help, for the well performance of all our Actions; for should it happen, that our attention to the Presence of God in our Actions should cause us to perform 'em negligently, and thereby make us commit several faults, this would be no good or true Devotion, but a pure illusion. Since the true Presence of God, which we ought always to have before our Eyes, and which the Scripture and Saints recommend unto us, is to take great care to do all our Actions so, that they may be fit to appear in his sight, and may contain nothing unworthy of his Divine Presence; in a word we ought so to perform 'em, as tho' we perform'd 'em in his holy sight. Saint John, seems to mind us of this in the *Apocamps*, when speaking of the four Beasts he saw before the Throne of God, he says, * *That within and without, before and behind, and of all sides, they were full of Eyes;* to signifie that those who would perfectly serve God, and be worthy of his Presence, ought to be very circumspect, to do nothing, whereby they may render themselves unworthy to appear before him: You ought to be full of Eyes, Within and without, to take care of all your Actions; of your steps, your looks, your words; of what

Tom I.

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you

viri ac semper
presentis o-
culis.
Seneca ep. 25.

† Oculi Do-
mini multo
plus lucidiores
sunt super so-
lem, circum-
spicientes om-
nes vias ho-
minum, &
profundum a-
byss, & ho-
minum corda
intuentes in
absconditis-
partes.
Eccli. 23. 28.
Job. 34. 21.
Prov. 5. 21.

* Apoc. 4. 8.

you hear, of what you think, and infine, of what you desire, and of what you love; to the end that in all your Thoughts, Words, and Actions, there may be nothing disagreeable in the sight of God, in whose presence you are.

Behold here a most excellent manner of walking in God's presence: Let us also take notice that instead of these Words in *Genesis*. † *Enoch walk'd with God*, that is to say, before God, and *disappear'd because our Lord took him*; *Ecclesiasticus* and Saint Paul say, * *Enoch pleas'd God, and was Translated to Paradise*; giving us hereby to understand, that there's no difference between walking with or before God, and in pleasing God; because the Wise Man and the Apostle explicate indifferently, and the one and the other expression, and make 'em to signifie the self same thing. *Origen* and Saint *Austin* give the same explication to what is sayd in *Exodus*, where when *Jeibro* came to see his Son-in-Law *Moyse*; *Aaron* and the chief of the People of *Israel* assembl'd themselves † *To Eat Bread with him before the Lord*. The Scripture says not, that they assembl'd themselves to Eat before the Tabernacle, or before the Ark, because they were not then in being; but they met together to rejoyce, and divert themselves with him, by entertaining and feasting him; and kept the same moderation, and decency during their mirth and feasting, as they would have done, had they eaten in God's Presence; taking care there shou'd be nothing, that might offend his Sacred Eyes. 'Tis after this manner, that the Just and Perfect walk before God in all things, even in the most indifferent, and necessary actions for the preservation of Life: * *Let the just*, says the Royal Prophet, *feast and rejoyce themselves in God's sight*. Let them Eat, Drink, and Recreate, so they do it in his sight, and do nothing that is indecent, or unworthy of his Divine Presence.

Many Saints affirm, that we ought to understand those Words of our Saviour, in this sense, † *We must always Pray without ceasing*; and also these of Saint Paul, * *Pray without intermission*; and they moreover add that those who perform what they do well, Pray always. Saint *Austin* speaking of these words of the Psalmist, * *I will celebrate thy praise all the Day long*, wou'd you know, says he, *the way to praise God always? Perform what you do well, and you will praise him continually. They Pray always,*

† Ambulavitque cum Deo, & non apparuit, quia tulit eum Dominus.

Gen. 5. 24.
* Enoch placuit Deo, & translatus est in Paradisum. Eccli. 44. 16. Ad Hebr. 11. 5.

* Ut comederent panem cum eo coram Deo. Exod. 18. 12.

* Iusti epulentur, & exultent in conspectu Dei, & delectentur in letitia. Psal. 67. 4.

† Oportet semper orare, & non desicere. Luc. 18. 1.
* Sine intermissione orate 1 ad Thess. 5. 17.
* quidquid egeris, benedice, & laudasti Deum. Aug. sup. illud Psal. 34. 28. Conc. 2. in fine. Tota die laudem tuam.

Part. I. Of our Daily Actions.

99

always, says Saint Hilary, † who always perform their Actions to please and glorifie God, whereby they make their Life a perpetual Prayer, and they who thus Live Night and Day according to his Law, their Lives are no other, than a continual Meditation thereof. Saint Hierom, writing upon this Verse of the Psalmist: * Sun and Moon praise ye the Lord, and let the light and all the Stars praise him: Asks how the Sun and Moon, the Light, and Stars can praise God? And answers the question himself: † By never failing to do their duty, and by continually complying with those Obligations God imposd upon 'em, in the Moment of their Creation; by this continual service, they render to God a continual praise; so that whosoever acquires himself well of his charge, and performs his more ordinary Actions well, to which his Profession obliges him, such a one praises God always, and exercises continual Prayer. This Doctrine may also be confirm'd by those Words of the Holy Ghost in Ecclesiastes: * He who observes the Law, multiplies Prayer; 'tis a wholesom Sacrifice to keep the Commandments, and withdraw ones self from all kind of Iniquity. Such Persons as these let us see, of how great Perfection it is, to perform our ordinary Actions well; because hereby we encrease our Prayer, we walk always in God's Presence, and we offer a continual Sacrifice, which is pleasing to him, and wholesom and profitable to us.

† Per hoc enim efficiunt, ut sine intermissione oramus, cum per opera Deo placita, & in gloriam ejus semper exercita, sancti christique viri vicia omnia oratio fit; ac sic secundum legem nocte dieque vivendo, vita ipsa nocturna legis erit & diurna meditatio.

Hil. sup. Ps. 1. 2.

* Laudate eum Sol & Luna: laudate eum omnes Stellæ & Lumen.

Psal. 148. 3.

† In eo quod a suo officio, & servitio non recedunt, ipsorum laus Dei est.

Hieron. in illud Psal. 148.

* Qui conservat legem, multiplicat obligationem, sacrificium salutare est attendere mandatis, & discedere ab omni iniquitate.

Ecc. 35. 2. & 2.

N. 2. C H A P.

C H A P. IV.

That another means to perform our Actions well, is to imagine each one, the only one we have to do.

THE third means to do our Actions well, is, to perform each of 'em a part, after such a manner as tho' we had nothing else to do; to make our Prayer, to say Mass, to recite our Beads, and Divine Office, and to do all the rest of our Actions, as if in effect we had nothing else to perform but this we are about. There's nothing that requires hast, wherefore let nothing trouble us whilst we are otherwise employ'd, nor let us permit one Action to hinder another, but intirely apply our selves to that we are about. Whilst we are at our Prayers, let us not think of our Studies, nor of any thing else, nor even of the duties of our Office or employment; which thoughts serve only to withdraw us from our present business, and to hinder us from well acquitting our selves of what we are about. We have the rest of the whole day to Study in, or to satisfy the other obligations of our charge: † *All things have there time*; let us not confound or disturb their order to no purpose; but let us remember, our Saviours Words; * *That 'tis sufficient for the day, the evil thereof*. Each days disquiet and affliction is sufficient to take up our thoughts, without thinking of the evils to come. This is so profitable a means, and so conformable to reason, that the Pagans themselves made use of it, to be able to keep themselves with more profound respect before their false God's and Idols; from whence came that ancient Proverb: † *Let those sit that Adore*. Let those that Adore God in Prayer, and thereby entertain themselves with him, do it with repose and attention, and not run about as if they were thinking of something else.

Plutarch

† Omnia
tempus habent
Ecclef. 3. 1.

* Sufficit
dici malitia
sua.
Matth. 6. 34.

† Adoraturi
sedant.
*Paul. Man. in
Adagio.*

Plutarch speaking of the reverence with which Priests in his time approach'd their God's, says, that whilst the Priest offer'd Sacrifice, there was one appointed to cry out continually with a loud Voice, *Do what you do*; as if he wou'd have sayd, think of nothing else but what you are doing, distract not your self, but wholly apply your mind to your present business. 'Tis this means that at present I propose to you, whereby to do all things well, tie your selves close and intirely to this action alone, as if you had nothing else to do; attend only to this, apply all your care and cast away all other thoughts; and you will never fail to do well. Let us do what we are about, at present, sayd * *Aristippus*, without thinking either of what is past or to come; and let us wholly apply our selves to the present Action; because 'tis that alone which is in our power; and that which is to come, is so uncertain, that we cannot answer, whether it will happen or no: How happy shou'd we be, if we cou'd gain so much upon our selves, and were so much Masters of our own thoughts and imaginations, that we never thought of any thing, but what we are at present about? But by reason of the great instability of our Heart, and because on the other side, the Devil is crafty and industrious, in profiting by our Natural levity, even then when we are employ'd about any thing, he sets before our Eyes what we shou'd do at another time, thereby to distract our minds, and divert us from doing what we are about at present. This kind of distraction is so much the more eagerly propos'd by him, by how much he sees 'tis more dangerous and prejudicial to us; for by this means he hinders us from ever performing any thing well. In time of Prayer; he fills our mind with the thoughts of our Studies and other Affairs; to the end we may not be able to perform it as we ought; and as long as he can but take away our attention from what we are about, he ceases not to suggest a thousand excellent means, how afterwards to perform our other Actions well. But when we come to do them, he will not fail to set others that are to come before our Eyes; to the end that we may not acquit our selves so well in what we are about at present, endeavouring after this manner continually to deceive us, and to render all our Actions Imperfect. But since † *We are not ignorant of his thoughts*. Let us lay aside the thinking of future affairs; casting 'em away as

† *Plut. in Numa. agē quod agis.*

* *Quid nunc instat agamus. Aristipp. refer. Elian. lib. 14. hist.*

† *Non enim ignoramus cogitationes ejus. 2 ad Cor. 2. 11.*

soon

soon as they present themselves: 'Twill be good to think of 'em in their due time; but 'tis ill to do so when we ought to be taken up with other thoughts. But if the fear of not being able afterwards to think of those things, that now represent themselves to your imagination, cause you to stay upon 'em; it ought to let you see, that 'tis not an inspiration from God, but a Temptation of the Devil: For God is a friend of Peace, and of Order; and therefore whatever troubles your repose; and hinders the order of things, comes not from God but from the Devil, who loves only confusion and disorder. Cast away therefore whatsoever presents it self to your imagination, under this pretence to turn or hinder you from what you are about; and assure your self that if then you perform your duty well, that God will not fail to put you in mind again in due time, of those thoughts, you had before banish'd for his sake, and fix 'em again with greater advantage in your mind. If for example, it happens that in time of your Spiritual Exercises you should be surpriz'd with some thought of your Studies; and some convincing reason offers it self about some hard point or difficulty, or any light concerning some obscure passage, or a solution of some hard doubt; cast all equally away, and believe that you will be rather a gainer than a looser thereby. † *The knowledge that is despis'd for the sake of Vertue, says Saint Bonaventure, is afterwards acquir'd by the Vertue it self:* And Father Avila advises us, when any business comes into our mind out of due time, to say, * God ordains not this at present; wherefore I will not think on't; when he pleases to command me, I will diligently apply my self to it.

† Scientia
quæ pro virtute
despicitur, per
virtutem post-
modum meli-
us invenitur.
Ien. in spec.
dist. 2. c. 7.
* Avila tom.
3. epist.

C H A P. V.

Another means to do our Actions well, is to perform each one, as if 'twere the very last Action of our Life.

ANother means which the Saints teach us for the well performance of our Actions, is, to perform 'em as if each Action were to be the last, we were to perform in this Life. Saint Bernard speaking of the manner, wherewith a Religious Man ought to comport himself in all he do's, says, † *That in all his Actions, he shou'd often repeat to himself; Were you to die presently, wou'd you do this?* And Saint Basil gives us the same Counsel, when he says, * *Have always your last hour before your Eyes: When you rise in the Morning, doubt whether you shall live till night; and when you go to bed at night, do not assure your self that you shall live till next morning; and in this manner 'twill be very easie for you to correct all your Vices: Thomas à Kempis* † says as much almost in the same terms. Saint Anthony, * also gave the same advice to his Disciples, to encourage 'em to Vertue and Perfection: And without doubt there's no better means to help us to do our Actions well, than to believe each day to be our last. If we cou'd put our selves into this disposition of mind; and perform every thing as if we were to die, as soon as we had done it, we shou'd perform our Actions after a far different manner, and with far greater Perfection than we do. With what Fervor wou'd a Priest say Mass, if he thought 'twou'd be the last Action of his Life, and that afterwards he shou'd have no more time to Merit, or perform the least good Work? What attention and zeal shou'd we not have in our Prayer, if we were perswaded it were to be our last, and that we shou'd never have any more leisure to ask God pardon for our Sins, and

† In omni opere suo dicat sibi ipsi: Si modo moriturus esses, faceres istud? Bern. in spec. Monac.

* Semper ante oculos tuos veritus ultimus dies. Cum enim diluculo surrexeris, ad vesperum te ambigas pervenire; & cum in lectulum ad quiescendum membra tua posueris, noli confidere de lucis adventu, ut facilius te possis ab omnibus vitiis refrænare. Basil. in 3. ad Filium spir. † Th. à Kemp. l. 1. c. 23. n. 3. Ans. Abbas. in ejus vita.

implore his Mercy? 'Tis for this reason that we commonly say, there's no better place to Pray in, than at Sea, because we find our Fervor far different, when we have Death before our Eyes, then when we are in no fright or fear at all.

'Tis reported of a Holy Religious Man, who was daily wont to go to Confession before he say'd Mass; that suddenly falling very Sick, and his Superior seeing him in great danger of Death, acquainted him with it, advising him to Confess himself, as if he were presently to die: God be prais'd, sayd the sick Man, lifting up his Eyes and Hands to Heaven, 'tis about Thirty Years since I daily made my Confession, as if I were to die the next moment; so that there remains no more at present for me to do, than to dispose my self to receive my Viaticum. 'Tis after this manner we ought to perform all our Actions, let us Confess, let us Communicate, as thô we were to die as soon as we had done it; and doing so, 'twill not be necessary at the hour of Death, that we Confess our selves in such a manner as if we were to die; but it will suffice that we dispose or reconcile our selves, as we often do a moment before Communion; to put our selves into a State of Receiving more worthily our Lords Body. If we carry this precaution along with us, Death will always find us prepar'd, and will never surprize us. Behold here is the best secret we can serve our selves withal, to be preserv'd from the misfortune of a sudden Death † *Happy, says JESUS CHRIST, is that Servant whom his Master at his arrival shall find busie in performing his duty.* Job us'd this conduct, as he himself tell's us, * *From the time of my combat in this Life, I daily attend when my change will come; you will call me O- Lord and I will answer you: Call me when you please, in what place or employment soever I am in, I am always ready to answer to your call.*

'Tis one of the best means, to know certainly whether we walk rightly before God, to consider whether we are in a state to answer him, at what time soever he calls, and in what employment soever we are about. I speak not here of an infallible certainty, because such a one is not to be had in this life, without a particular Revelation; but I speak only of a probable conjecture, which is all we can pretend unto; and I say that the

† Beatus ille
servus, quem
cum venerit
Dominus ejus
invenit sic
facientem.

Matth 24. 45.

* Cunctis
diebus, qui-
bus nunc mi-
lito, expecto
donec veniat
immutatio
mea. Vocabis
me, & ego
respondebo
tibi.

Job. 14. 15.

the most proper means for the knowledge of this, is to take notice whether in the condition, and present conjuncture we are in, and in the very Action we are about, we shou'd be content to be surpris'd by Death. Think whether you are as ready to answer to God as *Job* was, in case he shou'd call you this very moment; try your selves often in this manner; sound your Hearts and ask your self, whether in the State you are in, you wou'd be content to render your last account at his Tribunal. For my part when I reflect hereupon; and ask my self whether in this very moment, and in this Action I am about, I shou'd not fear Death, methinks my affairs go well, if I find no reproach of Conscience to the contrary. On the other side if I find, that I wou'd not willingly have Death approach, and take me in the state and occupation I am in, but shou'd wish he wou'd defer his coming for some time, till the things which take up my thoughts at present, and hinder me from performing my duty, were finish'd: I take this for an evident sign, that I have not the care I ought, for my Spiritual advancement. And that I do not satisfy the obligations of a good Religious Man: For according to what *Thomas à Kempis* says, † *If you had a good Conscience you wou'd not fear Death, because 'tis Sin, and not Death which we ought to apprehend.* Wherefore since you fear it so much, 'tis a sign that your Conscience reproaches you of something, and that your accounts with God are not well stated. A good Steward who has his accounts in good order, desires nothing more than to give 'em up; but he whose accounts are out of order, is always in fear he shou'd be call'd upon, and thinks of nothing else but how to gain time, and defer the giving 'em as long as he is able.

Saint Francis Borgia sayd, that the best exercise a Religious Man cou'd perform, wou'd be Four and Twenty times a day to put himself in the condition of a dying Man; and that he thought himself in a good state, when often repeating these words, *I must die to day*, he found nothing that troubl'd him. Let every one enter into himself, and make a strict inquiry hereupon; and if in the moment you make this reflection, you find you are not in the state, you wou'd be in were you to die, endeavour to put your self into it, and dispose your self well for this dangerous passage, imagine that you ask God some few days

Tom. I.

O

more

† Si bonam
conscientiam
haberes non
multum mor-
tem timeres,
melius esset
peccata cave-
re, quam mor-
tem fugere.
Tho. à Kempis.
lib. 1. cap. 25.

S

more to prepare your self for it, and that he grants 'em you; and endeavour to make a profit of the respite he gives you, by living during this time, as if you were to die the moment after: Happy is he who is such during his life, as he desires to be at the hour of his Death.

Nothing makes a deeper impression upon the minds of Men, then the Preaching this truth home unto them, admonishing 'em not to defer their Conversion from day to day; because to morrow is uncertain, and they know not whether ever they shall live to see it. † *He who has promis'd Pardon*, says Saint Gregory, *to those that Repent, has not promis'd a next day for Repentance to those who Sin.*

We ordinarily say, that there's nothing more certain than Death, and nothing more uncertain then the hour in which it will happen. But the Saviour of the World says yet more than this: * *Be ready*, says he, *because the Son of Man will come, at the hour you least expect.* For thô he speaks in this place of the general Day of Judgment, yet this may be understood also of the hour of Death; because then each one shall receive his particular Judgment, and such a Sentence, as being once pronounc'd will never be revok'd, but confirm'd at that great and general Day. JESUS CHRIST, do's not content himself with saying the hour is uncertain, and that we know not when it will come, but he says it will come at an hour when we least expect it, and perhaps when we are least of all prepar'd for it.

Saint Paul tells the *Thessalonians*, † *That he will come like a Thief in the Night*: And Saint John in the *Apocalyps* speaking in God's Name, says: * *I will come to you as a Thief, and you shall not know at what hour it will be.* A Thief gives no notice when he will come, but attends the hour when we are least upon our guard, and when the World is buried in Sleep; wherefore this comparison which the Son of God gives us, is also an instruction to teach us the manner how we ought to prepare our selves, to the end that Death surprize us not, nor find us unprepar'd. † *Know ye*, says he, *that if the Father of the Family knew at what hour the Thief wou'd come, he wou'd watch and wou'd not suffer him to break open his House.* But because he cannot foresee the hour, nor whether 'twill be in the beginning, towards the middle, or in the end of the Night, he continually stands upon his guard to hinder himself from being Robb'd. 'Tis after this manner,

† Qui poenitentibus veniam spopondit, peccantibus crastinam diem non promittit. Greg. hom. 12. in Evang.

* Et vos estote parati, quia quâ horâ non putatis, filius hominis veniet. Luc. 12. 40.

† Sicut fur in nocte, ita veniet. 1 ad Thess. 5. 2. * Veniam ad te tanquam fur, & nescies quâ horâ veniam ad te. Apoc. 3. 3.

† Hoc autem scitote, quoniam si sciret Pater familias quâ horâ fur veniret, vigileret utique, & non sineret perfodiri domum suam. Luc. 12. 39.

manner, we ought to be ready at all times, and in all places whatsoever; because Death will attack us, when we least think of it.

* The Saints hereupon take notice, that 'tis a very great Mercy of God that the hour of Death should be uncertain, to the end we might always be prepar'd for it; for if we knew its time, this assurance would give us occasion to become more loose, and to sin with greater confidence. If as uncertain as we are of the hour of Death, we live notwithstanding with so great negligence. What would we do if we were assur'd we should not die for some time? Saint Bonaventure says, that God would leave us in this incertitude, to the end that we might make no esteem of Temporal things; that seeing every hour, nay every moment we may loose 'em, we might not any ways be ty'd to them, but aspire to those we shall always possess, after we shall once have gain'd 'em: † Fool says the Son of God, to the Rich Covetous Man, *this Night thy Soul shall be requir'd of thee, and what then will become of all those Riches thou hast gather'd together?*

* Aug. in Ps. 144. Greg. hom. 13. c. 11. 12. Mor. c. 20. Bon. de prof. rel. l. 1. c. 17.

† Stulte, hac nocte animam tuam repetent à te: quæ autem parasti? cuius erunt? Luc. 12. 20.

What we Preach to others let us make profit of our selves, to avoid the reproach of Saint Paul, * *Thou who Instruct others, Instruct not your self.* One of the Temptations the Devil most commonly makes use of to deceive Worldlings, is, to hide as much as he can from 'em, so clear a truth as this, to divert their Eyes and their thoughts from it, and make 'em believe that there's time enough for all, and that one day they will grow better, and live after another manner than they now do. But 'tis not only Worldlings he abuses after this manner, but he also deceives many Religious after the same fashion, and continually persuad's 'em to defer their Spiritual advancement from one day to another, to neglect to apply themselves seriously to their duties, or to regulate their Spiritual Exercises, or give themselves to Penance, till they have ended their Studies, quitted their present employment, or perfected the affair they have in hand, which takes up all their thoughts. Unhappy are you, should you die in time of your Studies, whilst you are employ'd in this Office, or distracted with this affair! Because the knowledge which you will have gotten; the employment which you shall have exercis'd, the cares you shall have giv'n your self, are the cause why you are become more

* Qui ergo alium docet, seipsum non docet. Ad Rom. 2. 21.

* 1 Cor. 3. 15.

† Medice cur-
re teipsum,
Luc. 4. 23.

lax and tepid in Vertue, * and will serve only as Hay and Straw to burn and torment you in the other life? Make then your profit of the advice you give to others: † *Physician cure your self*: Make use of the same remedy you prescribe others, since you stand as much in need of it as they.

C H A P. VI.

That to perform our Actions well, we ought only to think of the present Day.

ANother means which is of great profit, and will extreamly encourage us to do our Actions well, is to look no farther than the present day; and tho' at the first sight, this means seems not at all different from the former, yet in effect it differs very much, as we shall see in the peruse of this discourse. One of the things which is wont most of all to discourage those that enter into the way of Perfection, and one of the most ordinary Temptations which the Devil makes use of for this end, is the consideration of the long time we shall have to live in this severe restraint, in a constant watch over our Actions, in Mortifications, Fasts, and Austerities, in the want of all the commodities of this Life; and in the absolute renunciation of our own Will. The Enemy lays all these things before our Eyes representing the difficulty of 'em; and by augmenting the difficulties that accompany 'em, endeavours to cause in us a disgust, and dissuade us from embarking our selves in such a kind of life, in which he wou'd persuade us that we shall never be able to persevere. When Saint *Ignatius* retir'd himself to *Manresa*, † to live there in the practise of a continual Penitence; amongst many other Temptations wherewith he was attack'd, this was one of the greatest: The Devil represented these thoughts continually to his mind, *Is it possible you shou'd be able to undergo*

† In Vir. S.
Ignat. l. 1. c. 6.

undergo so hard and painful a life during Fifty or Sixty Years; which probably you have still to live? The means we propose to our selves in this Chapter, is a true remedy against this kind of Temptation, and is extreamly proportionable to our weakness: Do not imagine that you have many Years, no even not many days, but only this very day alone; for who is there who will not be able to force himself to live well one day, and do his endeavour to acquit himself well of all his Obligations? Our Holy Founder ordains that we shou'd follow this method in our Particular Examens, and according to those things in which we find our selves most subject to fail in, to propose for example in the Morning to keep Silence at least till Noon, or to have greater care of Modesty, or to suffer with Patience whatsoever may happen to us till that time be expir'd. By this means all things will become easie and supportable, instead of appearing otherwise hard and insupportable; supposing we shou'd take a different way, and impose an absolute necessity upon our selves never to speak out of time, or to live in a continual circumspection, or to use a perpetual violence to our irregular inclinations.

This was that means the Solitary made use of, as we Read in the Lives of the Fathers, † who being so much Tempted with Gluttony, that even at break of day he found himself so very hungry, that he was ready to faint; yet he resolv'd not to break the Holy Custom of his Order, in Eating before three in the after-noon, and to this end, made use of this Pious Craft to deceive himself. In the Morning, sayd he to himself, as hungry as I am, I will fast till nine a clock, and then I may eat: At nine a clock verily, says he, I ought in something to force my self; therefore I will not eat till noon, I will have patience till then, as I had till this present: And after this manner he pass'd the time till mid-day, when he put his Bread into Water, saying since I have expected thus long, I will expect at least till my Bread fokes, and for two or three hours more or less, I will not break the Custom of my Brethren. Infine, at three a clock he took his Refection after he had sayd his Prayers; and practising this for many days, deceiving himself thus, by these delays, it happen'd that oncē being ready to eat at the ordinary hour, he saw a thick smoke rise out of the Basket, where he put his Bread, which went out of the Window of his Cell;

† In Vita
Patrum.

Cell; which without doubt was nothing else but the wicked Spirit that Tempted him. From this time forward, he never found the least incommodity of Hunger, or the same Appetite which he was accusom'd to feel; but on the contrary, he easily pass'd two or three days without eating. 'Tis after this manner that our Saviour recompences our fidelity in such assaults as these, with a Victory obtain'd against 'em.

But 'tis not without reason we sayd; that this means was very proportionable to our weakness; for it do's nothing else but fortifie us by little and little, as we are wont to mannage infirm Persons, for fear that labors shou'd affright 'em, and even overcome 'em at their first entrance. But if we were strong, if we were Fervent, if we truly lov'd God, 'twou'd not be necessary thus to conduct us by degrees, and to hide the labor and difficulty from us; because a true Servant of God is not affrighted either with the length of time, or the difficulty of pains; he thinks all the time short, but in God's Service, and the pain and labor he undergo's appear to him sweet and easie. † *He do's not oblige himself*, says Saint Bernard, *for a Year or some certain time, as a Mercenary do's, but Consecrates himself for ever to God's Service.* Hearken to the voice of the Just, who says, * *I will never forget your Commandments, for you have united my Salvation to their observance; I have dispos'd my Heart to observe 'em for ever.* 'Tis not therefore simply for a certain time, but for always; like as the recompence to be receiv'd for it, is not of a short durance, but for an Eternity; and without doubt the Eternal Hunger of the Just, Merits to be Eternally satisfi'd. The same Saint explicat's also the Words of the Wise Man in the same sense, † *He liv'd a short time, and yet fail'd not to perform a long course.* The Just, says he, liv'd many years in a few days; because he has so much love for God, and so much fervor in his service, that if he shou'd live a Hundred Thousand years, he wou'd employ 'em all, to serve him better and better; so that the determinate Will which he has to do this, is, as Meritorious in God's sight, as if he had effectually spent 'em after this manner; and God who knows the bottom of his Heart, measures the extent of his resolutions, and the greatness of his zeal and rewards accordingly. These are truly stout and couragious Men like Jacob, who had so great a love for Rachel, that to gain her, * *Seven years service seem'd to him but a few days.*

† Non enim ad annum vel ad tempus instar mercenarii, sed in æternum divino se mancipat famulari.

Bern. ep. 253. ad Abb. Guar.

* Audi vocem iusti dicentis: In æternum non obliviscar justificationes tuas, quia in ipsis vivificasti me. Inclina cor meum ad faciendas justificationes tuas in æternum. Non igitur ad tempus, proinde iustitia ejus manet, non aliquanto tempore, sed in sæculum sæculi. Sempiterna itaque justitiae ejus, sempiternam meretur refectionem.

Bern. ep. 253. ad Abb. Guar.

† Consummatus in brevi explevit tempora multa.

Sap. 4. 13. * Videbatur illi pauci dies præ amoris magnitudine.

Gen. 29. 20.

C H A P. VII.

That 'tis very profitable, to accustom our selves to do all our Actions very well.

PYTHAGORAS gave a very good Instruction to his Friends and Disciples, whereby to render themselves Vertuous, and to make the practise of Vertue both easie and sweet. That every one says he, thou'd choose an honest kind of Life; and that in the beginning, he regards not whether 'tis hard or painful, because custom will afterwards render it easie and agreeable. Behold here a very important means whereby we ought to help our selves; not only because it comes from a very great Philosopher, but because the Holy Ghost himself suggests the same, as we shall see afterwards; and because 'tis most proper to obtain our end. We have already chosen an excellent way of living, or to say better, our Saviour has chosen one for us; † *Because 'tis not we that have made choice of him, but 'tis he that has made choice of us*; and we ought to bless and praise him continually for this particular grace. Notwithstanding, we may advance more or less in this State of Life in which God has put us; for according as you carry your self therein you may become either a good, or a tepid Religious. But if you desire to acquire Perfection, accustom your self to perform all your duties well; to Obey punctually, and observe your Rules exactly, by making a great account even of the least things. Accustom your self to Recollection, Mortification, Penance, Modesty and Silence; and be not dismay'd at the difficulties you shall find in the beginning; for afterwards custom will not only render these practises easie, but delightful; and you will not cease to give God thanks for the habit and facility, you will have gain'd by their practise.

This

† Non vos
me elegistis,
sed ego elegi
vos.
Joan. 15. 16.

† Viam sapientie monstrabo tibi.
Prov. 4. 11.

* Ducam te per semitas & quitatis, quas cum ingressus fueris, non arctabuntur gressus tui, & currens, non habebis offendiculum.
Ibid. 4. 12.

† Quia modicum laboravi, & inveni mihi multam requiem.
Eccl. 51. 35.

* In opere enim ipsius exiguum laborabis, & cito edes de generationibus illius. Ibid. 6. 20.

† Omnis autem disciplina in presenti quidem videtur non esse gaudij, sed mœroris; postea autem fructum pacatissimi exercitatus per eam redder justitiæ.
Ad Heb. 12. 11.

La letra con la sangre entra

This Doctrin is taught us by the Holy Ghost in divers places of Scripture. † *I will shew you*, says he in the Proverbs, *the way of Wisdom*, that is to say according to Saint Bernards explication, who interprets this Holy Word *Wisdom* to be a *Delicious Knowledge of God*, I will shew you the way in which you will come to take delight in the Knowledge, Love, and Service of God; * *I will lead you by the Path of Equity*, and when you have once enter'd therein, nothing shall force or restrain your Steps, nor will you find any rubs to hinder your course. The Holy Ghost calls the way of Vertue a *Path*; because our bad and Natural inclinations make it so very hard in the beginning, that we seem to enter into it by very straight and narrow passages: But after we are once advanc'd, we find the way more large, and we walk with more ease, and even run therein without meeting any thing that may cause us to stumble, or find the least difficulty. Thus by a most Elegant Metaphor he teaches us, that tho' the practise of Vertue seem's hard in the beginning, yet we ought not to loose courage upon this account; because afterwards we shall not only find no difficulty therein, but even an abundance of pleasure, so as to be able to say with the Wise Man: † *I have labor'd a little and I found very great repose*, and in another place, * *You have scarce taken any pains to gain Wisdom, but you begin to tast the fruits it carries along with it*: And Saint Paul tells us the same thing when he says, † *All Discipline in the beginning seems rather to give trouble than joy; but they who are accusom'd to it, will reap in peace the fruits of Justice*. We daily experience this in all sorts of Arts and Sciences. What difficulty for example do we not find in the beginning of our Studies? So that oftentimes it happens, that we must be drawn to them by force, and kept in our duty by punishment; from whence comes the Proverb, *That knowledge makes a Bloudy entrance*: But afterwards when we have got a habit, and begin to make progress in it, and have already gain'd some knowledge, we often take so much delight therein, that our Studies become our chief pleasure and divertisement. The same happens in the way of Vertue and Perfection.

Saint Bernard perfectly well explicates this unto us, upon those words of Job: * *I am reduc'd to such an extremity that the very things I had a horror to touch, are at present become*

† Quæ prius nolebāt tangere anima mea.

become my ordinary Food. Wou'd you know, says he, † *How much the practise or habit has power over us? At first a thing will appear to you unsupportable; but if you accustom your self to it, in time it will seem less hard, afterwards you will find it easie, and in the end 'twill give you no pain at all, but a great deal of joy and delight; so that you may say with Job; I now take pleasure in feeding upon those things, which before I had a difficulty to touch.* All then depends upon the habit, which renders the things that we often perform, very easie: So that if you have a difficulty to observe those circumstances which are necessary to make your Prayer and Examen well; 'tis because you are not accustom'd thereunto. If when you wake in the Morning, or in time of Prayer, you cannot recollect your imagination, and hinder it from wandring here and there, 'tis because you have never us'd violence, nor accustom'd your self to restrain it from dissipating it self upon any thing that occur'd besides the subject of your Meditation: If Silence and Retirement give you any difficulty, 'tis because you have not habituated your self to them. * *We find our Chamber sweet and pleasant, says Thomas à Kempis, when we stay a long time in it, but we find it very tedious and irksome when we are not accustom'd to keep it; Make Retirement familiar to you, and 'twill become very pleasant and agreeable.* Prayer and Fasting seem hard to Secular Persons, because they do not sufficiently practise 'em. *Saul* put his own Armor upon *David*, † when he sent him to fight with the *Philistians*, but because *David* was not accustom'd to carry such a weight, he found it troublesome, and cast it away: Yet afterwards became so us'd to it, that it did not at all hinder him from fighting. That which I say of Vertue, ought to be understood in like manner of Vice; for if you let your self be carry'd away with any ill habit, the evil will augment, and from day to day gain new strength, and infine it will at last become so hard to apply a remedy, that you will be in danger not to be able ever to obtain a cure whilst you live. But if from the beginning you had accustom'd your self to do things well, how happy wou'd you be at present, and how wou'd you rejoyce to see the practice of Vertue become so very sweet and easie? Begin therefore at present to accustom your self thereunto, 'Tis better to begin late than never; undertake to do your ordinary Actions well, since this is of so great

Tom. I.

P

confe-

nunc præ angustia cibi mei iunt. Job. 6. 7.
† Primum tibi importabile videbitur aliquid, processu temporis, si assuecas, iudicabis non adeo grave: Paulò post, & leve senties; paulò post etiam delectabit. Bern. lib. 1. de consid. ad Eug.

* Cella continuata dulcescit, & male custodita traditum generat & vilescit. Tho. à Kemp. L. 1. c. 2. n. 5.

† Reg. 17. 38.

consequence; and if it be necessary, make this the matter of your Particular Examen: Since you can never choofe a better or a more profitable one; and thus you will gain a great facility, and take very much delight in the well performance of all your Actions.

CHAP. VIII.

Of how great importance 'tis to a Religious Man, not to relent in the way of Vertue.

BY all that we have sayd, 'tis easie to comprehend of how great consequence it is for a Religious Man, to walk always with fervor in the Exercise of Religion, and never to slacken or relent therein: Because afterwards it will be very hard for him to return to his first State of Perfection; and to be able to do so, he will even stand in need of a kind of Miracle. Saint Bernard perfectly well treats this point, writing to Richard the Abbot of Fontaynes and his Religious, in whom God had wrought this wonder, for they having lead a very tepid and loose kind of Life, God had afterwards enflam'd 'em with a most fervent and most perfect way of living; so that the Saint seems astonish'd, and rejoyces very much, at their change, and congratulating with 'em for it, he says, † *This is truly the finger of God. Who will make way for me to come to you, to behold like another Moyses this great and wonderful Vision? For infinite this is no less surprising, and no less pleasing, than that of the burning Bush. There's nothing more rare and unusual in the World, than to see a Religious Man raise himself never so little above that degree in Religion from whence by tepidity he was fallen; and 'tis far easier to find many Seculars that intirely Convert themselves to God, after having lead an irregular Life, than to meet a Religious Man that from a Languishing and Negligent State, passes to an Ardent and Zealous way of living.* The reason of this is, because Seculars have not the remedies, either so present

† Digitus Dei est iste. Quis dabit mihi ut transeam & videam visionem hanc magnam? nec enim minus mira, minusve jucunda ista promissio est quam illa combustio. Rarissima avis in terris, qui de gradu quem fortè in Religione attigerit, vel parum ascendat. Multò facilius reperies multos seculares converti ad bonum, quam unum, quempiam de Religiosis transire ad melius. Bern. ep. 96.

or so frequent as Religious Men have: So that when Seculars hear a Sermon that touches 'em home, or behold one of their Relations or Friends die a sudden or unhappy Death; this being a novelty to them strikes 'em the more, and the more easily astonishes and mov's 'em to Convert themselves, and make an intire change of their Lives. But a Religious Person who has such helps and remedies always present, who so often frequents the Sacraments, so frequently hears Spiritual Exhortations, exercises himself continually in Meditating upon God and other Pious subjects, thinking upon Death, Judgment, Hell, and Heaven; if with all this he leads a loose and tepid Life, what hopes can there be that he will ever mend himself? Since he is come to such a pass, as to hear these sort of things, without being at all mov'd by them; so that what ought to excite him, and most touches others, makes no impression at all upon him. 'Tis this that gave occasion to Saint *Austin* to pronounce this renowned Sentence: † *Since I began to serve God*, says he, *as I have seldom seen better Christians than those who have perfected themselves in Monasteries, so I have scarce found worse, than those Religious, who have fallen.* Saint *Bernard* says, that there are very few of these, who return to the same state they were in, before they fell: And 'tis over such as these, that the Prophet *Jeremy* Weeps and Laments, when he says, * *How is the Gold obscur'd? How has it lost its colour and brightness? They who were brought up and nourish'd in Purple, are plung'd in Filth and Ordure.* Those upon whom God bestow'd so many Graces, who so frequently entertain'd themselves with him, whose chief desires were in Heaven, have defil'd themselves with the Dung and Filth of the Earth.

There is then, commonly speaking, very little hope left for a Religious Man, who has begun to go out of the right way; which ought to make all of us tremble; because according to what I have sayd, what can be expected from such a one, since he grows worse by the use of such remedies as cure others? When Physick works no effect upon the Sick Person, but on the contrary augments his Disease, we look upon his condition as desperate. When a Physician sees a weak Patient in a fainting fit, or finds a great weakness in his Pulse, he is not much in pain; because 'tis not extraordinary

† Ex quo servire Deo cepi, quomodo difficile sum expertus meliores, quam qui in Monasteriis profecerunt, ita non sum expertus peiores, quam qui in Monasteriis defecerunt. Aug. ep. ad Pleb. Hipp.

Bern. ser. 3. in feb. Apost. Petr. & Paul.

* Quomodo obscuratum est aurum, mutatus est color optimus? qui nutriebantur in croceis, amplexati sunt stercorea. Thren. Jere. 4. 1. & 5.

for such things to happen, to one that is weak and infirm. But when he perceives the like symptomes in a healthful and strong Body, he looks upon 'em as a very dangerous sign; since such an accident as this, cannot proceed but from a revolution of malignant and predominant Humors, that infallibly either prognosticate an approaching Death, or a great and very dangerous Sickness. If a Secular Person falls into sin, 'tis not much to be wonder'd at, as corresponding to the life of such a one, who perhaps Confesses only once a Year. and who is continually amidst such occasions as move him to disorders. But when a Religious Man, supported by the frequent use of the Sacraments, by Prayer and other Spiritual exercises, notwithstanding all this happens to fall; 'tis a sign that some dangerous change and revolution has happen'd in his Soul, that some malignant disease has attack'd, and even shaken the very foundation of his Spiritual Life, and that he has great reason to fear. I do not say, says Saint Bernard, * that this always happens, because I wou'd by no means discourage you, especially if you will endeavour to rise as soon as you have fallen; for the longer you defer to do so, the greater difficulty you will have to get up: But I say this, to the end you may not sin at all, and that you do no ways relent in your fervor. * But if any one Sins, we have JESUS CHRIST the just, for Advocate to the Eternal Father. Wherefore let not any one loose courage, for whosoever returns truly to God with his whole Heart, without doubt he will obtain Mercy. If the Prince of the Apostles, after he had for so long a time frequented the School of JESUS CHRIST, and receiv'd so many favors from him, fell notwithstanding in so foul a manner as he did; and if after so enormous a fall, by having renounc'd his Master and God, he was put again into so eminent a state of Grace; who is there that can despair of his pardon? Have you, as Saint Bernard adds, committed greater sins in the World than Saint Paul, or in Religion than Saint Peter? If the one and the other by their Repentance and Pennance not only Merited that God shou'd pardon 'em, but afterwards raise 'em to so sublime a degree of Sanctity and Glory; do you also imitate 'em in their Pennance, and thereby you will be able not only to return to the state you were in before your fall, but also arrive to a greater and more accomplish'd Perfection.

C H A P.

† Bern. ubi sup.

* Siquis peccaverit, advocatum habemus apud Patrem JESUM CHRISTUM solum.
1 Joas. 2. 1.

C H A P. IX,

How much it imports that Novices employ their time well in their Noviship, and that in it they accustom themselves to perform their Religious duties exactly

FROM what we have already sayd, we may gather of how great consequence it is, that Novices profit well, during the time of their Noviship, and in it accustom themselves to perform exactly well all their Religious Exercises; and that which we say here for them in particular, may generally serve for all those who begin to enter into the way of Vertue. The first Rule which we have in the SOCIETY, belonging to the Master of Novices, takes notice of two reasons which shew of how great consequence this is, and also manifest to us, that the charge of Master of Novices, ought to be consider'd as one of the greatest importance in all Religious Communities. The first reason is, because probably speaking, all the future progress of a Religious Person, depends upon the Education he receiv'd in the Noviship, and upon the manner he shall have carry'd himself therein: And the second, which is still of greater force, that all the hopes of Religion, and all its happiness absolutely depends thereupon. But to come to a more particular discussion of this point, I say in the first place, that the profit, or small advancement of a Religious Man do's so much depend upon this his first Education, and the manner he shall have carry'd himself during his Noviship; that morally speaking 'tis very certain, that if he pass'd it with negligence and tepidity in his Spiritual duties, he will continue to do the same during his whole Life. For how can one imagine he shou'd afterwards become careful and fervent, since there is not the least appearance for the belief of such a change; but on the contrary, there are many reasons to persuade us he will still remain in the same state.

To

To make this truth still more clearly appear, let us address our discourse particularly to a Novice himself, let us lay our reasons before him, and hereby convince him of this truth, after this following manner. Now you are in your Noviship, you have a great deal of time to apply your self to your Spiritual advancement, and to those different means that may contribute thereunto; your Superiors thinking of nothing else but this, and making it their chief endeavour. You have the example also of your Brethren before your Eyes, who apply themselves to nothing else, and example ordinarily makes such an impression upon us, that commonly when we are in the company of those that give themselves to Vertue, and make considerable progress therein, 'tis hard, how remiss and sluggish soever we be, not to find our selves excited to rise out of this state of remissness and tepidity. You have moreover a Heart which is not distracted or hinder'd by being prepossess'd or engag'd by Worldly thoughts and cares, but finds in it self a strong inclination to Vertue: From which you have no occasion to withdraw your self, but a Thousand that push you on to embrace it. Now if at present, where you have nothing else to do but this, for which you were call'd hither, you notwithstanding make no progress, nor gather together any Treasures of Vertue, for the time to come; what will become of you, when afterwards, your Heart shall be fill'd and divided with a Thousand different distractions? If now when you have so much leisure, such conveniences, and so many helps, you make not your Prayer and Examen well, if now you use not your utmost endeavours to omit nothing, and do not perform very diligently all your Spiritual Exercises; what will become of you when the care of your Studies will take up your thoughts; when you shall be put into an Office, or into the Employments of hearing Confessions, Preaching, or Teaching? If with so many Conferences, so many Exhortations, so many Examples, and so many Solicitations, you do not profit at all, what will become of you when you will meet with impediments, and obstacles on all sides? If in the beginning of your Conversion, when novelty shou'd encrease your Fervor and Zeal, you notwithstanding languish and become tepid, what will become of you when your Ears shall be accusom'd and harden'd to all things that may touch, or do you any good? Infine, if at present whilst your Passions do but begin in you, and your inclinations are still weak and tender,

you

you have not the courage to oppose 'em: How shall you be able to resist 'em, how will you be able to overcome 'em, when they shall be so strengthen'd by custom, and become so deeply rooted in you, that you will not be able to master 'em with using a violence even more cruel than Death?

Saint *Dorotheus* explicat's this very well, by an Example he recounts of one of the Fathers in the Desert, † *Who* † Dorot.
doct. II. *being one day with his Disciples in a place full of Cypress Trees of different bigness, commanded one of 'em to pluck up a little one he pointed at, which his Disciple presently perform'd without any difficulty; then he pointed at another somewhat bigger, which he in like manner pluck'd up by the Roots, but with far greater difficulty than the former, being forc'd to use both his Hands to do it. To pluck up another which was yet stronger, he was forc'd to use the help of one of his Companions: And infine, all of 'em together labor'd in vain to pull up another, which was much bigger than the former. Behold,* says the Ancient Father, *how 'tis with our Passions: In the beginning when they are not yet rooted, 'tis easie to master 'em, if we take but never so little pains; But afterwards when by a long habit they have taken deeper root in our Hearts, 'tis very hard to pull 'em out; then we must use extraordinary endeavours, and often times shall not be able even thereby to compass it.*

By what I have sayd, we may perceive 'tis a very great abuse, and a very dangerous Temptation, to defer from day to day our amendment, thinking we shall be better able to overcome our selves in the same things another time; or because we have not at present the courage to oppose 'em, by reason of the great difficulty we find in 'em. If whilst this difficulty is yet small, you dare not undertake to surmount it, what will you be able to do when it shall become greater? And if at present whilst your Passion is but like a Lyons Whelp, you have not the courage to attack it, how will you be able to do it when it shall be grown a great and furious Beast? Hold it therefore for a certain truth, that if now you lead a loose and tepid life, you will hereafter do the same: If now you be not a good Novice, a good Apprentice, you will never hereafter be a good Religious, nor a good Work-man: If at present you are negligent in the things that belong to Obedience, and regard not the observance of Rules, you will continue afterwards still to become more negligent; if at present

present you have little care to perform your Spiritual exercises well, and if you perform 'em by piece-meals, you will continue to do the same during your whole life. All therefore consists in beginning well as Saint Bonaventure teaches us, when he says, † *We seldom quit those Impressions we receive Young; and he who in the beginning of a new kind of life, contemns Discipline, will very hardly afterwards apply himself to it.* * 'Tis a Proverb, says Salomon, *that what course of life a Young Man has follow'd in his Youth, he will never change the same in his Old Age.* Saint John Climachus also says, † *That loose and weak beginnings are very dangerous, this being an evident sign of a future fall.* 'Tis therefore of very great importance to accustom our selves to Vertue, and a punctual performance of our Spiritual exercises in the beginning; which the Holy Ghost teaches us, when he says, * *That 'tis good to carry the Yoke from our Youth,* because hereby the practise of Vertue will become every day more and more easie, and if it be not exercis'd betimes, † *How will he be able to find in his Old Age, what he has not been careful to hoard up in his Youth?*

From this first reason thus deduc'd, we may draw a necessary induction for the second: For as the future Perfection of a particular Religious Man, depends upon his first Education, so also the advancement of Religious in general do's consequently depend upon every particular Mans Perfection: Because 'tis the assembly of Religious Persons, and not the Walls of their Houses and Churches, that sustain Religion; and those that are in the Novitship, are they who are to compose the whole Body. 'Tis for this reason, that by a wholesome Institution, the SOCIETY has Establish'd particular Houses of Probation, to apply our selves therein to Abnegation, Mortification of our Senses, and the Practise of true Vertue: And Saint Francis Borgia sayd, † that these Houses ought to be a *Bethleem* for the Novices: That is to say, *A House of Bread:* Because there we make Bisket and Provisions for the long Voyage or Navigation we are to make, after we go from thence. The time you remain there, is the time of Harvest, the time of fruitfulness and abundance, in which like *Joseph* you ought to furnish your self against the Years of Sterility, and Famine. Had the *Egyptians* understood what wou'd have happen'd, or had they had any forecast, they wou'd not so readily have parted with their Corn, which with so much care *Joseph* gather'd together. If you can but conceive of how great

† Formam, quam primò quis recipit, vix deponit: Et qui disciplinam in novæ conversationis initio negligit, ad eam postmodum difficile applicatur. Bon. in hęc. discip.

* Proverbum est. Adolescentens juxta viam suam etiam cum senuerit, non recedet ab ea. Prov. 22. 6. Quo semel est imbuta recens servabit odorem Testa diu Horat.

† Climac. de inan. vit. fuga grad. 1.

* Bonum est viro, cum poraverit jugum ab adolescentia sua.

Thren. 3. 27. † Quæ in juventute tua non congregasti, quomodo in senectute tua invenies?

Eccles. 25. 5.

† Borgia ep. ad Soc. Jes. Domus Panis.

Gen. 47. 48.

great importance it is; that you shou'd not quit the Novitiship without having made a good Provision, you wou'd not so soon desire to leave it; but wou'd quit it rather with a true sense of sorrow, when you reflect that perhaps you are very ill provided of all those Vertues, necessary for a Religious Man. Those who are desirous and impatient to leave the Novitiship betimes, shew very well, says the same Saint, that they want experience; because being to make a long and tedious Journey, they are not afraid to begin it, without having made such Provisions as are necessary for it.

Saint Ignatius has taken such a particular care to have us make a sufficient Provision of Vertues, during our Novitiship, that in his Constitutions, he supposes it as a thing certain, that every one has done so. He has Establish'd and Appointed two Years of Probation, to the end that in that time we shou'd think of nothing else but our Spiritual Advancement, without exercising any other Studies but that; out of which we might be able to draw that profit, whereby we may arrive to a great Abnegation of our selves, and a high degree of Perfection. Moreover, being persuaded that a Religious Man leaves the Novitiship with the Spirit of Fervor, Mortification, and Retirement; and with such a Love for Prayer and Spiritual Exercises, that he ought even to be moderated therein. He also advises those, who afterwards are to continue their Studies, to moderate their Fervor, and to give themselves less to Prayer and Austerities in time of 'em, than otherwise they wou'd do. Endeavour therefore to go out of the Novitiship such a one, as in effect this great Saint imagines you shou'd be; manage this precious time very well; think with your self, that perhaps during your whole life, you shall not have such another, so proper to advance your self in, or to heap together all sorts of Spiritual Treasures. In fine, to make use of the words of Scripture, † *Permit not so good a day to pass without profiting by it, and loose not the least part of so excellent a gift.*

Those whom God calls to Religion from their tender Years, have great reason to be thankful to him; because then 'tis very easie to apply themselves to Vertue, and to submit to the Yoke of Religious Discipline. 'Tis easie in the beginning to bend a Young Tree, and make it become strait: But if it grow crooked, and you let it alone, 'twill always remain so; and you will sooner break, than straiten it. 'Tis the same in those of a tender Age; 'tis easie to make 'em take a good course, and to apply themselves to Perfection: So that being

Tom. I.

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accustom'd

† Non defrauderis à die bono, & particula boni domini non te pretereat.
Eccles. 14. 14.

accustom'd to it beelines, they afterwards find therein a great facility, and always persevere in it. Stuff that is dy'd in the Wool, never looses its colour. How is it possible, says Saint Hieron, to change Wool that is dy'd Scarlet, into its first colour? † An Earthen Pot retains a long time the smell of the first Liquor that's pour'd into it. And the Scripture praises Josias, For having given himself to the Service of God from his Youth.

Humbertus a Person of note, and General of the Order of Saint Dominick, reports, that a certain Religious Man after his Death appear'd to another, all in Glory, and leading him out of his Cell, he shew'd him a great number of Men clad in White, and encompass'd with light. Who carry'd very fair Crosses upon their Shoulders, as they went in Procession towards Heaven. He shew'd 'em others that follow'd in the same manner, but shi'd far brighter than the former, and carry'd in their Hands a far richer and more beautiful Cross. After that, a third Procession pass'd, still far more glorious and admirable than the two former: For all their Crosses were of a very surprising beauty, and instead of being carry'd by Men, as the former were, either in their Hands or upon their Shoulders, each of these had an Angel that carry'd their Crosses before 'em; so that they went with a great deal more ease, and follow'd with far greater cheerfulness. The Religious Man astonish'd at this Vision, demanded its explication; the Holy Man answer'd, that the first who carry'd their Crosses upon their Shoulders, were those who enter'd into Religion advanc'd in Years; the second who held their Crosses in their Hand, were those that enter'd Young; and the last, who march'd with so much freedom and cheerfulness, were those who from their tender Years, renounc'd all the Vanities of the World, and embrac'd a Religious course.



THE

Tom. I.

Hieron.

† Quo semel
est imbuta re-
cens, servabit
odorem Testa
dia Hor.

‡ Cum adhuc
esset puer, coe-
pit quætere
Deum patris
sui David.

2 Paral. 34. 3.
Humbertus

THE THIRD TREATISE OF

The Integrity and Purity of
Intention, which we ought
to have in all our Actions.

CHAP. I.

That we ought to fly Vain-glory in
our Actions.



ONE of the things, that Saint Ignatius has most of all recommended to us, and most frequently repeated in his Constitutions, is, that his Children should endeavour to have a right Intention in all their Actions, and that they never seek any thing in them, but the Will of God, and his greater Honor and Glory: Using often these words, * To the Greater Glory of God; and Exhorting us, † To show his greater Honor and Service always before us; and as, * Out of the Abundance of the Heart, the Mouth speaks, so God's Glory was so profoundly rooted in his, that he directed all his Words and Actions to this end. Wherefore

* Ad Majori Dei gloriam.

† Majus Dei obsequium semper intendo.

Reg. 4. Sum. Conf.

* Ex abundantia animi cordis os loquitur.

Luc. 6. 45.

'tis with a great deal of reason, that in the Images which are Graven of this Saint, they have put these words. **TO THE GREATER GLORY OF GOD**; not being able to give him a greater praise than this in fewer words; in which also the entire History of his Life is comprisd. 'Twas God's Glory which was properly the Soul that animated all his Actions; and therefore these words may well serve for his Device or Motto, as his proper Warch-word, and as his Coat of Arms. Which each of us also ought to take for our own, making 'em the Rule of all our Actions; that insine, by this resemblance we may make our selves appear to be the Legitimate Children of such a Father. That which renders this point of so great importance, is, that our Advancement and Perfection consists in the Perfection of our Actions; and the more Holy and Perfect they become, the more Holy and Perfect we shall also be. This being supposed as an infallible truth, we may also assuredly conclude, that our Actions will have the greater Merit and Perfection, by how much our Intentions shall be more Right and Pure; and that, we cannot propose to our selves a more high and sublime end, than God's Honor and Glory. For 'tis the Intention that imprints a character and esteem upon all our Actions; conformable to that passage of Scripture. *† Your Eye is the Lamp of your Body; if your Eye be upright and clear, your whole Body will be enlightned; but if your Eye be bad, your whole Body will remain in Darkness.* By the Eye, the Saints understand the Intention, which regards and foresees what we ought to do; by the Body is understood the Action, that follows the Intention that directs it, as the Body follows the Eye that conducts it. The Son of God wou'd therefore in this place, assure us; that 'tis the Intention that gives splendor, and light to the Action; according to this, the Action will be good or bad, proportionable to the goodness or badness of the Intention. *If the Root be Holy,* says Saint Paul, *the Branches will also be Holy.* What can we expect from a Tree whose Root is corrupted; but that it shou'd bear Wood which will scarce have any Sap, and bring forth ill tasted Fruit; that will easily rot? But if the Root be whole, all the Tree will be fair, and bring forth good Fruit. The goodness also, and the perfection of our Actions depend upon the purity of our Intention, and will become like to the Root, and the more pure and right the Intention

† Lucerna
corporis cui
est oculus
tuus: Si oculus
tuus fuerit
simplex, totum
corpus tuum
lucidum erit. Si autem
oculus tuus
fuerit nequam,
totum corpus
tuum tenebrosum
erit.

Matth. 6. 22.
c. 23.

Greg. 1. 38.
Mor. 1. 3.

* Si radix
sancta, &
familia
Rom. 11. 16.

Intention is that produces 'em; the more Vertuous and accomplished they will be. Saint Gregory explicating that passage of Job. 1. Upon what are the Foundations sustain'd? says, that as it often happens that a Building is sustain'd by Pillars, and the Pillars by their Bases; so in like manner, a Spiritual Life is sustain'd by Vertue; the Base of which, is the right Intention of the Heart. But that I may observe a method in what I have to say, I will speak first of the end which we ought to avoid in our Actions; which is, the performing of 'em for a motive of Vain-glory, or for any other Human Respects; and afterwards I will treat of the end we ought to propose to our selves in their performance; and shall observe the same method the Psalmist reaches us, when he says; * *Avoid evil, and do good.*

All the Saints admonish us to defend our selves against Vain-glory; because say they, 'tis a cunning Thief, which often steals from us even our best Actions; and which insinuates it self so very secretly, that it has giv'n its stroke even before we perceive it. Saint Gregory says, that Vain-glory is like a Robber, who first craftily insinuates himself into the Company of a Traveller, and then sets upon him; pretending to go the same way he do's, to have occasion afterwards to Rob and Kill him when he is least upon his guard, and when he thinks himself in greatest security. I confess, says this great Saint, in the last Chapter of his Morals, that when I go about to examine my own Intention, even whilst I am Writing this, methinks that I have no other Gust or Will than to please God; But notwithstanding whilst I am not upon my guard, I find that a certain kind of desire of pleasing Men, intermixes it self, and methinks I feel some vain satisfaction for having perform'd it well; how it comes to pass I know not; but I perceive very well, that whilst I go on, what I do is not so free from Dust and Chaff, as 'twas in the beginning. For I know, that I began it at first with the best Intention in the World, with the only prospect of pleasing God; but now I easily perceive other considerations mix themselves herewithal, which render my Intention less right and pure than it was before. The same thing happens to us herein, adds the Saint, that happens to us in Eating: In the beginning we Eat for necessity; but Sensuality so cunningly insinuates it self, that what we begin to satisfy the

Greg. 1. 18. Mor. c. 13.

† Super quo bases illius solidatae sunt? Job. 38. 6.

* Diverte à malo, & fac bonum. Ps. 33. 15.

Greg. c. ult. Moral.

the necessities of Nature, and to conserve our Life, we continue upon account of the gust and pleasure we find in Eating. Experience makes us see but too often, the self same thing even in our best Actions; we apply our selves to them at first, to Preaching for example or such other like practices, out of the sole motive of Charity, for the Salvation of Souls; and afterwards Vanity enters and joins it self to these Intentions, raising in us a desire to please Men, and to be esteem'd by them; so that when we find this wanting, we seem also to want courage, and are unable any longer to do any thing but with regret.

C H A P. II.

In what consists the Malignity of Vain-glory.

THE Malignity of this Vice, consists in this; that those who are infected with it, endeavour to Rob God of the glory that belongs to him alone, according to the Words, of Saint Paul, *† To God alone, be Glory and Honour*; of which he is so jealous, that he himself says in the Prophet *Isay. * I will not give my Glory to another*. Wherefore Saint Austin speaking of this subject, *Lord, says he, the who would be praised for your Gifts, and seeks not your Glory, but his own in the good he do's, such a one is a Robber; and is like the Devil himself, who pretends to Rob you of your Glory: In all the works of God there are too things, the Utility or Profit, and the Glory: As to the Profit, he leaves that intirely to Men; but he reserves all the Glory of them to himself alone. † The Lord has wrought all things for himself, that is to say for his Glory: * And has Created all Nations to Praise and Glorify his Name. We see that all things Preach his Wisdom, his Goodness, and his Providence. and tis for this reason that he Inspired the Psalmist to make this Petition, † Be thou Exalted O Lord above the Heavens, and thy Glory over all the Earth. When therefore*

† Soli Deo
honor, &
gloria.
‡ ad Tim. 1. 17.
* Gloriam
meam alteri
non dabo.
Isa. 42. 8.
Aug. c. 16.
Soli.

† Univerſa
propter ſemet-
ipſum operatus
eſt Dominus.
Prov. 16. 4.
* Cunctis
gentibus quas
creavit, in lau-
dem, & no-
men, & glo-
riam ſuam.
Deut. 26. 19.
† Exaltate
ſuper celos
deus, & ſuper
omnem terram
gloria tua.
Psal. 107. 6.

therefore it happens, that we seek to draw to our selves the esteem and praise of Men, we pervert that order which God has established, and do him an injury; because we endeavour in a manner that Men, who should have no other employment but to praise and honor him, employ themselves in praising and honoring Creatures; and we endeavour to replenish the hearts of Creatures with an esteem of our selves, which God has made, as Vessels to be fill'd with nothing else but with his honor and praises; what is this, but to rob God of his Creatures Hearts, and in a manner to drive him out of his own House? Can one commit a greater evil than this? Or imagine any thing worse, than after such a manner to rob God of his Glory? For tho' by your words you Exhort Men to regard none but him, yet you wish in the bottom of your Heart, that they wou'd turn their Eyes from him, and fix 'em upon your self? He who is truly humble, desires not to live in the Heart of any Creature, but in the Heart of God only; he seeks not his own glory, but that of God alone; desires not that any person shou'd entertain himself with him, but with God alone; and infine, he wishes that all the World shou'd have God so in their Hearts, that no other object may ever have the least place in 'em.

The grievousness of this sin, may also easily be understood by this comparison. If a **Marry'd Woman**, Dresses and Adorns her self to please any other Man but her Husband, the wou'd without doubt do her Husband a very great injury. The good Works are the Dressings and Ornaments of your Soul; if you do them to please any one but God, who is your Spouse, you do him a signal injury. Moreover, imagine what a shame 'twou'd be, if any private person shou'd set a great value upon some small service, he had done to some mighty King or Prince, who had before for his love expos'd himself to a Thousand pains and dangers? If besides this he shou'd boast all the World over, of some small service he had render'd his Prince; whilst the Prince, in all he had done for this Man, had not receiv'd the least assistance from him; but the same Man cou'd not have been able to do any thing, without the Princes help; to whose service he was also excited, by the great recompence the Prince had before-hand promis'd, and afterwards bestow'd upon him. Wou'd not his Vanity appear intollerable, and this procedure appear base and unworthy? Every one of us in particular ought to apply this unto

unto our selves, to the end that we may blush at the selfe opinion, which with so little reason we have of our selves; and be asham'd hereafter to praise our selves for any thing whatsoever; because in comparison of that which God has done for us, and of that we ought to do for him, that which we do, is so little, that we ought rather to have a great confusion for it, than harbor any vanity for having perform'd it.

But that which sufficiently demonstrates the deformity of this Vice, is, that the Saints and Divines, rank it amongst those sins ordinarily call'd Mortal, or which are more properly styl'd Capital sins; because they are as it were the head and source of all others. Some put down Eight of this nature, and say, that the first is Anger, and the second Vain-glory; but the common opinion of Saints, and that which is receiv'd by the Church, is, that there are Seven Capital sins. And Saint Thomas, who names Vain-glory as the first, says, that Pride is the Root of all the rest, according to the words of the Wise Man: † *The beginning of all sins, is Pride.*

*Climat. cap. de
vana gloria.*

*Thom. 2. 2. q.
112. art. 4.*

† Initium
omnis peccati
est superbia,
Ecclesi. 10. 13.

C H A P. III.

The prejudice that Vain-glory do's occasion.

THE prejudice we receive from Vain-glory is sufficiently explicated to us in the Gospel, by the Son of God, when he tells us. * *Take care not to perform your Actions before Men; to the end they may take notice of you. Otherwise you will have no recompence for 'em from your Heavenly Father.* Do not as Hypocrites are wont to do, who perform nothing but to be seen by others, and to gain their esteem. † *In truth I tell you, these have already receiv'd their Reward.* You have a desire to gain Reputation, this is the Motive of your Actions, and will also be their Reward; but take notice that you must expect no other Reward than this. Unhappy are you, who have already receiv'd your Wages, and for whom there remains nothing else to be hop'd for.

The

* Attendite
ne iustitiam
vestram facia-
tis coram ho-
minibus, ut
videamini ab
eis: alioquin
mercedem
non habebitis
apud Patrem
vestrum, qui
in caelis est.
Matth. 6. 1.

† Amen dico
vobis, recepe-
runt mercede-
dem suam.
Matth. 6. 3.

† The hope of the Hypocrite shall perish, says Holy Job, and his folly shall afford him but little satisfaction. And Saint Gregory explicating this passage, says, * that What the Hypocrite hopes for, is the esteem and praise of Men, and that all this ends with his Life. Adding moreover, That he who by his Vertuous Actions would gain the applause of the World, quits at an easie rate a thing of great Value. And when he might thereby have purchas'd the Kingdom of Heaven, he seeks to gain nothing but the transitory Reward of Human applause. What greater abuse can happen than this, and what greater folly can one imagine, than to have taken a great deal of pains, to have perform'd many good Actions, and yet to find his hand empty at last. Which the Prophet Aggeus gives us to understand when he says, † Reflect upon your own conduct. You have sown much, and have reap'd but little: You have eaten, and you have not been at all satisfi'd: You have drank, but you have not quenched your thirst; you have cloath'd your selves, and you are not warm: And he who has gather'd together the greatest Reward, has put it into a Sack full of holes, which another Text call's, A Bushel full of chinks. Behold what Vain-glory performs: It puts all things in a Bag full of holes; for that which enters at one end go's out at the other: One casts it into a Vessel full of chinks; because what is cast into it, runs thorough the same moment 'tis cast in; and there's nothing receiv'd, but what is presently lost as soon as 'tis got. * Wherefore do you lay out your Money, and buy not Bread, says the Prophet Isay, and why do you take pains and not satiate your selves. Since you take so much pains to do the thing, do it after such a manner as to profit by it, that you may not loose all the fruit of your Labors.

Saint Basil marks four sorts of prejudices that Vain-glory brings along with it. The first is, to make us kill and destroy our Body with much Labor, Watchings, and by what is the most painful in good Actions. The second is, to corrupt or destroy all the Merit of our Actions, after they make us loose all the fruit we might expect from them. This Vice, says he, do's not hinder us from working, because it wou'd not be so hard for us to be frustrated of our recompence, if we had not Labor'd at all; but it expects till we have taken pains to per-

Tom. I.

R

form

† Spes hypocrite peribit: Non ei placebit recordatio sua.

Job. 8. 13. 14. * Qui pro virtute quam agit, humanos favores desiderat, rem magni meriti, vili pretio venalem portat. Et unde Cæli Regnum mereri potuit, inde nummum transiit in terrenis quærit, Greg. lib. 8. Mor. cap. 25.

† Ponite corda vestra super vias. Seminastis multum, & intulistis parum: Comedistis, & non estis satiati: Bibistis, & non estis inebriati: Operulistis vos, & non estis calefacti: Et qui mercedes congregavit, misit eas in sacculum peritum. Aggai 1. 5. & 6.

* Quare expenditis argentum non in panibus, & laborem vestrum non in saturitate? Isai 55. 2.

Basil. in cons. Mon. cap. 21.

form many good Works, and afterwards it Robs us of 'em, and takes the profit of 'em from us. 'Tis like a Pirat', says he, that attacks not a Vessel that goes out of the Port to purchase Marchandise, but expects till it returns home richly fraughted, and then fails not to set upon it. But Vain-glory do's still worse, it causes us a third damage, turning Good into Evil, and Vertue into Vice, by the Vanity of that Miserable End we propose to our selves; when instead of the recompence due to us, it causes us to Merit nothing else but chastisements and punishments. In such sort, that we reap bad Fruit from good Seed; that which shou'd elevate and raise us to Heaven, serves only to precipitate us more deeply into Hell. Moreover, Vain-glory performs all these things after so sweet and quiet a manner, that we are so far from troubling our selves, at the loss of all these good works, that on the contrary, we even take pleasure in these our losses. And notwithstanding whatsoever one can then say to a Man guilty of such a Vice, tho' we let him see that all he do's is lost, yet he will not let himself be hinder'd in the least, from desiring and gaining human praise and glory; so that one wou'd think there were some Charm or Enchantment in it. And 'tis for this reason that Saint Basil call'd Vain-glory, † *A charming Thief, that Robs us of all our Good and Spiritual Actions; a mild and peaceful Enemy of our Souls.* And 'tis by this sweet insinuation and flattery, that it gains and deceives such a World of People. For Human praise and glory, is a thing very sweet and pleasant to such Persons as know not what it is. * *Take heed of the Arrow*, says Saint Bernard; *it flies silently, penetrates as easily, but I assure you it makes a Wound that is very hard to be cur'd, and kills upon a sudden: And this Arrow is indeed nothing else but Vain-glory.* 'Tis like sweet sented Powder, that is compos'd of Arsenick or Ratsbane; it pleases whilst it destroys.

We Read in the Life of Saint Pachomius, that conversing one Night in his Monastery with some other Ancient Fathers; one of his Religious carry'd two little Matts he had made the same Day, and lay'd 'em close by his Cell, over against the place where the Saint was sitting; imagining that when the Saint shou'd see them, he wou'd praise his diligence, for having made two Matts in one Day, when the Rule oblig'd only to make one.

The

† Dulcem spiritualium operum expoliatricem; jucundum animarum nostrarum hostem. Basil. ubi suprad.
Dulce quid humana appetitis gloriam est.

* Time fugit: tam: Leviter volat, leviter penetrat, sed dico tibi non leve infligit vulnus, cito interficat: mirum sagitta hæc vana gloria est. Bern. Serm. 6. sup. Ps. Qui habitat.

Surius in Vita Sancti Pachomii.

The Saint easily perceiv'd that 'twas done out of a Spirit of Vanity, wherefore addressing himself to the Fathers that were with him, *Behold*, says he, fetching a great sigh, *what pains this Brother has taken from Morning till Night, to offer up in the end, all his labor to the Devil; having preferr'd the esteem of Men, before the Glory of God: And afterwards calling him, he gave him a severe reprehension, and ordain'd him for his Pennance, that when all the Religious were assembl'd to make their Prayer he shou'd go with these two Matts about him, and with a loud Voice tell 'em, My dear Fathers and Brothers, I beg of you all for the Love of God, to Pray to our Lord, that he will have Mercy upon me a most Miserable Sinner, who have more esteem'd these two little Matts, than the Kingdom of Heaven.* Moreover, he commanded him, that when the Religious went to Eat, he shou'd go into the Refectory in the same manner, and stand in the middle of it the whole time of Dinner. But the Pennance ended not here, for he caus'd him also to be Imprison'd Five whole Months in a Cell, to Fast with Bread and Water, that none shou'd Visit him, and oblig'd him also to make two Matts every Day. This example, besides the fruit proper to our present subject, which we ought to draw from it, serves likewise to let us know, what severe Pennances the Ancient Fathers inflict'd for very light and small faults; and how great was the Humility, and Patience of their Subjects, to submit themselves, and undergo such severe Pennances impos'd upon 'em.

R. 2 CHAP.

C H A P. IV.

That the Temptation of Vain-glory, do's not only attack those that enter into the way of Perfection, but even such, as are most advanc'd in it.

† Si Filius Dei es, mitte te deorsum. Matib. 4. 6. O execrabilis Diaboli malitia! Putabat malignus, quem gula non vicerat, vanâ gloriâ superari.

S AINT Cyprian speaking of the second Temptation, the Devil made use of against JESUS CHRIST, when he carry'd him to the top of the Pinnacle of the Temple, and sayd to him, † *If you be the Son of God, cast your self down;* cries out in this manner. *O Execrable Malice of the Devil! This miserable Spirit thought, that He who cou'd not be overcome by Gluttony, might be vanquish'd by Vain-glory:* Wherefore he endeavour'd to persuade him to cast himself into the Air, to the end that by flying, he shou'd become a Spectacle of admiration to all the beholders. The Devil imagin'd that he shou'd have the same success against JESUS CHRIST, that he had formerly had against many others. He had experienc'd, says Saint Cyprian, that he had often overcome by Vain-glory, such as he cou'd not vanquish any other way; and it was for this reason, that after he had Tempted him with Gluttony to no purpose, he Tempts him with Vain-glory, as with something more considerable, and which was harder to be resisted. For 'tis very hard not to be touch'd with Praise; since as there are very few Persons that are pleas'd to hear any thing that is ill spoken of 'em, so also there are very few that are not extreemly delighted when they hear themselves spoken of with advantage. So that the Temptation of Vain-glory, attacks not only such Persons as are beginners in Vertue, but also those who are most advanc'd in it; and 'tis even such as these, to whom the Enemy ordinarily addressees himself, they having more subject for him to work upon.

The

The Holy Abbot *Nilus*, who was a Disciple of Saint *Chryssostom*, reports, that the most Ancient and most Experienced Fathers of the Desert, Educated and Instructed the new Religious, after a different manner, than they did others. To the Young they recommended and enjoyn'd Temperance and Abstinence; because such as permit themselves to be carry'd away with Gluttony, will more easily yield and be carry'd away with Impurity; because having yielded to the more weak Temptation, there was little appearance that they would resist one that was more Violent. But as to the Ancient, they admonish'd 'em to take care, and be continually upon their guard, to free themselves from Vain-glory. As those who go to Sea, ought diligently to avoid the Banks, and the Rocks before the Harbor, because it often happens that after a most happy Voyage, a Vessel happens to split in the very Haven: So in the same manner, those who are most eminent in Vertue, ought extremely to defend themselves from Vanity; because it often happens, that after we have sail'd very prosperously throughout the whole course of our Life, and resisted courageously against all the Storms and Tempests the Devil had rais'd against us; insine, when we are come in sight of the Harbor, confiding in our past Victories, believing our selves out of all danger, we come at last by our Pride and Negligence, to suffer a miserable Ship-wrack. 'Tis upon this account that the Saints stil'd Vain-glory, a Tempest in the Harbor: And others say, that the same happens to the most Perfect, which would happen to a Man who ascending a Ship, well fraughted with all sorts of Provisions, and loaden with a great deal of Marchandise, shou'd himself make a hole in the bottom, throu' which the Water by little and little, wou'd in a short time come to sink the Ship.

So that these Ancient Fathers, thought it was not so necessary to give Novices any advertisement or particular remedy against Vain-glory, because they suppos'd, that such as these who came out of the World all cover'd with the fresh bleeding Wounds of their Sins, had in themselves sufficient matter of Humility and dejection, and therefore 'twas only necessary to speak to them of Abstinence, Penance and Mortification. But the more Ancient who had already deplor'd their Sins, had perform'd severe Penance for 'em, and who had for a long time exercis'd them-

*Nilus de inter-
emptione Pa-
trum qui trans
in Syria. Et
Surius 14.
Januarii.*

themselves in the practise of Vertue, ought to be continually upon their guard against Vain-glory. But those who only began; who had not as yet acquir'd any Vertue, who were not yet free from their bad inclinations, and ill habites which they had contracted in the World, and had not as yet made an end of deploring their Sins; and the blindness and forgetfulness of those things that belong'd to God's Service, in which they so long had liv'd; were suppos'd to have no heed of any precaution against Vanity; because they saw in themselves nothing but what was a subject of Sorrow, and Confusion. This ought also to confound many Persons, who having frequent occasions to humble themselves, do still in very many things permit themselves to be puffed up with Pride, for some one thing or other that is commendable in 'em. This is a very great abuse: One only fault ought to be sufficient to humble and confound us; because there ought nothing to be wanting in what is good; since even the least defect, renders any thing whatsoever bad and imperfect. We notwithstanding act after a different manner: The many faults, and many sins we daily commit, suffice not to inspire us with humble Thoughts; but the least advantage we think we possess, is sufficient to fill us with a great deal of Vanity, and makes us sigh after the esteem and applause of the World. By this 'tis very easie to perceive that Vain-glory is very dangerous, because it spares no-body, and sets upon us without any Reason at all. * *It is the first thing we give way to, and the last that we resist.* Wherefore, says Saint *Austin*, let us arm our selves by our dear Brethren; and use great precaution against this Vice: Of the danger of which the Royal Prophet was very sensible, when he made this earnest Petition: *Turn my Eyes O Lord from beholding Vanity.*

* Ipsa est in peccato prima, in confictu postrema. Bern. de ordine vite & morum instit.

Aug sup. illud. 1 Averte oculos meos, ne videant vanitatem. Ps. 118. 31.

C H A P.

C H A P. V.

That those who Labor for the Salvation of their Neighbour, have more reason than others to be upon their guard against Vain-glory.

ALtho all the World in general has reason to take heed of Vain-glory; yet those, who by their Institute and Charge, are employ'd in the Salvation of Souls, have yet a more particular obligation, to be always upon their guard in this point. For their employment being so sublime, and so expos'd to publick view, they have a great deal more to be afraid of than others; and they will render themselves far more guilty, if in this function they only regard themselves, and seek nothing else but the vain applause of Men. This were to make use of the grace and gifts of God, as an Instrument of Rebellion against him, and 'tis for this reason, Saint Bernard cries out. † *Unhappy are they, who have receiv'd this gift of speaking and thinking well of God, if they look upon Piety as Marchandise; and make use of that for the profit and interest of Vain-glory, which they receiv'd to apply to God's Honor: If the height and generosity of Mind, that moves 'em to undertake so great enterprises, be not founded upon true Humility of Heart, let 'em truly fear, lest they are such as we read of in the Prophet Osee: I have given 'em Silver and Gold, wherewith they have made an Idol of Baal. That is, they have Erected my gifts, as an Idol to their own Vanity.*

Saint Gregory relates to this purpose, what Saint Paul sayd to the Corinthians: * *We are not like the great number of those, who Corrupt the Word of God; but we*

† Vx qui bene de Deo & sentire & eloqui acceperunt si quantum æstiment. Pietatem si convertant ad inane gloriam quod ad lucrum Dei acceperunt erogandum. Si alta sapientes, humilibus non contentant. Paveant quod in Propheta Osee legitur: Multiplicavi ei argentum, & aurum, quæ fecerunt Baal. Ose. 2. 8. Gregor. lib. 2. Moral. cap. 172. * Non enim sumus sicut plurimi, adulterantes verbum Dei, sed

Speak

ex sinceritate,
sed sicut ex
Deo, coram
Deo, in Chri-
sto loquimur.
2 ad Cor. 1, 17.

Speak with sincerity, we speak as those who are of God, and in his Presence, and speak in JESUS CHRIST. This passage, says he, receives two explications, and shews that we may corrupt the Word of God two ways. The first is, when explicating the Holy Scripture after another manner, than we ought; we draw from thence innumerable falsities, which like Illegitimate Children, are produc'd by our Understanding. For the Holy Ghost being the Author and Spouse of Holy Scripture; it ought to have that true and Legitimate sense, which he declares to his Church by the Saints and Doctors thereof. The second is proper to our purpose, which this great Saint gives us to understand after this manner: There is this difference, says he, between the Spouse and the Adulteress; the one proposes to have Children, and the other thinks of nothing else but to satisfy her Passion: So that he who by his Preaching, pretends not to beget Spiritual Children to God, conformable to the obligation of his Office, and according to these Words of the Apostle, † *I have begotten you by the Gospel*, but only searches his own satisfaction, and to gain for himself the esteem of Men; he is a meer Adulterer, who Corrupts the Purity of the Word of God. 'Tis upon this account that the Saints also call'd Vain-glory, *A Spiritual Luxury*. Which so far surpasses Carnal pleasure, as the sensibility of the Soul, is infinitely more exquisit, and surpasses that of the Body. Let us therefore take care not to be Adulterers of the Word of God, but do as our Saviour in Saint John tells us he did, * *For my part I seek not my own glory*. Let us not in effect seek our own ends in our employments, but let us always have the honor and glory of God alone, before our Eyes.

† Per Evan-
gelium ego
vos genui.
1 Cor. 4, 15.

* Ego autem
non quero
gloriam
meam
Jean. 8, 50.

The Holy Scripture recounts a very remarkable passage of the conduct of Joab. He kept the King of the *Amo-nites* streighly Besieged in his Capital City, and having advanc'd the Siege in such a manner, that he was upon the point of taking it by force, he sent a Messenger to David, to let him know the place was reduc'd to extre-mity, and that it was time he shou'd come to finish the taking it; † *For fear*, says he, *if I press or make an Assault upon 'em at present, the Victory shou'd be attributed to my self*. We ought to have the same fidelity to God, he had to his Prince, in all our Employments, and

† Ne cum a
me vastata
fuerit urbs,
nomini meo
ascribatur
victoria.
2 Reg. 12, 28.

and never desire that any one shou'd attribute to us the glory of the Conversion of Souls, or any other good success, but refer it always to God alone; according to what the Prophet says. † *Give not thy glory to us O Lord, but to thy Name*, and according to the Canticle the Angels Sung at our Saviours Birth: * *Glory be to God on High.*

† Non nobis Domine, non nobis, sed nomini tuo da gloriam.

Psal. 113. 9.
* Gloria in altissimis Deo.
Luc. 2. 14.

We Read in the Life of Saint *Thomas of Aquin*, that he was never touch'd with the least sentiment of Pride, and that neither his profound Knowledge, nor his Angelical Wit, nor the other favors he had receiv'd from God in great abundance, ever mov'd him to take the least Vain satisfaction in himself. We Read also of Saint *Ignatius*, that for many Years before his Death, he was not the least mov'd by any Temptation to Vain-glory; because the Light of Heaven, which Illuminated his Mind, fill'd him at the same time with such a Knowledge of his Nothing, and with such a Contempt of himself, that he was accusom'd to say, *That there was no Vice he less fear'd, than that of Vain-glory.* See therefore by what examples we ought to form our selves, and what ought to be the subject of our confusion, when, even in our most frivolous and insignificant Actions, we permit our selves to be carry'd away with Vanity. For if in these small things you find so little Moderation, how wou'd you be Transported, were you arriv'd to a very great pitch of Learning, had you the Vogue of a most Famous Preacher, shou'd you produce extraordinary fruit in a great number of Souls, and heard your self applauded by the whole World? We ought therefore in little things, to accusom our selves betimes to make little or no esteem of the Praises of Men, and do nothing at all out of any Human Respects; to the end that we may more easily do the like in other occasions of greater moment.

C H A P. VI.

Of several Remedies against Vain-glory.

Bern sup. ill.
 † Super aspi-
 dem, & basili-
 scum ambula-
 bis, & concu-
 cabis leonem
 & draconem.
 Psal. 90. 13.

* Attendite,
 ne iustitiam
 vestram facia-
 tis coram ho-
 minibus, ut
 videamini ab
 eis.
 Matth. 6. 1.

S AINT Bernard explicating those words of the Psalmist, † *You shall walk upon the Asp and Basilisk, and trample under your Feet the Lyon and the Dragon*, says that amongst these Beasts, some kill by looking and breathing; others tear in pieces with their Teeth and Claws, and frighten us by their roring; and that the Devil invisibly do's also all these mischiefs to Man after the like manner: And at length accommodating the different properties of these Beasts to those different Temptations of Vice, which the Devil makes use of to attack us, he comes to the Basilisk; and after having say'd, what the Naturalists report of it, that it kills by it's very looks or aspect, he applys this to the Vice of Vain-glory; and citing the words of JESUS CHRIST, * *Take care you perform not your good Actions before Men, with design they shou'd behold 'em*: Have a care, says he, of the Eyes of the Basilisk; but know at the same time, that it only kills those it sees first; and that if you see it, before it perceives you, it will not only do you no hurt; but will presently dye it self. 'Tis after this manner, says the Saint, that Vain-glory only kill's the Inconsiderate and Negligent, that expose themselves to be seen by it; and use no endeavour to be upon their gard to discern it first, and discover it's weakness. For if you behold it first, you shall not only be free from all fear that this Basilisk can do you any harm; but you will destroy it, and make it vanish into smoke.

Behold here the greatest remedy against Vain-glory, which is, that we take care to behold the Basilisk first; and to consider with attention, that the good opinion of Men is but meer Wind and Smoke; because it neither gives, nor takes away any thing from us; and that all they can say of us, whether good or bad, neither

neither makes us any thing better or worse. Saint *Chrysostom* upon these words of the Royal Prophet, † *Because you will bless the just*, treats this matter perfectly well, and says, that this great Saint hereby encourages the just, to condemn the Persecutions and Calumnies of Men. For what harm can the injuries and affronts which they receive do them, if God blesses and praises 'em? And on the contrary, what good can the praise or applause of men do us, if we want God's blessing? He afterwards alledges the example of *Job* upon this subject, who sitting upon the Dunghill cover'd all over with Leprosie, Ulcers, and Worms; persecuted and scoffed at by his Friends, by his own Wife, and even by the whole World, yet was notwithstanding very happy in this state, because God bless'd him, and gave him this Testimony:

* *That he was a sincere and upright Man, fearing God, avoiding Evil, and persevering in his Innocence.* 'Tis this that render'd him truly happy, and truly great, nor was the Contempt of Men, able to diminish or lessen in the least his Merit. Where Saint *Chrysostom* adds, that what we ought with all care and zeal to procure, is to be esteem'd by God: And since the esteem or contempt of Men, can neither give, nor take any thing from us, we have no reason to put our selves in pain, what opinion they have of us. † *I am not in pain*, says the Apostle, *what Judgment you and the rest of Man-kind make of me, for my true Judge is our Lord.* Let us joyn to this, a consideration of Saint *Bonaventure*, *Be not angry*, says he, *with those that speak ill of you*; for either what they say, is true or false; if it be true, you must not wonder they dare say, what you durst do; if it is false, their detraction can do you no harm. But if notwithstanding any motion of Anger thou'd arise, repress it, and suffer all with Patience, as one suffers the Fire, when apply'd to a Wound; for as the Fire cures the Wound, so the Detraction that you suffer will perhaps cure you of some secret Pride, which for some time you have entertain'd, and taken content in.

The second means, that will help us very much for the obtaining this end, is that which Saint *Basil*, Saint *Gregory*, Saint *Bernard*, and generally all the Saints recommend to us; which is to take very great care to let no expressions slip out of our Mouths, that may turn

Chrys. sup. ill. Quoniam tu benedices iusto. Psal. 5. 14.

* Vir simplex, & rectus, ac timens Deum, & recedens à malo, & adhuc retinens innocentiam. Job. 2. 3.

† Mihi autem pro minime est ut à vobis judicer, aut ab humano die: qui autem iudicat me Dominus est. 1 ad Cor. 4. 3.
Basil. ser. de exercit. Monach.

* Nihil unquam de te loquaris, quod laudem importet, quantumcumque sit familiaris ille, cum quo loqueris. Imò potius plus labora celare virtutes quam vitia.
Ber. in formulâ benevite vite.

to our praise: * *Never say any thing of your self that may redound to your praise*, says Saint Bernard, *tho the Person you speak to, should be one of your most familiar Friends; but on the contrary endeavour to hide all your Vertues, with more care than you take to hide your Vices and Imperfections.* Father Avila, us'd so great a circumspection in this matter, that when it seem'd necessary for the Instruction of his Neighbours, to say something of Edification that had happen'd to himself; he recounted it as of a third Person; so that they could not conceive that what he sayd, was of himself. Saint Ignatius practis'd the same: And we have been inform'd, by a Spaniſh Bishop who knew him at Paris, that this Saint one Day Discoursing of Prayer, and the Bishop having ask'd him how, and in what disposition he felt himself in time of Prayer; he made this Answer: *Of that I will say nothing; it suffices that I entertain you with what is fit and proper for your self. Charity and Duty obliges me to this; but in what you desire of me, there would be a great deal of Vanity in me should I do it.* We Read in like manner of Saint Francis, that he was so reserv'd in this matter, that he not only never discover'd to others the favors, and particular graces God had communicated to him in Prayer, but when he went from it, he endeavour'd so to compose himself in his words and comportment, that none shou'd be able to perceive the joy, and interior satisfaction with which his Mind was replenish'd.

In the Third place, we ought to content our selves, not only in abstaining from what may tend to our own praise, but we must yet go farther, and even hide and conceal, as much as possible we can, the good Actions we perform, according to the precept of JESUS CHRIST in Saint Matthews Gospel: † *When you would Pray enter into your Closet, shut the Door upon you, and Pray to your Father in secret: He who penetrates the most secret and hidden places, will give you a Reward for it.* * *When you shall give Alms,* says he in the same place, *let not your Left Hand know what your Right Hand do's;* as if he would say, you ought your self if it were possible, to be ignorant of the good you do: † *And when you Fast, Anoint your Head, and Wash your Face, to the end that none may perceive that you Fast.* Vain-glory is a crafty and dexterous Enemy, who beholds all our good Actions; and 'tis for this reason that

† Tu autem, cum oraveris, intra in cubiculum tuum, & clauso ostio, ora Patrem tuum in abscondito, & Pater tuus qui videt in abscondito, reddet tibi.

Matth. 6. 6.
* Te autem faciente elemosinam, ne sciat sinistra tua quid faciat dextera tua.

Matth. 6. 3.
† Tu autem cum jejunas, unge caput tuum, & faciem tuam lavas, ne videaris ab hominibus jejunans.

Matth. 6. 17.

that the Saviour of the World recommends to us so great a diligence in hiding 'em, for fear it shou'd Rob us of their Merit. 'Tis after this manner, says Saint Gregory, that Travellers hide their Mony with a great deal of care, lest they shou'd be Rob'd of it: And hereupon he recounts the passage of King *Ezechias*, who for having shewn his Treasures to the Embassadors of the King of *Babylon*, gave occasion to the *Affyrians* very soon after to Besiege *Jerusalem*, and take 'em away. See here an example of what happens to those who perform their good Works, with the Spirit of Pride: The Intention with which they perform 'em, makes 'em loose their Merit. Some have compar'd 'em to Hens, who make a Cackling after they have lay'd an Egg, whereby they discover it, and loose it by this their discovery. 'Tis after this manner, says he, that we loose our good Actions, when we our selves speak of 'em, or when we endeavour to manifest 'em to others.

* *The true Servant of God*, says Saint Gregory, is so far from acting after this manner, that he esteems the good he do's as nothing; and what he cannot hide from the Eyes of Men, he believes he has receiv'd a kind of Reward; if he joys not other good works, which cannot come to their knowledge. Saint Hierom, reports of Saint Hilarion, that perceiving the concurrence of People that follow'd him, and the Reputation that his Miracles had occasion'd, he was much afflicted, and Wept every Day very bitterly: And his Disciples asking him what was the occasion of his Sadness and Tears, *Methinks*, says he, *seeing the esteem that Men have of me, that God pay's me in this Life, for the service which I endeavour to render him.* This is a very profitable consideration, and of which we ought to have a great esteem, as of a means that is very fit to free us from the danger of Vain-glory. Do not therefore aspire after the praises of Men, for fear that God shou'd make that to be the extent of all the recompence of those good Actions you were able to perform. For 'tis after this manner he is us'd to treat those that do so, and he himself tells us the same, by the words of *Abraham* to the Rich *Glutton*. † *Remember Son, that you have receiv'd your share of Rewards whilst you Liv'd.* 'Tis also for the same reason, that the Saints do Counsel us to avoid all sorts of singularity in Devotion; because singular and unusual Actions are most taken notice of, and give greater

Gregor.

4 Reg. 20. 17.

* Jam enim de bonis suis quasi retributionem sibi factam existimat, nisi eis, & alia quæ ab hominibus ne-sciuntur, ad-jungat.
Greg. lib. 22.
Mor. cap. 9.

† Fili, recorde, quia recepisti bona in vita tua.
Luc. 16. 25.

* Qui facit
quod nemo
miratur om-
nes.
Genf. & Guli.
Paris.

greater occasion of talk. * *And he, who do's what others do not, draws the Eyes of all the World upon him;* from whence arises the Spirit of Pride and Vain-glory, which makes us look upon others with contempt.

But, because we cannot always hide our good Actions, this being impossible for those who are oblig'd to contribute by their example to the Edification of their Neighbour; the first means whereby we are to defend our selves against Vain-glory, is to rectifie in the beginning our Intention, and to elevate our Heart to God, and offer to him all our Thoughts, Words, and Actions; to the end, that when Vain-glory comes to claim a part in 'em, we may say to it, according to the advice of Father *Avila*, *Tou come too late, all is already giv'n to God.* It will also be very good to make use of the Answer Saint *Bernard* made to a thought of Vain-glory, that came to his mind whilst he Preach'd; † *I neither began, says he, for your sake, nor will I leave off for it.* For we ought not to permit, that the fear of Vain-glory shou'd make us desist from our good undertakings; we must only stop our Ears, and thereby render our selves deaf to the praises of Men. Saint *Chrysostom* says, we ought to carry our selves in respect of the World, as a Father carries himself towards his Son whilst he is yet in his Infancy; for whether he be fond of him, or shews himself peevish to him, 'tis all the same thing, he laughs as well at the one as at the other; because, he looks upon him as an Infant, who knows not what he says, nor what he do's. Let us look upon the World in the same manner, and believe 'tis an Infant, and as tho' it had not the sense of knowing what it says, or what it do's. Saint *Francis Xaverius* went still farther, and sayd, if we attentively consider'd our faults and sins, and what we truly are in God's sight, we shou'd look upon and receive the praises of Men but as so many ralleries and injuries.

Let us from hence conclude, that both the knowledge of our selves, which is the most proper remedy against Vain-glory, is also the last means we can propose, to defend us from it. If we enter a little into our selves, and take an account of what we are, we shall see that there's nothing we can be proud of, but rather see many things to humble and confound us. For we are full of defects, not only in regard of our sins, but even in regard of those Actions that appear

† Nec prop-
ter te capi,
nec propter te
desinam.
Bern. in vita
sua.

appear the most just and perfect, for if we examen 'em well, we shall find occasion enough of humiliation and confusion. Wherefore, Saint Gregory frequently repeats this Sentence :

* *All human Justice is Convicted as guilty of Injustice, if we Judge according to rigor; for if Mercy takes not place in the Examination of our Actions, those for which we expect the greatest Reward, will even deserve Punishment.* Wherefore Job sayd, † *That he fear'd all his Actions;* that is, he had always an extream mistrust of himself, because of the many imperfections and defects which easily intermix themselves with all we do, especially, when we stand not upon our guard, and keep not a diligent watch over our selves; hence it is that the ignorance of our imperfections, is the foundation of our Pride, and the source of that Vain-glory, that so puffs up our mind: For if we come to Examen our selves with attention, and at Night if we take an exact account of our Consciences what we have done all the Day long, shall we not find in our selves an Abyss of Miseries, a Thousand imperfections, and a Thousand faults that we have committed in our Thoughts, Words, and Actions, and a Thousand omissions that we are guilty of? And if it happens, that we have done any thing that is good, we often find we have corrupted it, and destroy'd it's Merit, either by our Vanity, or Negligence, or infine, by several other defects we perceive therein; or by an infinity of others we are ignorant of; in which notwithstanding we ought always to believe our selves guilty. Let us then enter into our selves, let us have recourse to the knowledge of our Nothing, and let us like the Peacock look upon our Feet, that is, let us take notice of that, wherein our Actions are defective; and we shall presently perceive all those sentiments of Pride and Vanity to flag and abase themselves, which the satisfaction we had taken in our selves, had before occasion'd and rais'd in our Hearts.

* Omnis humana iustitia, iniustitia esse convincitur, si districtè iudicetur: Si enim remotà pietate discuti-mur, opus nostrum penà dignum est, quod remunerari præmijs præstolamur. Greg. lib. 9. Mor. cap. 11. & 13. & lib. 17. cap. 10. † Verebar omnia opera mea. Job. 9. 28.

C H A P. VII.

*Of the End we ought to propose to our selves
in our Actions.*

WE have already made appear, that our Actions ought intirely to be disingag'd from all sorts of Vanity, and Human Respects: Whereby we have shewn the way how to avoid this Evil. Now I shall speak of the End and Intention, which we ought to have in all we do, and shew that God's greater Glory, is the only End we ought to propose to our selves. Saint *Ambrose* recounts out of the Naturalists what is very much to our purpose: These relate, that when the *Eagle* desires to know whether her Yong-ones are Legitimate or no; she takes 'em in her Talons, and holding 'em suspended in the Air, exposes 'em to the brightest Beams of the Sun; which if they look fixedly upon, she esteems 'em worthy her owning 'em as hers, and carries 'em back to her Nest, to bring 'em up as her own. But if she finds their Eyes so weak as to twinkle, she looks upon 'em as Illegitimate, and lets 'em fall to the Ground. We may after the same manner, know whether we are the true Children of God; if we fix our Eyes upon the true Sun of Justice, who is God; referring all our Actions to him; and that they have no other aim than to please him, and to accomplish his Divine Will. Which truth is confirm'd by the Words of our Saviour in the Gospel, when he says, † *Whosoever do's the Will of my Father that is in Heaven, he is my Brother, my Sister and my Mother.*

We Read of an Ancient Father of the Desert, who was us'd to stop a little at the beginning of each Action he perform'd. And one Day being ask'd why he did so, I believe says he, that all our Actions have no Merit of themselves, if they be not done for a good End. Wherefore

*Ambros. lib. 5.
exam. cap. 7.*

† Quicumque
enim fecerit
voluntatem
Patris mei, qui
in caelis est,
ipse meus fra-
ter, & soror,
& mater est.
Matth. 12. 50.

fore, as he who Shoots at a Mark, takes his aim for some time before, to direct his shot right; so in like manner, before I perform what I purpose, I direct my Intention to God; who ought to be the only aim or end of all our Actions; and 'tis upon this account, that I always pause or stop a little in the beginning of every thing I do. We ought to do the same as those Archers do, who the better to hit the White, shut the left Eye and open only the right, that the sight may be more united and strengthen'd, and be less dissipated upon other objects: So after the same manner we ought to shut the left Eye, that is to say, have no human respect, but open the right; that is, have no regard but to God alone; and by this means we shall not fail to hit the Mark, and infallibly touch the Heart of God, as he himself acknowledges in the Canticles: * *You have Wounded my Heart, O my Sister, my Spouse, you have Wounded my Heart with one of your Eyes.*

* Vulnerasti cor meum soror, mea ipse fecisti, vulnerasti cor meum in uno oculorum tuorum.
Cant. 4. 9.

To speak more clearly, and to descend more to particulars, I say we ought to endeavour to offer and actually to direct all our Actions to God, which we may do with more or less Perfection. For first in the Morning, we ought when we Rise, to offer to God all our Thoughts, Words, and Works of that Day, and beg of him, that all these may be perform'd to his Honor and Glory; to the end, that when Vain-glory shall present it self to desire a part in 'em, we may Answer it with reason, you come too late, all is already dispos'd of. But we ought also not to content our selves with this alone; we must also accustom our selves as much as we are able, to take care not to begin any thing, without first referring it actually to God's greater Glory: And as in a Building, we lay no Stone without applying the Rule and Plummert; so in every Action we do, we ought to apply that strength and unerring Rule of the Will, and greater Glory of God. Moreover, as a good Work-man contents not himself in making use of his Rule and Square only once, but often applies 'em, till such time as the Stone is rightly plac'd; so 'tis not enough that we have once offer'd our Actions to God, in the beginning of each of 'em; but at the very time we perform 'em, we ought to carry our selves after such a manner, as thereby continually to offer 'em to God; saying to him, Lord 'tis for you I do this, I do it because you have Commanded me, and because you desire to have it so.

CHAP. VIII.

What we ought to do, to Act always with a great Purity of Intention.

THE Masters of a Spiritual Life; when they would explicate after what manner we should perform our Actions with extream Perfection, are wont to make and propose a very just comparison. As the Mathematicians, say they, consider only in themselves the dimension and figure; and always abstract from the matter, because it makes nothing to their purpose; so the true Servant of God ought to think of nothing in all his Actions but the Will of God; and for this end, he ought to make a perfect abstraction from the matter, that is to say, not at all regard, either in what charge he is employ'd, or what he is commanded; because 'tis not in that, in which our Perfection consists, but only in performing the Will of God, and seeking his Glory in all things that we do. 'Tis this which the great Saint Basil teaches us, as the Apostle Saint Paul had done before; † *The whole Conduct of a Christian, says he, proposes to it self only one end, which is, the Glory of God; wherefore, whether you Eat or Drink, or whatever you do, do all to the Glory of God.*

† *Victus ac ratio vivendi hominis Christiani, unum scopum habet, nempe gloriam Dei, sive enim cibum capescitis, sive bibitis, sive aliud quid facitis, omnia in gloriam Dei facite, inquit in Domino verba faciens Apostolus. Basil. de ingl. & chr. or. 16.*

* *Ego cibum habeo manducare, quem vos nescitis. Numquid aliquis attulit ei manducare? Meus cibus est ut faciam voluntatem ejus qui misit me. Joan. 4. 32. & seq.*

The Saviour of the World, finding himself tir'd in his Journey; his Disciples, who were gone to buy something to Eat, at their return finding him reposing himself upon the Well of Jacob, and entertaining himself with the Samaritan, press'd him to take something to repair his strength: But he Answer'd 'em, * *I have Meat to Eat, you know not of; and afterwards when they ask'd one another, who has brought him something to Eat? My Food, answer'd he, is to do the Will of him that sent me.* See here what ought to be our Food in all things we perform: When you Study in private, when you Teach in publick, or whether you Preach the Word of God, nourish not your self

self with the pleasure of your knowledge, or excellency in Preaching; but with the pleasure there is in doing therein the Will of God, who is pleas'd that you shou'd be then employ'd in those things. But if you be employ'd in the functions, which regard the Temporal Service of your Brethren, use also the same Intention: The nourishment of the Porter and Infirmarian, is not different from that of the Preacher and Master; and you ought also to be as content in this your employment, as each one of them is in his. For the fulfilling the Will of God being the only subject of that satisfaction they ought to have; you may have as much hereof as they; since as a good Spiritual Mathematician, you rest not upon the matter of the Action you perform, but you consider only that you do what God desires at your hands. Wherefore, we ought to endeavour to have always in our Mouths and in our Hearts these words: 'Tis for you O Lord, that I do this, 'tis for your Glory, 'tis because you desire it; and continue always this exercise till we come to perform our Actions, † *As those that serve God, and not Men*; that is to say, till we find our selves actually inflam'd with the Love of God in what we do; and till we have a joy to accomplish thereby his Divine Will; and infine, that all our Actions be nothing else, but the effects of that Divine Love, which animates us.

† Servientes
sicut Domino,
& non homi-
nibus.
Ad Ephes. 6. 7.

Father *Avila* brings a familiar comparison, that serves much to our purpose, and says, that we ought to carry our selves in all our Actions, as a Woman who bears a great love for her Husband, is us'd to do; who seeing him return from a great Journey all cover'd with Dust, and quite spent and weary'd, washes his Feet her self, and has a sensible joy in this service she do's him; so that we clearly see that 'tis the motive Love that moves her to what she do's. If we can perform things after this manner; if we can find this hidden Treasure in the Fields, this Treasure so expos'd, and yet so hid at the same time; how rich shou'd we become, and how soon shou'd we be Perfect? This is the true Philosophers Stone, which changes Iron and Brass into Gold; because how mean soever any Action is of it self, it renders it very precious. Let us therefore for the future strive thus, to convert all things into most pure Gold; since 'tis so much in our power: And as in the Temple of *Salomon*, there was nothing but

Matth. 13. 44.

Reg. 6. 22.

what was of Gold, or cover'd with Gold; so let there be nothing in you, which is not either an Act, or an Effect of the Love of God.

C H A P. IX.

That the cause of our Distraction and Remissness, ought not to be ascrib'd to our Exterior Occupations; but only to the negligence with which we perform 'em.

From what we have already sayd, we may easily see that if sometimes the employments we are in chance to distract us, and cause us to relent in our Fervor; the fault is not in the employments, but in our selves, who know not how to perform 'em as we ought. If we stay upon the exterior Bark or outside of the Action, the labors of the Body will be fruitless and in vain, and your Mind will be unprofitably wasted and tir'd out: The Will of God, which is as the inside, Marrow, and substance of all things, ought to be your Food and Nourishment: Break the Bark, and penerate to the Marrow like the Eagle, which Ezechiel speaks of, † *Which carry'd away the Marrow of the Cedar,* and say with the Psalmist: * *Lord I will Offer unto you Holocausts full of Juice and Marrow;* and by this means you will make a continual progress in Perfection. *Martha* and *Mary* are Sisters, one neither hurts nor hinders the other; that is, Action and Contemplation prejudice not each other: But on the contrary, Prayer well made helps us to perform each Action well; and each Action perform'd well as it ought to be, is a great help to the well performance of our Prayer. If you feel therefore any trouble and disquiet in what you are about, 'tis because the help and assistance of Prayer is wanting: † *Martha, Martha, you torment and trouble your self about many things; Martha* is troubl'd because her Sister *Mary* do's not help her; and

† Tullit medullam Cedri. Ezech. 17. 3

* Holocausta medullata offeram tibi. Ps. 65. 15.

† Martha, sollicita es, & turbaris erga plurima. Dic ergo illi ut me adjuvet. Luc. 10. 40. & 41.

and therefore desiring her assistance, addresses her self to our Saviour, saying, *Speak to her to help me.* Do you also endeavour to gain assistance from *Mary*, that is from Prayer and Meditation, and you will find that all your disquiet will soon Vanish. The Ho'y living Creatures that appear'd to *Ezechiel*, † held their Hands hid under their Wings, to let us understand, that those who make Profession of a Spiritual Life, ought not to act but under the shadow of Contemplation; and must so joyn Meditation and Action together, that one be never separated from the other: *Cassian* says, that the Ancient Anchorets of *Egypt*, ceas'd not to use Contemplation, tho they were also earnest upon their Work; and as long as their Hands were employ'd in the function of *Martha*, their Hearts were intirely employ'd in the exercise of *Mary*. And Saint *Bernard* speaking of this subject, * The Principal care, says he, of those who give themselves to Spiritual exercises, is to employ themselves in Exterior things, that the Interior heat of Devotion, do's not at all Relent; but that the same function which weakens the Body, serves to give new strength to the Mind. Wherefore 'tis so false that Exterior Occupations hinder Devotion, and Interior Retirement; that on the contrary, they contribute to it so far forth, as whilst they only take up the Body, the Mind is not thereby hinder'd, from continually thinking upon God. Wherefore an Ancient Religious very much advanc'd in Vertue, was us'd to say, that in Religion, he envy'd extremely two sorts of Persons, Novices, and Lay-Brothers; because the first were employ'd in nothing but in procuring their Spiritual advancement; and the second, because they, not having their Mind charg'd or hinder'd with any care, might have it always disingag'd, and free for Prayer.

Saint *John Climacus* reports that in a Monastery near *Alexandria*, he found a Cook that was extremely taken up in his employment, because he was every Day to prepare Meat for two hundred and thirty Religious Persons, besides Strangers: And notwithstanding, amidst all these his Exterior Labors, he fail'd not to be always Recollected in himself, and shed Tears in very great abundance. Saint *John Climacus* much astonish'd at this, pressed him to tell him, how amidst so many impediments, he was able to keep so great a Recollection of Mind, and obtain the gift

† Et manus
sub pennis
eorum.
Ezech. i. 8.

† Hoc maxime curant
spiritualibus
exercitationibus
dediti, taliter se circa
exteriora occupare, ut devotionis spiritum non extinguant:
Unde licet extrinsecus bonorum operum exercitiis fatigantur in corpore, intrinsecus tamen reficiuntur in mente.
Bern. ser. ad solit.

Climacus. c. 4.

gift of Tears. I always imagine to my self, answer'd the Brother, that 'tis God whom I serve, and not Men; wherefore, I believe that I ought not to give my self any respite or repose; and the sight of the material Fire, furnishes me with a continual Fountain of Tears, by setting continually before me, the violence of the Fire of Hell. We Read in like manner of Saint *Catherine of Siena*, that the Persecution of her Parents, who wou'd oblige her to Marry, went to such an excess, that believing, the Spiritual Exercises the practis'd, were what most of all hinder'd her from Marrying, they depriv'd her of all liberty of being able to apply her self in secret to Prayer; and employ'd her in the meanest Offices of the House, putting her into the Kitchen in the place of a Slave whom they took out of it. But this Holy Virgin instructed by the Holy Ghost, built her self a retreat in the bottom of her Heart, and propos'd to her self never to quit the Office, performing faithfully what she had purpos'd; so that tho she was not permitted to remain in the Apartment, which she before had in her Fathers House, no longer than they thought fit; yet she never left that, she had made within her Heart; so that tho it were easie to deprive her of the one, it was impossible for em to put her out of the other: For when she was employ'd in the most servile Offices of the House; she look'd upon her Father and Mother as representing JESUS CHRIST, and the Blessed Virgin; and in the persons of her Brethren, and the rest of the Family, she represented to her self the Apostles and the Disciples of our Saviour. Thus having her Mind always fill'd with this Idea, she perform'd all things with joy, thinking that it was JESUS CHRIST, she serv'd; and putting her self always in God's sight, she enjoy'd continually his Presence, and shut her self up with him in the Sanctuary of her Heart. Wherefore she was wont to tell her Confessor, when he was charg'd with any Temporal employments, or had any Journey to make, Dear Father make within your self a retreat, which, endeavour never to forsake. Let us take this Counsel to our selves, and we shall find by experience, that all Exterior employments that can be impos'd upon us, will be so far from hindering us, that they will on the contrary help us to Interior Recollection, and continual Prayer.

C H A P. X.

*Of the advantage there is in performing our
Actions after the foresaid manner.*

SUCH Actions as are perform'd after the manner
aforesaid, are call'd Full and Perfect Actions, and
Saint Hierom and Saint Gregory say, that when the
Holy Scripture speaks of those that have liv'd after
this manner, it expresses it self, *That they have thus
liv'd entire and full Days; and that they dy'd full of Days,*
notwithstanding they dy'd very Young: 'Tis this the Wise
Man teaches us, when he speak's of the Just,
* *That in a short durance they here liv'd, they have fulfill'd,
a great space or length of time.* But how can it be that any
one lives a great while in a short time, and that in a
few, he should include a great number of Years? Would
you know how? By performing his Actions full and entire,
and in living perfect and whole Days, † *Full and entire Days
shall be found in Them,* says the Psalmist; and from this
second passage 'tis easie to draw the explication of the
first. Each Day of the true Servants of God, are Days
of twenty four hours long; they suffer not one Moment in
this time to be empty or unprofitable. The Day is al-
ways full and entire to them; because they employ
it totally in doing the Will of God. The very hours of
Eating, Recreation and Sleeping, pass not idly and without
fruit to These, because they refer all their Actions to
the Greater Glory of God, and because they perform
'em only, according to God's Will who would have 'em so. They
Eat not but for pure Necessity, never for Pleasure; and
seek not their own satisfaction in any thing: But on the contrary,
they would desire, if it were God's Will, to be able to
live without Eating, Sleeping, or Diverting their Minds by
any Recreation; they would never be employ'd but in
Loving of God, and earnestly desire with the Royal Pro-
phet, * *That he would deliver 'em from their necessities,*
that

*Hier. sup. illud
Isai. 38. 10.
Ego dixi: In
dimidio.
Greg. lib. 35.
sup. illud Job.
Mortuus est
senex.*

* Consum-
matus in brevi
explevit tem-
pora multa.
Sap. 4. 13.

† Et dies
pleni inventi-
entur in eis.
Psal. 72. 10.

* De neces-
sitatibus meis
erue me.
Psal. 24. 17.

that is, that he wou'd disingage them from the Miseries of their Body, and that they might be exempted from satisfying their Necessities, to the end they might be always absorpt in the Love and Contemplation of God.

I know very well that this is a thing, to which none can arrive in this Life; and that the Just ought to suffer with patience, all the Infirmities of Human condition; yet they cannot accommodate themselves to them but with Sorrow; of which the Testimonies of *Job* and *David*, are great proofs. The one says, † *I Sigh before I Eat*: And the Other, * *That he mix'd his Drink with his Tears*: And in another place, † *That he wash'd his Bed every Night, and Water'd it with his Tears*. It belongs to us to do the same; we ought as soon as we are lay'd down in our Bed to say to God with Tears; Must I O Lord, be so long a time depriv'd of thinking of you? * *Why is my Exile and Banishment prolong'd*, when will you please to give an end to it? † *Draw my Soul out of it's Prison*, draw it out of the Prison of this Miserable Body, to the end that it may nevermore be employ'd but in Blessing and Praising you Eternally. 'Tis after this manner, that all our Actions and all our Days become full and entire; 'tis after this manner, that the Just live a long while in a short time, and that a few Days of Life make many Years of Merit. But he, says Saint Gregory, who has not well employ'd his time, and has neglected to do good Works during his Life; how long so ever the course of his Life may be, we may say of him, that he dyes void and destitute of Days, because he has permitted his Days and Years to pass unprofitably; and he may truly say, that the * *Days of his Pilgrimage have been short and Evil*.

Saint Hierom speaking of these Words of King *Exechias*, related by the Prophet *Esay*, † *In the midst of my Days I will go to the Gates of Hell*, makes this remark, that the Saints and Just, even such as *Abraham* was, do intirely accomplish the Multitude of their Days: * *He dy'd in a happy Old Age, and full of Days*, says the Holy Scripture, but the Wicked die in the midst of their Days; and even go not so far; because they let many Years pass unprofitably: † *The Men of Blood, and the Deceivers*, says the Prophet, *shall not Live half their Days*. 'Tis upon this account, and for the

† Antequam comedam, sup-
pilo.

Job. 3. 24.

* Potum me-
um cum lactu
miscbam.

Psal. 101. 10.

† Lavabo per
singulas no-
ctes lectum
meum, lachry-
mis meis stru-
tum meum
lavabo.

Psal. 6. 7.

* Heu mihi,
quia incolatus
meus pro-
longatus est!

Psal. 119. 5.

* Educ de
custodia ani-
mam meam.

Psal. 141. 13.

Greg. lib. 35.

Afor. cap. 15.

* Dies pere-
grinationis
vitæ meæ par-
vi & mali.
Gen. 47. 9.

† In dimidio
dierum inco-
rum vadam ad
portas inferi.
Isaia 38. 10.

* Mortuus est
in senectute
bona, & ple-
nus dierum.
Gen. 25. 8.

† Viri san-
guinum & do-
losi non dimi-
diant dies
suos.

Isaia. 54. 24.

the same reason, that the Holy Scripture calls a Sinner an Infant of a Hundred Years; because he lives not as a Man, but as a Child. * *An Infant dy'd of a Hundred Years of Age*, says *Isay*, and the Sinner of a Hundred Years Old shall be Curs'd. From hence it happens, that the Wicked are always surpris'd by Death, and cut down whilst they are green; and when it falls out thus, they complain that it happens too soon, and beg some respite that they may have leisure to do Penitence. We may say the same thing of tepid and loose Religious; for how long soever it is, since they took the Habit; yet they have liv'd but a very few Days in Religion.

* Quoniam puer centum annorum morietur, & peccator centum annorum maledictus erit. *Isa.* 65. 20.

We Read in the Chronicle of Saint *Francis*, that a good Old Man, being ask'd by a Secular, how long he had been Religious, Answer'd him, *That he had not yet been one Moment*, but finding him scandaliz'd at this Answer, he did not rightly comprehend, he added, *I know very well that 'tis Seventy Five Years, that I have worn a Religious Habit, but I know not how long I have been a true Religious Man, by a due performance of all my Actions.* God grant that none of us, may say of our selves with truth, what the Humility alone of this Holy Man made him say: Because it matters not to have been a long while in Religion, and to have grown Old therein, but 'tis of importance, to have liv'd well in Religion; and what do's it profit us to count many Years from the Day of our Conversion; if we be not at all grown better? A few Days of a Pure and Holy Life, are of greater value, than many Days of a dissolute and tepid one: So that before God we reckon not the Years of our Life, but those of a good Life; nor the Years that are past in Religion, but those in which we have liv'd as good Religious. The Holy Scripture furnishes us with an excellent example of this truth in the First Book of the Kings, when it says, that *Saul † was an Infant of a Year Old, when he began to Reign, and that he Reign'd two Years over Israel.* Yet 'tis very certain that he Reign'd Forty Years; and Saint *Paul* clearly testifies this in the Acts of the Apostles, by these words: * *Afterwards they ask'd a King, and God gave 'em Saul the Son of Cis, of the Tribe of Benjamin, during the space of Forty Years.* Why then in the History of the Kings, is there only mention made of Two Years? Because in God's Annals, we count only the Years that we have liv'd well; and therefore of the whole time that the Reign of *Saul* lasted, the Holy Scripture only marks Two Years, because he only

Tb. à Kemp. de Imit. Chr. lib. 1. cap. 25.

† Filius unius anni erat Saul, cum regnare cepisset: Duobus autem annis regnavit super Israel. * Reg. 13. 1. * Exinde postulaverunt Regem, & dedit illis Deus Saul Filium Cis, virum de tribu Benjamin, annis quadraginta. *1. Reg. 13. 21.*

Tom. I.

U

Reign'd

Matth. 20. 8.

Reign'd those Two Years like a Just Prince, and as a true King. The Gospel also teaches us, that altho those; whom the Father of the Family had sent last of all to his Vine-yard, had only wrought an Hour, yet they had the same recompence that those had, who had wrought all the Day long: And without doubt he treated 'em after this manner; because in the short time that these had labor'd, they had Merited as much, if not more, than the others had done the whole Day? Let us therefore regulate our account after this manner, and let us according to this reckoning, count how long we have liv'd in Religion.

Eusebius Emisenus declares this admirably well, when he says: * 'Tis by the number of years that we ordinarily measure the time we have liv'd; but take care you abuse not your self, in counting from the time of your entrance into Religion. Because you ought not to count any other Days, than those in which you have renounc'd your own Will; or resisted your Passions; or wherein you have done nothing contrary to the exact observance of your Rules; reckon also that Day as one of your Life, which receiv'd it's light from the purity of your Mind and Holy Meditation. Make if possible some Years of these sort of Days, and measure hereby the time you have liv'd in Religion: Fearing least otherwise the same reproach be made to you that was made to the Bishop of Sardis in the *Apocalyps*: † Write to the Angel of the Church of Sardis, says our Lord, I know all your Actions; I know they say that you live, and notwithstanding you are dead; wherefore stand upon your guard, because I find your Actions are not full in the sight of God. Believe that nothing is hid from the knowledge of God; he sees in you that which Men cannot discover; they believe you live, when alas you are dead; you bear the Name of a Christian, but live not the Life of a Christian; you bear the Name and Habit of Religion, but have not the qualities of a Religious Person; all your Actions accord very ill with the Name you bear: They are intirely void of God; and if they are full of any thing, 'tis of your self; you seek only your self in all things you do; you seek your own particular commodities; your own Glory, Honor and Reputation. Let us therefore watch carefully over our selves; let us endeavour that our Actions be full and compleat, and that our Days be full and entire, to the end that after this manner we may Live a great while in a short time, and that we may Merit very much before God.

C H A P.

* Solemus annos nostros & temporum spatia, quibus nunc vivimus, supputare; non te fallat quicumque ille est numerus dierum, quos hic relicto corporali ter saculo, consumpsisti, illum tantum diem vixisse te computa, in quo voluntates proprias abnegasti, in quo malis desideris restricti, quem sine ulla regula transgressione duxisti: Illum diem vixisse te computa, qui puritatis, & sanctæ meditationis habuit lucem.
Euseb. Emis. lib. 9. ad Mon.

† Et Angelo Ecclesiæ Sardis scribe: Scio opera tua, quia nomen habes quod vivas, & mortuus es. Esto vigilans, non enim invenio opera tua plena coram Deo meo.
Apoc. 3. 1.

C H A P. XI.

Wherein is more fully declar'd, what Integrity and Purity of Intention we ought to have in all our Actions.

WE are wont to teach those who employ themselves in the help of their Neighbour, how they shou'd carry themselves in their Functions; and the advice we give 'em, which is drawn out of the Doctrin of the Fathers of the Church, may also serve to teach us, how to purifie our Intention in all things; and with what simplicity, and how free from self Interest, we ought to seek God in every thing we do. When you undertake any thing, say they, from which any Spiritual advantage may arise to your Neighbour, let not the good success of your enterprise, but the fulfilling only of the Will of God, be your principal End and Intention. After this manner, when we hear Confessions, when we Preach, and when we Teach; we ought not to have chiefly in prospect the Conversion, the Amendment, and the Profit of our Neighbour; but we ought to regard above all, to do the Will of God, in whatsoever he employs us, and perform it, the best we are able, purely to please him. And after we have done this, whether or no we succeed in our undertaking, whether any one grow's better by our Instruction, or gathers fruit from our Sermons, 'tis God's Affair, and not ours: † *I have Planted*, says the Apostle, *Apollo has Water'd, but God has giv'n the Increase*. That which we are able to do, is to Plant and Water as the Gardiner do's; but to make the Plant grow, and to make the Trees bring forth Fruit, is not his Work, but the Work of God alone. The Fruit of Souls, which is their Conversion, their Amendment, and their Progress in Vertue, can come from none but God; and 'tis not of these Fruits, that the Merit and Perfection of our Actions depend.

U 2

Behold

† Ego plantavi, Apollo rigavit; sed Deus incrementum dedit.
1 Cor. 3. 6.

Behold here, what Purity of Intention we shou'd endeavour to have; whereby we may be able to enjoy a profound peace in every thing we do. For when any impediment opposes it self, to the good success of any laudable Action, and hinders the Fruit we design to draw from thence; we shall not be at all troubl'd, if the End we propos'd to our selves in our enterprise, has not the wish'd event, but rest satisfi'd in having compleated the Will of God; performing our Duty in the best manner we are able, thereby to deserve to please him. But if when you Preach, hear Confessions, and treat with your Neighbour for his Salvation; you have in prospect the gaining great Fruit by this means, and make this your chief End; you will infallibly find great trouble of Mind, if your design happens to be cross; and sometimes not only loose your interior peace of Mind, but your patience also, and perhaps permit your self to be transported still farther.

Saint Ignatius was accusom'd to explicate this by a very proper comparison: *Do you know*, says he, *how we ought to carry our selves towards our Neighbour in the employments, that concern the Salvation of Souls? As the Angels Gardians carry themselves towards those, of whom God has giv'n 'em care. They give 'em all the good Counsel they are able, they defend, conduct, enlighten, excite, and help 'em to do well; but if Men make an ill use of their free Will, and resist their good Inspirations, the Angels afflict not themselves for this, and the felicity they enjoy is not at all diminish'd; but they say with Jeremy: * We have us'd all our care and industry to cure Babylon: And it is not heal'd; let us leave and abandon it.* 'Tis after this manner we ought to do what we can for the Conversion and Amendment of our Neighbour: But when we have carefully perform'd our duty, we must keep our Mind in peace, and not permit it to give way to any disquiet, upon account that the Sick person is not, nay even will not be Cur'd.

The Disciples, sent by JESUS CHRIST to Preach, were not able at their return, to hinder themselves from expressing the Joy they had, in having wrought Miracles, and cast out Devils; to whom the Son of God gave this following check: † *Do not rejoyce at this, but rejoyce, that your Names are Written in Heaven.* Let not your joy and contentment depend upon your success, tho' never so advantageous; but see whether you perform such Actions so, as to Merit that your Name be Register'd in the Kingdom of Heaven. See that you fully

* Curavimus
Babylonem, &
non est sanata:
derelinquamus
eam.
Jerem. 51. 9.

† In hoc nolite gaudere, quia spiritus vobis subjiciuntur; gaudete autem quod nomina vestra scripta sunt in caelis.
Luc. 10. 20.

fully satisfie the obligation of your charge; and let the doing so, be all your ambition and all your joy; since the happy Success, the extraordinary Conversions, and the other wonders God shall enable you to work, shall not be look'd upon as your own; your Reward shall not be regulated by these: For whether they be Converted or no, the pains you shall have taken with 'em, and the Charity you shall have exercis'd towards 'em, shall be the due measure of your recompence. On the contrary (and this will let us also see more clearly the truth of this proposition) shou'd the whole World by your means come to be Converted: † *What will it profit you, to have gain'd the whole World, if your own Soul at the same time suffers any prejudice?* Wherefore believe also, that tho' you shou'd not Convert one person, your recompence shall not be any thing the less, so you do but your endeavour. Whereas, shou'd our Reward depend upon accidents, and our satisfaction be built upon 'em, certainly the Apostle Saint James had been very unhappy, because as they say, in all Spain he Converted not above Eight or Nine persons; yet the little success he had, did not at all diminish his Merit, nor render him less acceptable and pleasing to God, than the rest of the Apostles were.

We have moreover in what has been sayd, a great subject of consolation; because from hence it follows, that not only God will not ask of us, whether or no by our Preaching we have produc'd great Fruit? Or whether we have Preach'd well? Because 'tis not that which he commands, nor to which our Merit is annex'd. That which he requires of us, is, that we do what we are able, according to the Talents he has giv'n us. He desires but little of us, if we have receiv'd little: * *But of him, says the Gospel, to whom he has giv'n much, he also requires much.* Saint Chrysostom explicates admirably well this Doctrin; when discoursing upon the Parable of the Talents, He asks, why the Servant who had gain'd two Talents, was as well treated as he who had gain'd five? The Gospel says, that when the Master came to take account of his Servants, of the Talents he had divided amongst 'em; he to whom he had given five, presented himself, saying, my Lord, you gave me five Talents; behold here are five others I have gain'd. † *Well done good and faithful Servant, says his Master, because you have been faithful in small things, I will give you a greater Preferment, enter into the Joy of your Lord.* Then, he who had

† Quid prodest homini, si universum mundum lucratur, animæ verò suæ detrimentum patiatur? Matth. 16. 26.

* Omni autem, cui multum datum est, multum quæretur ab eo. Luc. 12. 48. Chrys. hom. 4^a. sup. Gen.

† Euge serve bone, & fidelis, quia super pauca fuisti fidelis, super multa te constituam: intra in gaudium Domini tui. Matth. 25. 21.

* Meritò :
augmentatio-
nem enim, &
imminutio-
nem non vel
huius diligen-
tia, vel illius
negligentia,
fecit, sed con-
creditorum
quantitas :
nam quoad
diligentiam,
ambo pares
fuerunt, pro-
inde & ean-
dem dignita-
tem naciunt.
*Chrys. hom. 4.
sup. Gen.*

had receiv'd two Talents presented himself, saying, my Lord, you trusted me with two Talents, and I have gain'd two more. His Master made him hereupon the same Answer he gave the other, and promis'd him the same recompence. * 'Tis with Justice, says this great Saint, that he Reward'd 'em equally; because the more or less gain the one and the other had made, proceeded not from the care of the one, nor from the negligence of the other, but from the Summ committed to their charge: As to the care thereof, it was the same in 'em both; and 'tis for this reason that they receiv'd an equal reward. This Point is of great advantage, and extream consolation; because it may be apply'd to all things, and all sorts of employments and functions. So that he who labors and takes as much care as another, to perform what is commanded him, Merits as much, tho perhaps he performs not so great things. For example, if I take as much pains as you in Preaching; and yet I Preach ill, and you well: It may happen, that hereby I Merit as much as you, nay perhaps more; because I do all that I am able, and perhaps you may be able to do more than you perform. 'Tis the same as to Studies; altho he who Studies with you, succeeds not well in 'em, and you make great progress, so that he remains very Ignorant, and you become very Learn'd; it may happen nevertheless, that he Merits more in his Ignorance, than you with your Learning. In like manner, in matter of employments; if I perform not mine, so well as you do yours, and my force and capacity, is not able to extend it self so far as yours; it may happen that there may be more Merit in the little I do, than there is in all that you perform. And without doubt this consideration will also help very much both to repress the motions of Vain-glory, in those that have better qualities than others, and hinder those that have less Wit and Talents, from losing courage by the knowledge of their weakness and incapacities.

Saint Hierom's Opinion is very conformable to what I have already sayd, who speaking of the same Parable: † *In fine*, says he, the Master gave the same kind of reception to his Servant, who had increas'd his five Talents to ten; as to the other, who had increas'd the two Talents he had receiv'd, to four; and without taking notice of the great gain they had made, he consider'd only the great zeal and diligence they had thereby express'd. 'Tis not the value of the Oblation, says

Salvin,

+ Denique &
illud qui de
quinque Ta-
lentis decem
fecerat, & qui
de duobus
quatuor, simili
recepit gaudio,
non confide-
rans lucri
magnitudi-
nem, sed stu-
dii voluntate.
Hier.

Salvin, but 'tis the Affection with which 'tis offer'd, that renders it pleasing to God. He regards not how much we give, says *Saint Gregory*, but with how good a Will we give it; He esteems not the present, but accepts of the heart that bestow's it; so that we may even do less than another, and yet often please him more; if we Act with a greater extent of Charity. 'Tis in this that the greatness of God appears, that all the service we are able to do him, is inconsiderable in his sight, unless upon account of the excess of Love wherewith 'tis perform'd: For he wants not our Goods, since he can neither encrease in Riches, or any thing else, † *And all our good Actions, can give him nothing he has not*; wherefore, all he desires of us, is, that we Love him, and that we do all that is in our power to express it. We have a formal Example of this in the two Mites which the Widow in the Gospel offer'd. The Son of God standing near the Poors-box in the Temple, took notice, that the *Pharisees* and Rich People put very great Alms. into it, and that a Poor Widdow approaching, put in only two Mites. Our Saviour hereupon turning towards his Disciples sayd, * *Verily this Poor Widdow has giv'n more than all the rest; for they gave nothing but their superfluities, but she notwithstanding her extream Necessity, has giv'n all she has, without keeping so much as any thing for her self to live upon.* In this manner God Judges of our Actions, and as he rewarded † *This Widdow*, says *Saint Chrysostom*, so he will reward those that instruct others. He will after the same manner have regard to those that Preach, Study, Labor, or employ themselves in other Religious functions; he will not take so much notice of what they do, as of the Charity and Fervor with which they do it.

† Si iuste egeris, quid donabis ei? Job. 35. 7.

* Amen dico vobis, quoniam vidua hæc pauper, plus omnibus misit. Omnes enim ex eo, quod abundabat illis, miserunt: hæc vero de penuria sua omnia quæ habuit misit totum victum suum.

Mar. 12. 43. & 44.

† Quod in Vidua fecit, idem in doctribus operabitur. Chrys. hom. 31. in 1 ad Cor. 1.

CHAP.

C H A P. XII.

*Several Marks whereby we may know when we
Act purely for God, and when we seek our
selves in what we do.*

SAINTE Gregory proposes to us an excellent Mark, how to know whether in our functions which relate to the Salvation of our Neighbour, we seek purely the Glory of God, or whether we have regard also to our own. Take notice, says he, whether you have the same joy when any one Preaches well, is extreamly follow'd, and produces great fruit in Souls, as if you perform'd all this your self. For if you rejoyce not as much in his performance as in your own, but find on the other side a kind of trouble and envy; 'tis an infallible sign that you do not purely seek the Glory of God; as the Apostle Saint James tells us in exprest terms: * *If you have a bitter jealousy, and nourish in your heart the feelings of contention and envy, your Wisdom comes not from above, but is Earthly, favors of Creatures, and Diabolical.* You are not jealous of God's Honor, but of your own, and of gaining to your self that esteem and reputation, which you perceive another has got: For if you desir'd the Glory of God and not your own; you would be glad that there shou'd be many excellent Persons, and able Work-men in his Vine-yard; and that another shou'd do more than you are able to perform your self. 'Tis after this manner that *Moyse* acted when *Josue* would have had him hinder several persons from Propheying in the Camp. He Answer'd like one very angry, and mov'd at such a proposal: † *What Zeal, says he, do you arrogate to your self upon my account? I wou'd to God that all the People were able to Prophezie, and that our Lord wou'd impart his Spirit to them all!* A true Servant of God, ought in like manner to say: I wou'd to God that all Preachers were very excellent, and that our Lord wou'd give 'em the Spirit of Eloquence and Persuasion,

* Quod si
aerum ama-
rum habetis
& contenti-
ones sint in
cordibus ve-
stris, non est
ista sapientia
descensum de-
scendens, sed
terrena, ani-
malis, diabo-
lica.
Jacob. 3. 14.

† Quid emu-
laris pro me?
Quis tribuat,
ut omnis po-
pulus Prophe-
tet, & det eis
Dominus Spi-
ritum suum?
Numb. 11. 29.

Persuasion, to the end that they might be the better able to extend his Glory throughout all places, that his Name might be known and sanctifi'd by the whole World?

Father *Avila* has giv'n an excellent example of this. Of whom 'tis sayd, that when he knew of the Establishment, which the SOCIETY of JESUS had gain'd, by means of Saint *Ignatius*, and understood what was the End and Institution thereof; he sayd, that he had aspir'd for many Years to bring this to pass, but cou'd never compass it; and that the same thing had happen'd to him as to a little Child, who being at the foot of a Mountain shou'd employ all his forces to roll a very heavy Burthen to the top of it, which was beyond his power to effect, by reason of his weakness, and want of strength: And afterwards a Gyant shou'd come, who takes up the same burthen, and carries it whether he pleases with the greatest facility imaginable. Thus this Holy Man look'd upon himself as a Child, whilst he compar'd Saint *Ignatius* to a Gyant. But to come to what makes more to our present purpose; the Establishment of our SOCIETY gave him as great a Joy, as if he had been the Founder and Institutor thereof himself; because therein he only regarded the Glory of God and Salvation of Souls. Behold here how the faithful Ministers of God, † *Think not upon their own interests, but those of JESUS CHRIST*; and 'tis after this manner, that those who serve him ought to have the like disingagement from themselves; so that when the Divine Providence shou'd advance it's Glory, and procure the Salvation of Souls by the means and help of another, they ought to be as well satisfi'd, as if it had made use of their assistance. Wherefore, 'tis a very laudable practise, that some Servants of God, who are very Zealous for the Conversion of Souls, do observe to Pray after this manner: Lord, so that these Sinners correct their ill courses, that this Soul Converts it's self to thee, that this good happens, that the encrease and progress of Christianity be made, 'tis all that I desire; let it be perform'd by what means and helps you please 'tis the same to me; for my part, I desire that nothing thereof be ascrib'd, or attributed to my endeavours. This in effect is to have a pure and right Intention, to act with an entire disingagement from all things that relate to our selves, and to have no other aim, but God's greater Honor and Glory.

† Qui non
quæ sua sunt
querunt, sed
quæ JESU
CHRISTI.
Ad Philip. 2.
11.

We may say the same concerning our own and our Brethrens Spiritual advancement. Whoever is disgusted, or looses courage, because he sees his Brother advance before him in the way of Vertue, he seek's not purely the greater Glory of God. For tho' it be true that a faithful Servant of God, ought to have his Heart deeply pearc'd with sorrow to see that he serves not so great a Master, with such diligence as he ought, and is able to do; yet it do's not therefore follow from hence, that he needs must disquiet himself or repine, because another makes greater progress then he. On the contrary, in the sorrow he ought to have that he serves God no better than he do's, it shoud' be a great comfort to him to see, that tho' he complys not entirely with his Duty, yet there are others at least, who acquit themselves of theirs, as he wou'd acquit himself of his; and who serve and glorifie God as he deserves, and ought to be serv'd. So that the disquiet and trouble into which any person is cast upon this account, comes not from any thing else but Self-love, or some secret motion of Pride and Envy: For if we desir'd truly the Honor and Glory of God, and desir'd to serve him only upon this account, 'tis certain we shoud' extremely rejoyce to see others encrease in Vertue and Perfection; tho' on the other side, the thought that we serv'd him not so well as they, ought to give us great sorrow and confusion.

A second Mark that we do our Actions purely for God, is, when a Religious Man do's so embrace the Office allotted him; and so executes whatever he is Commanded, that he is wholly indifferent whether they prescribe one thing or another; whether they employ him in one Function or another; and in whatsoever Office he is employ'd, he is always pleas'd and contented alike. For the source of this indifference and equality of Spirit, proceeds not from any thing else, than that his Mind is wholly taken up and employ'd in doing the Will of God, without putting himself in pain for any thing else: But if he performs not as willingly a mean and painful, as an easie and honorable Employment; 'tis a sign that he acts not purely for God, but that he regards himself, and seeks his own satisfaction and particular advantage. Wherefore, a Holy Man had great reason to say, that howsoever it shall please the Divine Providence to dispose and order things, we shoud' always equally rejoyce at all events, if God's Will be truly the Motive of our desires.

Thom. à Kemp.

But

But when a Religious Man desires very much that his Superiors shou'd know what he do's, and what pains he takes; when he desires to be prais'd by 'em, or at least to receive some demonstration of their satisfaction from 'em; and when this is wanting is presently discourag'd: 'Tis an evident sign that the Love of God is not the sole Motive of his Actions; but that there are a great many Human Respects which are mingl'd therewith. If you acted purely for God, the praises of Men wou'd be of no esteem with you; but on the contrary, if you reflected that the satisfaction which your Superior shews he takes in your Actions, proceeded from nothing else, but his compassion of your weakness and imperfection, that stands in need of his encouragement, certainly you wou'd be asham'd and confounded at it, instead of being pleas'd; and bemoaning your self you wou'd cry out, is it possible that I shou'd be still so imperfect as to cause my Superior to treat me after this manner; shall I always remain a Novice, and appear so little advanc'd in Vertue, as to stand in need of being excus'd to it, by so poor and imperfect a Motive as this?

We Read in the *Spiritual Meadow*, that the Abbot John, who was Disciple of Saint Amon, serv'd Twelve whole Years one of the Ancient Fathers of the Desert, who was extreemly Infirmit; and tho' during this time he apply'd himself with all imaginable care and affection, to serve him, yet he never receiv'd the least comfortable word from him, but on the contrary, was often receiv'd very rudely, and unkindly treated by him. Infine, the Old Man finding himself near his Death, before a great many Ancient Hermits that came to Visit him, he call'd the Holy Man to him, who had serv'd him during this space, with so much Patience and Humility; and taking him by the Hand he thrice repeated these Words, *Remain constant in God's Service*; and recommending him to the most Ancient Fathers there present, to move 'em the more, believe me says he, 'tis not a Man, but an Angel, I recommend to you; since in the Twelve Years that he has serv'd me in my sickness, he has never had a good Word from me; yet notwithstanding he never fail'd to serve me, with all possible Diligence and Affection.

C H A P. XIII.

*What we ought to do, to obtain every Day
a greater Purity of Intention.*

3. Part. Conf.
c. 1. §. 26. Reg.
17. Summaris.

S AINT Ignatius explicating in his Constitutions, after what manner we ought daily to encrease in rectitude and purity of Intention: *Let all our Study,* says he, *be to have a right Intention, not only in our State of Life in General, but also in all our other Actions in Particular; proposing nothing else to our selves, but to serve and please God; and this rather out of the Motive of love and gratitude for the benefits we have receiv'd, than out of fear of punishment, or hope of reward; tho' nevertheless these two Motives are very good, and may profitably be made use of by us.* There are several ways of seeking and serving God. To serve him out of fear of pain or punishment, is to seek him, and to do a good Action; because that fear tho' it be servile, ceases not to be good, and to be a gift of God; and therefore the Royal Prophet begg'd it of God when he sayd, † *Penetrate my Flesh O Lord with your Fear.* But if we shou'd truly say to our selves, and in effect had the same sentiment in our hearts; that *If there were no Hell, and I were not afraid of being punish'd, I wou'd offend God:* Divines hold that such an Act as this is a new Sin, because this were actually to have our Will, very ill dispos'd. Notwithstanding, to help our selves with the fear of punishment, with the apprehension of Death, and the fear of God's Judgments; to excite our selves the better to serve God, and to abstain from offending him, cannot but be laudable; because 'tis upon this account, that the Holy Scripture frequently recommends this very thing unto us, and makes such terrible threats as it do's.

† Confige timore tuo carnes meas.
Psal. 118. 120.

'Tis moreover to seek God, if we serve him for the recompence which we hope for in Glory; and 'tis also to search him after a more perfect manner than the former; because there is more Perfection to do our Actions for the Motive of recompence,

recompence, than for that of fear: *Moyſes* acted after this manner; as *Saint Paul* teaches us when he ſays, * *That it was by Faith, that Moyſes, after he came of Age renounc'd the Title of Pharaos Daughter's Son; deſiring rather to be afflicted with the People of God, than enjoy the tranſitory advantages of Sin; and preferring the ignominy of JESUS CHRIST, before all the riches of the Egyptians; becauſe he fix'd his thoughts upon the recompence to come.* 'Tis alſo upon the ſame account, and with the ſame Intention, that the *Pſalmiſt* ſayd: † *I have diſpos'd my Heart to obſerve continually your Commandments, becauſe of the recompence I thereby hope for.*

* *File Moïſes grandis factus, negavit ſe eſſe filium filiz Pharaonis, magis elens ſiligi cum populo Dei, quam temporalis peccati habere iucunditatem, maioris æſtimans theſauro Egiptiorum improprium Chriſti; aſpiciebat enim in remunerationem.*

14. 23. & 16. retributionem.

† *Inclinaui cor meum ad faciendas iuſtificationes tuas in æternum, propter*

Ad Heb. 11.

Wherefore theſe two Motives of fear and hope are very good; and we may thereby help and excite our ſelves to do good, or avoid evil: But *Saint Ignatius* will have us go farther, and deſires we ſhou'd ſtill elevate our Hearts, and entertain higher thoughts: * *Aſpire to greater gifts, and I will ſhew you a more excellent way.* He do's not content himſelf that we ſeek and ſerve God after an ordinary manner; but he teaches us a more perfect way; he will have us ſearch him, and ſerve him purely for himſelf, upon account of his Infinite goodneſs, and becauſe God is God; in which is compris'd all we can imagine to be excellent, great and ſublime.

* *Emulamini chariſmata meliora, & adhuc excellentiorem viam vobis demonſtro.*
1 Cor. 12. 31.

The Fathers of the Church, *Saint Baſil*, *Saint Chryſoſtom*, and *Saint Gregory*, treat excellently well this matter; they compare thoſe that ſerve God for the recompence they hope for thereby, to *Simon the Cyrenean*, who carry'd the Croſs of JESUS CHRIST for a certain price or reward, the *Jews* had agreed to give him. Wherefore; they wou'd not have this be the Motive, for us to act by. † *We ought not, ſay they, be like thoſe Servants, who have little or no affection to their Maſters, and regard only the recompence they are to receive: Becauſe this is rather like a Mercenary or Hireling, who thinks of nothing elſe but his own Intereſt, than like a Servant that has a love for his Maſter.* They wou'd therefore have us led by a more Noble Motive, and that we ſhou'd ſerve God as his Children, purely for love of him. There is a great deal of difference, as they add, between the Service of a Slave, that of a Hireling, and that of a Son. The Slave Serves his Maſter only

Baſil. in Regul. ſuſ. diſputatis, in Poenit. Chryſoſt. hom. 2. ſup. ep. ad Rom. Greg. 1. 8. Moral. c. 30.

† *Mote ingratorum ſervorum, ſupputando mercedem; hoc enim mercenarii potius, quam grati ſervi eſt.*
Baſil. ubi ſup.

only out of fear of punishment; The Hireling out of hopes of recompence, and if he be careful to serve well, 'tis because he believes by this means, he shall be the more amply rewarded: But the Son acts after a different manner; 'tis out of pure love, that he serves his Father: And when he takes great care to do nothing that may displease him; 'tis not that he fears any punishment, nor that he hopes for any reward; but 'tis because love naturally gives him this tenderness of affection and attention; and thus tho' his Father be poor, and able to leave him nothing, yet he serves and honors him nevertheless; because the quality of Father, obliges him to it; so that if his Father be but pleas'd, he believes himself sufficiently rewarded for all his pains and services. We ought to serve God after the same manner, say these great Saints; not as Slaves, out of apprehension of being chastis'd, nor of Hirelings, who regard nothing but gain and recompence; but as the true Children of God, since he has done us the favor to admit us to that Dignity. * *Behold what love the Father has for us, says Saint John, that he is pleas'd we shou'd style our selves Children of God, and be so in effect.* Since therefore we are truly such; and since 'tis not without reason that we call God our Father, and JESUS CHRIST our Brother; let us love and serve him as it becomes true Children of his; let us honor and respect him as our Father, and as a Father so worthy and deserving our obedience and respects. Let it be only for his love that we act, let it be purely to please him, and because he deserves it by being what he is; and because his Infinite goodness deserves still a thousand times more, than we can do; tho' we shou'd have a thousand Hearts, and a thousand Lives, to employ in loving and serving him.

*If you have ever been worthy to do any thing pleasing to God, says Saint Chrysostom, † and if you seek any other recompence than to have deserv'd to please him; you are without doubt ignorant how great a good it is to please God; because if you knew it, you wou'd never desire any other recompence. In effect what greater good can we wish for, than to please him? * Be ye imitators of God, says Saint Paul, as his most dear Children, and make it your business to love him as JESUS CHRIST has lov'd us. Let us also*

* Videte qualem charitatem dedit nobis Pater, ut Filii Dei nominemur & simus.
1 Joan. 3. 1.

† Si omnino a genus fueris agere aliquid quod Deo placeat, & alia adhuc præter hoc ipsum, quod placere meruisti, mercedem requiris; vere ignoras quantum boni sit placere Deo: si enim scires, nunquam aliud quid extrinsecus mercedis aut muneris expectares, Chrysostom. lib. de compunct. cord.
* Estote imitatores Dei sicut filii charissimi, & ambulate in dilectione sicut & Christus dilexit nos. Ephes. 5. 1.

add to this, the reflection Saint Bonaventura makes when he says: † Consider that God your Benefactor, imparts to you his gifts, after such a manner, that he desires nothing of you, having no need either of you, nor of any other Creature whatsoever: And he not only desires nothing of us; and 'tis not only without any interest of his own that he loves us, and heaps upon us so many favors; but what he bestows upon us, is purchas'd by the inestimable price of his most Precious Blood, and even the loss of his Life. Behold here, after what manner we shou'd love God, purely for himself, and without any mixture of our own particular interest: And we are not also to wish for Vertues or any other super-natural gifts, for our own advantage and satisfaction, but purely for his sake alone, and for his greater Glory; to have something whereby to make our selves more agreeable and pleasing to him, and that we may serve him the better. Nay we ought to go still farther, and not even desire Eternal Glory but upon this account; in such sort, that when we excite our selves to Vertue, we set not before us the recompence annex'd to good Works; for 'tis not that which we ought to propose to our selves for our principal motive; but our last End, ought always to be to love and praise God, and to think that the higher we shall be elevated in Glory, the more we shall be able to glorifie and praise him.

'Tis this which is call'd a true Love of Zeal and Charity, and a true and perfect Love of God; and this is properly to seek God alone, and his greater Glory. Every thing else being, to speak the truth, only to seek and love our selves. This will more easily be perceiv'd by the difference that Divines and Philosophers put, between that perfect love they call the love of Amity, and the love of Concupiscence. The one moves us to love for the good of our beloved, and for the love of Vertue; without having any regard to our own interest; and the other moves us to love, but 'tis for the advantage we hope to gain thereby to our selves. 'Tis after this manner that we ordinarily love rich and powerful persons, and unite our affections to them, out of the sole Motive of profit: And 'tis very easie to perceive that this kind of love is so far from being perfect, that 'tis full of Self-love; because 'tis a less love to love a friend, than to love him for himself, whereby we seek his, not our own advantage. Those who serve God, either out of fear of pain, or hope of reward, do the same thing; all their Thoughts and Actions are mix'd with

† Considera quod ipse Benefactor tuus Deus, ita tibi benefaciat, ut nihil à te repetat, nec te, nec aliquam creaturam indigeat. Bonav. hom. 1. opus. in falsis. cap. 6.

with Self-love, and therefore they do not seek God after a pure and disinterested manner. 'Tis this that JESUS CHRIST lets us understand in Saint John, when after he had wrought that famous Miracle of satisfying five thousand Persons with five Loaves and two Fishes, turning himself towards the People, who follow'd in great throngs, he told 'em:

* Amen
amen dico vo-
bis: quæritis
me, non quia
vidistis signa,
sed quia man-
ducastis ex pa-
nibus, & fatur-
ati estis. Ope-
ramini non
cibum qui pe-
rit, sed qui
permanet in
vitam æter-
nam.
Joan. 6. 26.
& 27.
Gerson.

* *Verily, Verily, I say unto you, you do not seek me, for the Signs and Wonders you have seen, but by reason of the Bread you have Eaten, and because you have been satisfi'd: Labor not to obtain the Food that perishes, but to gain that which will last for Ever.* But this Food that JESUS CHRIST speaks of, is what he calls his own Food, which is purely to do the Will of God. It was a very Judicious and Holy Answer, which as Gerson reports, a Servant of God made who exercis'd very great Pennance, and was continually in Prayer. The Devil being Jealous of this Holy Mans progress in Perfection, and desiring to divert him from it, one Day Tempted him very violently in the matter of Predestination; causing him in imagination to hear these words frequently repeated: *Wherefore do you torment your self after this manner? Wherefore do you take so much pains? Do what you will, you shall never be sav'd. To whom this Holy Man Answer'd: 'Tis not upon account of Reward that I Serve God, but 'tis for his sake alone that I Serve him.* By which Answer he gave the Devil so great a confusion, that he quite freed himself from this importune Temptation.

But Saint Bernard go's farther yet, and wou'd have us think so little upon our selves in all our Actions, and be so disingag'd from all Self-interest, that we thou'd not think it sufficient to love and serve God, only as Children love and serve their Fathers; but requires of us still a more pure, perfect, and more elevated affection: † *For insine, says he, 'tis true that Children love their Fathers, but they also think of their Inheritance; and therefore are so afraid upon any account to be disinherited, that perhaps this fear makes 'em give more respect to those from whom they expect an Inheritance, tho' they love 'em the less.* This indeed may be call'd love; but may very well be suspected, when it seems to be conserv'd by the hopes of gain: 'Tis also very weak, when it can either relent, or be extinguish'd; when the hope of profit is diminish'd, or remov'd; and 'tis also less pure, when 'tis capable of desiring any thing besides the beloved.

Pure

† Amant e-
nim filii, sed
de hæreditate
cogitant;
quam dum ve-
rentur quo-
quomodo a-
mittere, ipsum
à quo ex-
pectatur hære-
ditas, plus re-
verentur, mi-
nus amant.
Suspectus est
mihi amor,
cui aliud quid
adipiscendi
spes suffragari
videtur: In-
firmus est qui
forte spe sub-
stractâ aut ex-
tinguitur, aut
mutatur;

*Pure love is not Mercenary; Pure love and true charity presumes not upon hope, nor feels or receives any damage from Despair. Wherefore the Saint wou'd teach us hereby, that this pure love wants neither hope nor recompence to excite it to labor, and to be mov'd to serve God. And tho' a Soul inflam'd with this love shou'd certainly know she cou'd gain nothing thereby, yet she wou'd never loose the least courage, nor desist from daily doing her Duty; because 'tis not interest, but only tenderness of love, which is the Rule, and Motive of all she do's. But what love is there, that can be so perfect and elevated, as to surpass that of Children towards their Parents? † Wou'd you know, says this great Saint what this love is? 'Tis, the love that the Spouse has for her Beloved; for true love is content with it self alone, and bounds it's desires and recompence within the limits of the Object it loves. In fine, this love, between the Spouse and her Beloved, is such, that it intirely satisfies it self with the Object it loves; it searches nothing out of it, nor desires any thing else: * This is the only Affair of true lovers, and 'tis after this manner, says Saint Bernard, that all of us ought to behave our selves in our love towards God, the Beloved of our Souls. Let us love him for himself, and let all our joy and Satisfaction be, in loving him: For love is sufficient to it self, and pleases alone, and for it self; 'tis both it's own Merit and Recompence; it neither seeks any Motive to love, nor pretends any advantage in loving out of it self. But the fruit and exercise of this love, is, I love, because I love; I love, purely to love.*

Amo, quia amo; amo, ut amem. Idem Serm. 85. sup. Cant.

† But do not think, says Saint Chrysostom, that by not looking after your recompence, it can be ever a whit the less: on the contrary, it shall thereby become greater; and the less you look upon your own profit, the more considerable shall be your advantage. For 'tis certain, that the more our action is free from, and void of all sort of Self-interest, the more pure and perfect it is. And never becomes so Meritorious, as when there is no mixture at all of Self-love. If you turn your Eyes therefore intirely from your self; if in all that you do, you propose to your self nothing else but to please God, and that 'tis not the hope of reward that moves you to act; believe that your reward shall become greater, and thereby far more precious; since you shall not

Tom. I.

Y

be

impurus est qui & aliud cupit. Purus amor mercenarius non est. Purus amor de spe vites non sumit, nec tamen dissidentia damnasent.
Bern. Serm. 85. sup. Cant.

† Spouse his amor est, amor se ipso contentus.
Bern. de dilig. Deo. c. 3.

* Habet premium, sed id quod amatur. Nec est aliud querit, nec illa aliud habet. Is per se sufficit, is per se placet, & propter se. Ipse meritum, ipse premium, sibi est amor. Præter se non requirit causam, non fructum. Fructus ejus, usus ejus:

† Atque tibi major est merces, si modo extra mercedis spem feceris.
Chrysost. hom. 5. sup. ep. ad Rom. circa finem.

† Si autem
filii, & hære-
des; hæredes
quidem Dei,
co-hæredes
autem Christi.
Ad Rom. 8. 17.

* Ego dabo
tibi mercedem
tuam.

Erod. 2. 9.
† Ego merces
tua magna
sumus.
Gen. 15. 1.

be rewarded only as a Mercenary, to whom nothing is giv'n over and above the Salary promis'd; but you shall be treated as a Son, who is Heir of all the Treasures of his Father: † For if we be the Children of God, we are by consequence Heires; Heires of God, and Co-heires of Jesus CHRIST. Whereby we shall enter upon the enjoyment of our Heavenly Father's Possessions; who will not only thus perform what he promises; * I will give you your Reward; but he will be the Reward himself: † I will be your Reward; an exceeding great one indeed, and such a one as pure Love deserves. The Daughter of Pharao, gave Money to the Mother of Moyses, for Nursing her own Child: Yet it was not for this recompence that this Mother Nurs'd her Son, but for the Natural Love she bore him.

CHAP.

C H A P. XIV.

Of three Degrees of Perfection, by which we
may Elevate our selves to a great Purity
of Intention, and a most Perfect
Love of God.

WE may gather from the Doctrin of the Holy Fathers, and chiefly from that of Saint Bernard, that there are three degrees of Perfection; by which we may elevate our selves to a very great purity of Intention; and to a most perfect love of God. The first is, to search nothing else but the love of him, and search it in such a manner; that in all we do, we have our minds absolutely disingag'd from all other things of the World; placing all our contentment in God alone, so as to bound and limit our thoughts to think of nothing else, but the compleating this Divine Will: Do you desire, says Saint Bernard, to have an excellent mark whereby you may know, as far as 'tis possible in this Life, whether you love God perfectly? See if there be any thing out of God that can give you any joy and satisfaction; and thereby you will perceive the progress you have made in loving God. * "Certainly so long as I am capable of receiving any comfort or satisfaction elsewhere, I dare not affirm that God do's entirely possess the tender affection of my Heart. Saint Austin is of the same opinion when he says: † Lord, he loves you less, who loves any thing with you, which he loves not for you: This sort of love being far from the excellence and purity of the love of that great Queen, who in the midst of the pomp, and glory

Bern. traß. de
int. domo. c. 69.

* Certè quam-
diu possum ex
aliena quali-
cumque re
consolatio-
nem vel ju-
cunditatem
concipere:
nondum au-
deo dicere,
Dilectum no-
strum, insti-
tum ardentis-
simi amoris
suum tenere.
Idem. ibid.
li. 10.

† Minus te amat qui tecum aliquid amat, quod non propter te amat. Aug. Conf. cap. 29.

Domine,
tu scis quod
nunquam la-
tata sit ancil-
la tua, ex
quo huc tran-
data sum ul-
que in pre-
sentem diem,
nisi in te Domine Deus Abraham.

Greg. l. 4. Mor.
c. 18.
† Qui edifi-
cant sibi soli-
tudines.
Job. 3. 14.

of her Royal Majesty, say'd to God: * *You know O Lord, that from the time I was brought hither, to this very Day, your Servant has taken no satisfaction but in you O Lord, the God of Abraham.* Behold here, without doubt a most perfect, and pure manner of loving God.

Esai. 14. 18.

Saint Gregory upon these words of Job, † *who build themselves Solitudes*: Asks what it is to build a Solitude? And says, that whosoever is so disingag'd from all Creatures, and has so absolutely cast of all affection to Earthly things, that even amidst the greatest divertisments, he ceases not to find himself alone; such a one has built a Solitude; because none of all these touch or afflict him; for having plac'd all his Satisfaction in God, he can find no Divertisment or Consolation elsewhere. We daily experience, that when our Affection is settled upon any Person, when we happen to loose him, either by Absence or Death, we are then in a mournful Solitude, even amidst the best Company; because we are not in his Conversation, with whom we before found a frequent satisfaction. The same thing happens to him who has intirely banish'd all Creatures from his Heart, to fill it only with God: Amidst the greatest Pleasures, and greatest Assemblies, he finds himself alone; because he takes no Pleasure in any thing of the World, and there is nothing besides the true Object of his Love, that can give him any true content. Those, says Saint Gregory, who are arriv'd to this point of Perfection, enjoy a most Perfect Tranquility and Peace of Soul: Nothing disquiets or troubles 'em, neither Adversity afflicts or dejects 'em, nor Prosperity renders 'em proud or haughty. For having no tye at all to any thing of this Life, all the changes that happen in it, produce no alteration or change in them, who frame to themselves, such a Happiness, as has no dependance upon any Events whatever, and contemns all Changes or Vicissitudes: Do you know, says he, who was rais'd to this high pitch of Perfection, and who had built himself such a Solitude as this? He who sayd, * *One thing I ask'd of our Lord, which I will never give over asking, till I have obtain'd it, which is to live all the days of my Life in the House of our Lord.* For after all, what else

† Nam petii
domino,
hanc requi-
ram, ut inha-
bitem in domo
domini om-
nibus diebus
vitz meae.
Psal. 26. 4.

is

is there either in Heaven or Earth worth our desiring or seeking? † *And what is at present my expectation but God?* The Holy Abbot *Silvanus* was also arriv'd to the same degree of happiness: For they recount of him, that when he went from Prayer, all Earthly things seem'd so contemptible to him, that putting his Hands before his Eyes, he sayd, *Shut your selves O my Eyes, shut your selves, for there is nothing that is worth your beholding.* We Read in like manner of Saint *Ignatius*, that sometimes lifting up his Eyes to Heaven, and his Heart to God, he cry'd out, * *Alas how Contemptible do's the Earth appear, whilst I Contemplate Heaven.*

† Et nunc quæ est expectatio mea? nonne Dominus?
Psal. 38. 8.

Silvanus
Abbas.

* Heu quam fordet terra, cum cœlum aspicio!
Ignat. l. c. 2.
vita sua.

The second step, by which we may ascend to the Perfection we speak of, is suggested to us by Saint *Bernard*, in his Treatise of the *Love of God*; which is, not only to forget all things of this World, but even to forget our selves, and only to love our selves in God. For if we desire to be truly Perfect, we ought to be wholly and intirely forgetful of our selves, and of any thing whatsoever that may any way regard us, or our interest; and to Love God after so pure and elevated a manner, that in all the Gifts we receive from his Hands, whether those of Grace, or those of Glory, 'tis not the profit we reap from them, but the accomplishment of his Divine Will in us, that ought to be our joy and contentment. This is the practise of the Blessed Saints in Heaven: They rejoyce more at the Will of God accomplish'd in 'em, than at that height of Glory they enjoy; and Love God after so sublime a manner, and are so Transform'd into him, and United to his Divine Will, that amidst the ineffable satisfactions wherewith they abound, 'tis more for God's sake, than their own, that they love the Felicity they possess: 'Tis after this manner we ought to Love God, says Saint *Bernard*, and it was after this manner that the Royal Prophet lov'd him, when he sayd, † *Bless our Lord, because he is good:* He says not, *because he is good to me*, but only, *because he is good*; he do's not love or praise him upon his own account, and for Self-interest, as he did of whom he speaks in another place, * *He will bless you because you have done him good*; But he loves and praises him, because he is good in himself; because God is God, and because his goodness is Infinite.

Bern. Traç. de dilig. Deo c. 6.
¶ 7.

† Confitemini Domino quoniam bonus.
Psal. 117. 1.

* Confitebitur tibi cum benefeceris ei.
Psal. 43. 19.

“The

† Quando jam
quis operatur,
non ut Deo
placatur, sed
quia placet ei
Deus, vel quia
placet Deo
quod opera-
tur.
Bern. in sent.
coll. 4. li. 3.
Bern. de dil.
Deo c. 7.
* Amor iste
mons est, &
mons Dei ex-
cellus, revera
mons coagu-
latus, mons
pinguis.
1. sal. 67. 16.

† Quis ascen-
det in mon-
tem Domini?
Psal. 23. 3.
* Quis dabit
mihi pennas
sicut colum-
bae, & volabo,
& requiescam?
Psal. 54. 7.
† Infelix ego
homo, quis
me liberabit
de corpore
mortis huius?
Ad Rom. 7. 24.
* Domine,
vim patior,
responde pro
me. Psal. 14.
† Heu mihi,
quia incolatus
meus prolun-
gatus est!
Psal. 119. 5.
* Quando ve-
niam, & ap-
parebo ante
faciem Dei?
Psal. 41. 2.

† Te enim
quodammodo
perdere, tan-
quam qui non
es, & omnino
non sentire
teipsum, & a
temetipso exi-
stare, & pen-
am nullam, co-
llestis est con-
versationis,
non humanæ
affectionis.
Bern. de dil.
Deo c. 7.
* Introibo in
potestas
Domini: Do-
mine, memo-
rabor iustiti-
arum solius.
Psal. 70. 16.

† Similes ei

† “The Third and last degree of Perfection, says Saint Bernard, is to do our Actions not only to please God, but because God is pleasing to us, and pleas’d with what we do. So that without thinking any more upon our selves, than if we were not in the World, we shou’d look only upon the sole contentment and satisfaction of God. Behold here a most pure and perfect manner of loving. * This love, says the Saint, is truly the Mountain of our Lord, a high Mountain, very Fat and Fertile. For this expression of the Mountain of God, has no other meaning in Scripture, but the Quintessence or highest pitch of all sorts of Excellency and Perfection: † Who O Lord shall ascend unto this Mountain? * Who will give me the Wings of a Dove, that I may fly thither, and there take my repose? But alas, says this great Saint, the very worst of all is, that in this Land of Exile, I can never be so happy as intirely to forget my self; † Miserable Man that I am, who will deliver me from this Body of Death? * Lord I suffer Violence, answer you for me. When shall I dye intirely to my self, that I may live only to you? † Why must my banishment be prolong’d? * When shall I come and present my self before the Face of God? When O Lord will it come to pass that I shall be totally United to thee, and Transform’d by Love into thee, and be so intirely disingag’d from my self, that I may become one Spirit with thee; that infine, I may love nothing in my self nor for my self, but love all in you and for you? † “For not to seek, nor find our selves in what we do, any more than if we were, as “I may say, lost in our selves; or as if one were not in “being; nor even feel our selves at all, but be as ‘twere “altogether perfectly annihilated; is the effect of that love, “the Blessed Saints enjoy, and has no Mixture of Hu- “man or Terrene Affections. Wherefore the Royal Prophet sayd, * I shall enter into glory, and into the power of our Lord, and then I will remember O Lord nothing else but your Justice. When we shall have thus behav’d our selves like faithful Servants, we shall enter into the joy of our Lord, and shall be inebriated with the abundance of his Love, then we shall be so Absorb’d and Transform’d into him, that we shall think upon, or remember nothing at all that belongs to our selves. † Then we

shall

shall be like to him, for then we shall see him as he is in himself. Then the Creature shall intirely Transform it self into it's Creator; * *And as he made all things for himself,* as the Scripture testifies, † "So also we shall love nothing but him, nor shall not even love our selves, but in him, and for him. So that neither the Misery from which we shall be freed, nor the happiness which we possess, but the Will of God Accomplish'd in us, shall be the only object of our joy. Behold here the manner how to enter into the joy of our Lord.

licitas, quàm quodd ejus in nobis, & de nobis voluntas adimpleta videbitur.

erimus, quoniam videbimus eum sicuti est.
1 Joan. 3. 2.

* *Univerſa propter ſemetipſum operatus eſt Dominus.*
Prov. 16. 4.

† *Delectabit ſanctus, non tam noſtra vel ſopita neceſſitas, vel ſortita felicitas.*
Bern. ubi ſup.

* "O Holy and Chast love! Cries out Saint Bernard in this place, "sweet and tender Affection, O pure and "right Intention of the Will! Intention so much the more "right and pure, by how much 'tis purifi'd from any "mixture of Self-interest? Affection so much the more "tender and sweet, by how much 'tis mov'd or touch'd "by nothing but what is Divine; and to be mov'd and "affected after this manner, is to be Deifi'd. And the Saint desirous to explicate to us, how afterwards we shall be Deifi'd and Transform'd into God, makes use of three Comparisons, and says, as a Drop of Water looses all its proprieties, when 'tis cast into a great Vessel of Wine; or as a red hot Iron in the Furnace, has no appearance of Iron but only of Fire; or infine, as the Air enlighten'd by a Ray of the Sun, becomes so bright, as thò it were the Light it self; so when we shall be in Glory, we shall wholly loose our first qualities, we shall be Deifi'd and Transform'd into God, and then we shall love nothing but him, and in him. † "Otherwise how will it "come to pass, That God shall be all things in us; shoud "there remain any thing of Man in us? Wherefore there "shall then be nothing in us that shall be ours. The joy and glory we shall possess, shall be the joy and glory of God, and not our own, according to the Words of the Psalmist, * *You are my Glory, 'tis you that have Exalted me:* And infine, we shall not place our satisfaction in our own happiness, but it will be in God alone, in whom we shall place all our content and comfort. But thò in this World we can never arrive to so high a pitch of Perfection, yet we ought often to endeavour to have our Eyes continually fix'd upon it; because the

* *O amor ſanctus, & caſtus! O dulcis & ſuavis affectio! O pura & deſecrata intentio voluntatis! Eo certe deſecratior, & purior, quò in ea de proprio ad nihil jam mixtum relinquitur; eo ſuavior, & dulcior, quò totum divinum eſt, quod ſentitur. Sic officii deſicari eſt.*
Bern. ubi ſup.

† *Alioquin, quomodo erit Deus omnia in omnibus, ſi in homine de homine quidquam ſupererit?*
Idem ubi ſup.

* *Tu es gloria mea & exaltans caput meum.*
Pſal. 3. 4.

nearer

† Hæc est in nobis voluntas filii cui, hæc pro nobis oratio ejus ad te Deum Patrem suum: volo ut sicut ego & tu unum sumus, ita & ipsi in nobis unum sint, ut scilicet ament te propter te, & se non nisi in te. Hic est finis, hæc est consummatio, hæc est perfectio, hæc est pax, hoc est gaudium Domini, hoc est gaudium in Spiritu Sancto, hoc est silentium in Cælo.

Bern. lib. de Amore Dei. ca. 4.

nearer we arrive to this end, the streighter shall our Union be; with God. Wherefore let us conclude with this great Saint, and say; † "O Lord 'tis only in this Union, "that the Will of your Son do's consist, and live in us; " 'tis this he ask'd of you in that Prayer he made for "us, when he sayd. *Grant, that as you and I are one, so they may be also one in us.* That is to say, "that they "love you for your self. and that they love not them- "selves but in you: 'Tis this which is truly the End, "Consummation, and Perfection of all things; this is the "Peace, this is the Joy of the Lord, this is the Joy in "the Holy Ghost, the Repose and Happiness of the Blessed "Saints in Heaven.



THE

THE FOURTH TREATISE O F

Union and Fraternal Charity.

C H A P. I.

Of the Merit and Excellency of Union, and Fraternal Charity.

† **B**EHOLD, says the Royal Prophet, *how good and pleasing a thing it is for Brethren to live together in Union?* How great an esteem therefore ought to be had of this Union and Conformity amongst Brethren? Saint Hierom says, that this passage properly belongs to Religious, assembl'd together in the same Community: And adds moreover, * that "Tis in truth a very great good, and a very comfortable thing, that for one Brother we have left "in the World, we find an infinity of Brethren in Religion, who love us better than our own Brothers could "do. For ordinarily speaking, the Affection that our Relations have for us is not True, and sincere; as being very often grounded upon Interest; and 'tis only upon this account

Tom. I. -Z that

† Hier. sup.
hunc Psal.
Ecce quam bonum,
& quam jucundum habitare fratres in unum!
Psal. 133. 1.

Hier. sup. cum.
* Verè bonum, verè jucundum, unum fratrem dimisimus, & ecce quantos invenimus?
Psal.

† Frater me-
us secularis
non tantum
me amat,
quantum sub-
stantiam me-
am. Ceterum
fratres spiritu-
ales; qui sua
utique negli-
gunt, aliena
non querunt.
Id. ibid.

* Major est
fraternitas
Christi, quam
sanguinis.
Sanguinis e-
nim fraterni-
tatem similitu-
dinem tantum-
modo corporis
refert. Christi
autem fraternitas
unanimitatem
cordis animi-
que demonstrat,
& anima una.

† Homines
ex diversis na-
tionibus ac
regionibus
profectos, per
exactam mo-
rum ac disci-
plinæ simili-
tudinem, adeo
in unum ve-
luti coaluisse,
ut in pluribus
corporibus
unus modò
esse animus
videatur, vi-
cissimque plu-
ra corpora
mentis unius
instrumenta
cernantur.
*S. Basil. c. 19.
cens. Monast.*

* Deus qui
inhabitare
facit unius
moris in
dome.
Psal. 67. 7.

that they have a kindness for us; having which, it seldom happens that they are any thing concern'd for what be-comes of us; and † "Perhaps my own Brother has, a less tenderness of affection for me, than he has for my Estate. But as to our Spiritual Brethren, who have con-tern'd and quitted whatsoever they possessed, they are far from desiring or sighing after the Possessions of others; 'tis not your Riches, but the Salvation of your Soul they desire; behold here what very well deserves to be stil'd true love. The great Saint *Ambrose* also teaches us, * that "Brother-hood in JESUS CHRIST, is far more excellent than that of Blood; because the one may perhaps produce some likeness of Body, but the other produces a likeness and Union both of Heart and Soul, according to what is affirm'd in the Acts of the Apostles, that the *Multitude of the Believers, had but one Heart and one Soul.*

sicut scriptum est *Athor. 4. Multitudinis autem credentium erat cor unum, Ambr. serm. 9.*

Saint *Basil*, reflecting upon this strict Union between Religious Persons, † "What can we figure to our selves, says he, "more Pleasant, Happy and Admirable, "than to see Men of divers Nations, so strictly United "by an exact resemblance of Manners and Discipline, that "they seem to have but one Mind in divers Bodies, and "that in like manner many different Bodies become the "Instruments of one only Mind? 'Tis this, that seems wonderful in our first Establishment, and in effect is a kind of continu'd Miracle in our SOCIETY; in which there is so great a Conformity, and so strict an Union, between Men of so many Nations, and so different in their Birth, Education, Inclination, Mind, and Humor: So that whatever difference Nature had made between 'em, Grace which Unites, * and makes 'em live in one House, and under one Rule, gives 'em a perfect Conformity of Inclinations and Will: In which the Mercy of God appears so great, that we do not only enjoy amongst our selves this blessing, but the sweet Odour thereof do's also spread it self abroad, to the extream Edification of our Neighbor, and the greater Glory of God. Whence it happens, that many of those who enter'd into the SOCIETY, being ask'd the motive of their choice, answer'd, that 'twas the Union they saw in it, which mov'd 'em most of all to make this

this Election. This perfectly agrees with what Saint *Austin* thought, when he spoke of those Words, *How good and profitable a thing is it for Brethren to live together in Union?* † “These Words of the Psalter, says he, this “sweet Sound, this harmonious Melody, has produc’d “and brought forth Monasteries. ’Tis by the Accents of so agreeable a Voice, that many being awak’d out of their drowsiness and tepidity, have quitted both friends and Riches, to live together in the Union and Poverty of a Religious Life; and ’tis at the sound of this Trumpet, that being assembl’d from divers parts of the World; they were perswaded that this mutual Charity which United ’em together, was the forecast of a Heavenly Life. In fine, ’tis this has Peopl’d such a number of Religious Houses, Establish’d so many different Orders, and drawn so many Hearts to JESUS CHRIST: The Wise Man speaking also of * *three things very precious, both in the sight of God and Man, puts the concord amongst Brethren, in the first place.*

We have two Precepts of Charity. The one, † *To love God with all our Heart, with all our Soul, and with all our Strength, and this is the first and greatest Commandment. The other which is like to the former, is, to love our Neighbor as our selves:* And ’tis of this second Commandment we shall treat at present; because ’tis the Origin of that Fraternal Union we pretend to speak of; this Union of Minds and Hearts being the effect of Charity; whose Property, says Saint *Denis*, is to joyn and Unite things together; for which reason Saint *Paul* call’s it the * *bond of perfection*, which assembles, and unites things that are most divided; making of many Wills only one, and causing me to desire that for another, which I desire for my self, by making me love him as my self; which also makes me look on my friend as my † *second self*, and on me as a *second self* to him; and in fine, makes us two to be only One. Wherefore Saint *Austin* approves very much the Ancient expression of the Poët, who call’d his *Friend the one half of his Soul*, as if he and his Friend had had but one Soul that animated both their Bodies.

But to the end that we may know the value and excellency of Charity and love of our Neighbor, and how great an esteem our Saviour makes of it, let us examen those last Words we just now cited of JESUS CHRIST. Upon which Saint *Chrysostom* reflecting, and considering that after

† Verba ista Psalterij, iste dulcis sonus, ista melodia etiam Monasteria peperit. August.

* Quæ sunt probata coram Deo & hominibus, concordia fratrum. Eccl. 25. 1.

† Diliges Dominum ex toto corde tuo, & in tota anima tua, & in tota mente tua. Hoc est maximum, & primum mandatum. Secundum autem simile est huic: Diliges proximum tuum sicut teipsum. Matth. 22. 37. 38. & 39. Dion. lib. 4. de divinis nominibus.

* Vinculum perfectionis. Ad Coloss. 3. 14.

† Amicus est alter ego, & ego alter ipse. Aug. lib. 4. Conf. cap. 6.

Chrysost. Hom. 23. super. Hy. ad Rom.

our Saviour had spoken of the first Commandment, which is *To love God*, he presently adds that the second which is, *To love our Neighbor*, is like unto the first: Behold, says he, the extreame goodness and bounty of our Lord, who notwithstanding the infinite difference and distance there is between God and Man, would have us love Man with the very self same love, with which we ought to love God: This methinks is to give the same measure and extent to the love of our Neighbor, as to the love of himself: Since that as he ordains us to love himself with all our Heart, and with all our Soul, he also commands us to love our Neighbor as we love our selves. When we have an intimate Friend, whom we desire to recommend extremely to another, our ordinary expression is, *by the love you shew to him you will express your love to me*. After the same manner, says Saint Chrysostom, when our Saviour sayd the second Commandment was like the first, he would have us to understand, that if we love our Neighbor, we love God himself, and 'tis in this sense that he sayd to Saint Peter, * *If you love me, feed my Sheep*, as if he would say, if you love me take care of mine, and thereby I shall know whether 'tis true or no, that you truly and effectually love me.

* Si diligis me, pascce oves meas.
Joan. 21. 17.

† Mandatum novum do vobis, ut diligatis invicem, sicut dilexi vos.
Joan. 13. 34.

Aug. Treat. 65. sup. Joan.

* Omne animal diligit sibi simile sibi.
Eccl. 13. 19.

There is yet another measure of our Charity towards our Neighbor; of which CHRIST himself gave us the Model, when he sayd to his Disciples: † *I give you a new Commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you*. As our Saviour has lov'd us purely for God, he will have us also love our Neighbor purely for God: And behold here, says Saint Austin, that which he calls a new Commandment; not only because he then made a new Ordination; or because he had lately taught it, by Word as well as Example; but because 'tis effectually a new manner of loving, which he exacts from us. Natural love, which is founded upon Flesh and Blood, and upon the considerations of Interest or Pleasure, is a very Ancient love, and as Old as the World; a love that is no less in practise amongst the bad, than 'tis amongst the good; and which is equally common to Men and Beasts; according to the common saying, * *Every Animal makes much of it's own kind*: But the love with which CHRIST would have us love our Neighbor, is a new love, because he would

would have it to be a Spiritual and Supernatural one; which makes us love our Neighbor for God, and with the same love and Charity wherewith we love God. The Divines, with the Holy Fathers also take notice, that the Vertue of Charity, which makes us love God for God, is the same that makes us love our Neighbor for God: And they say moreover, that, as this love of God is a Theological Vertue, that is to say, a Vertue wholly Divine, which proposes God for it's Object: So the Charity towards our Neighbor, is also a Theological and Divine Vertue, so far forth as 'tis for God, that we love our Neighbor; and that the same Infinite Bounty and Goodness of God, that deserves we should love it for it self, deserves also that for it, we should love our Neighbor.

Infine, we cannot find any thing in the whole Scripture, that is more earnestly recommended to us, or so often inculcated as this Union, and Fraternal Charity; for the Son of God recommends it himself to us, more than once in his Sermon at the last Supper: † *The Precept which I give you*, says he, *is, that you love one another, as I have loved you*; and a little after, * *that which I Command you, is, that you love one another*. By this we see how much he desires, that this Charity takes deep Root in our Hearts; and without doubt it can never take sufficient, because 'tis upon this, that the whole Law depends; and this is the fulfilling of all other Commandments, according to these words of the Apostle, † *He who loves his Neighbor has accomplished the Law*. The belov'd Disciple, who had drawn this same Doctrine from the very Bosom of his Master, scarce speaks of any thing else, in all his Canonical Epistles; and Saint Hierom reports of him, that being so worn out with Old Age, that he was not able to go to Church, unless he was carry'd, he continually repeated to his Disciples, these words, * *Children love one another*. They, tired out with his continual repetition of the same advice, ask'd him one day the reason, why he so often recommended the same thing; to whom he made, says Saint Hierom, this answer truly worthy of Saint John, *because 'tis the Precept of our Lord, and this alone is sufficient, if well observ'd*: As Saint Paul assures us, † *For the whole Law is comprisd in this Commandment: You shall love your Neighbor as your self*. Accomplish but this perfectly well, and you'll have fulfill'd all

† Hoc est præceptum meum, ut diligatis invicem, sicut dilexi vos
Joan. 13. 34.
* Hæc mando vobis, ut diligatis invicem.
Joan. 15. 17.

† Qui diligit proximum, legem implevit.
Ad Rom. 13. 8.

* Filioli, diligite alterutrum. Dignam Joannis sententiam, quia præceptum Domini est, & si solum fiat, sufficit.
Hieron. in commentar. in Joan. 6.

† Omnis enim lex in uno sermone impletur, diliges proximum tuum sicut teipsum.
Gal. 5. 14.

the

* Et tantum pondus precepti in ea sententia constituit Dominus, ut diceret: In hoc cognoscent omnes, quia Discipuli mei estis, si

the rest. Saint *Austin* reflecting upon this precept; says, * that "Our Lord, adds so great a weight unto it, that "he stick's not to make it the distinctive mark of his "Disciples, when he says, *by this all will know you to be my Disciples, if you love one another.*

dilectionem habueritis ad invicem.

Aug. lib. 83. quest. 9. 17.

Chrysost. Hom. 81. sup. Joan.

† Non pro eis rogo tantum, sed & pro eis qui credituri sunt per verbum eorum, in me ut omnes unum sint, sicut tu Pater in me, & ego in te, ut & ipsi in nobis unum sint, ut credat mundus, quia tu me misisti. Joan. 17. 20. 21.

Baron. Tom. 3. p. 144.

But the Son of God do's not stop here; and 'tis a remark of Saint *Chrysostom*, that in the Prayer he made to his Eternal Father, after the last Supper, he was not contented only that Charity shou'd be the mark and badge of his Disciples, but he wou'd also that there shou'd be such a Union amongst 'em, that the World shou'd be thereby convinc'd of the truth of his being sent, † *I Pray not only for them, says he, but for those also that shall believe in me, by their help, and ministry: And I beg of you that they become one; and that as you my Father, are in me, and as I am in you, so they may be also as one in us, to the end that the World may believe that you have sent me.* Can any one more exaggerate the excellency of this Fraternal Union, than to say, that it ought to be sufficient, to convince the World of the Coming of the Son of God, and oblige it to receive his Doctrin?

The truth of this will be perfectly understood in what happen'd to Saint *Pacomius*, when he was yet a Pagan, and serv'd in the Army of *Constantin* the Great. Who being Embarqu'd with new Levy's which were going towards *Maxentius*, and they all being in very great want of necessities, arriv'd to a Town, where the Inhabitants succour'd 'em with all sorts of Provisions, with so much chearfulness and alacrity, that Saint *Pacomius* being hereat surpris'd, ask'd who those Persons were, that had such a wonderful inclination to help and assist others. They answer'd him, they were *Christians*, whose Institution was to help and succour all the World, as much as they were able: And upon this he found himself interiorly touch'd with so ardent a desire of embracing the Profession of Christianity, that lifting up his Hands to Heaven, and calling God to witness, forthwith he embrac'd it. So that the example alone of the Fer-vent Charity of these Christians, was a sufficient Mo-
tive

tive to Convert him; and make him believe, that their Religion was excellent.

But there is still another thing, in that Prayer of the Son of God to his Father, which ought to be a great comfort to us, where he add's these Words, * *And to the end that the World may know that you have sent me; and that you have lov'd 'em, as you have lov'd me my self.* One of the chief marks, whereby we may know that God particularly loves any Congregation, and cherishes it with a love that approaches to that he bear's his Son; is when he pour's forth upon 'em the Grace of Fraternal Union; as he did in the Primitive Church, upon the Christians that enjoy'd the first Fruits, and first Blessings of the Holy Ghost. Wherefore, † *If we love one another, God will dwell in us, and will love us with a perfect love.* And seeing he has promis'd, * *That when two or three are gathered together in his Name, he will be in the midst of 'em.* What effects ought we not to hope for, from his Divine Presence, amongst so many Persons met together in his Name, and for his Love? To the end therefore that we may enjoy, the great benefits he has promis'd, and that we may have an assur'd pledge, and earnest, that he remains with us, and that he loves us with a particular affection; let us endeavour always to maintain our selves in the Spirit of Union, and Fraternal Charity.

* Et cognoscat mundus, quia tu me misisti, & dilexisti eos, sicut & me dilexisti.
Joan. 17. 23.

† Si diligamus invicem, Deus in nobis manet, & charitas ejus in nobis perfecta est.
1 Joan. 4. 12.

* Ubi enim sunt duo, vel tres congregati in nomine meo, ibi sum in medio eorum.
Matth. 18. 20.

CHAP.

C H A P. II.

Of the necessity we have to maintain the Spirit of Union and Charity, and the means how we may always exercise our selves therein.

† Super omnia hæc autem charitatem habete, quod est vinculum perfectionis.

Ad Colos. 3. 14.

* Ante omnia autem mutua in vobismet ipsis charitatem continuam habentes.

1 Pet. 4. 8.

S AINT Paul Writing to the Colossians, after having recommended to them the practise of many Vertues, † *But above all things, says he, have Charity one with another, which is the bond of all Perfection.* Saint Peter also expresses the same in his first Canonical Epistle, where having touch'd some few heads: * *But before all things, says he, entertain a continual and mutual Charity one with another.* Whereby we may judge of how great importance it is, that we shou'd always exercise the Spirit of Charity and union, since these great Apostles, these two Princes of the Church, recommend it to us *above and before all things*; and wou'd have us prefer it before all things else. Which shews in effect that nothing is more generally necessary, than this; for what Religious Community or Human Society can ever be form'd, or be able to subsist, without this Union and Charity? Take away this Union or Bond of any Assembly whatsoever; and 'twill presently become a *Babylon*; and contain nothing but discord and confusion. The common saying is, that *where there is a Multitude of People, there is also Confusion*: But this ought only to be understood of a Multitude that is not well United; for that which is perfectly United, is a Heavenly Hierachy upon Earth. Moreover, there is no Society or Common-wealth in the World, how Barbarous soever it be, where there is not some kind of Union; whether they live under one Head, or whether the Government be compos'd of divers Heads. We also see this verifi'd amongst irrational Creatures, and this not only amongst Bees, to which Nature has given an admirable Instinct of Union and Order; but even amongst the most Savage Beasts

Beasts, amongst Wolves and Lyons; in which, the same motion that carries 'em to self-conservation, moves 'em also to conserve a certain kind of Union, by a sort of knowledge or instinct they have, that Division will cause their Destruction. 'Tis for the same reason that even the Devils themselves, who are Spirits of Division, and the Sowers of Cockle and Discord, keep a kind of Union amongst themselves; † *For if Satan be divided against himself, says JESUS CHRIST, how will his Kingdom be able to Subsist?* And he afterwards confirms it by this Maxim, which the example of all Ages, has ever look'd upon as an infallible principle of Policy, * *That a Kingdom divided against it self, shall become Desolate:* Wherefore Plato says, that there is nothing more pernicious to a Common-wealth, than Discord and Disunion, nor any thing more useful or profitable, than Peace and a good understanding amongst the Inhabitants.

Saint *Hierom*, after a more forceable manner, says also the same thing of a Religious Life: † “’Tis Charity, says he, that makes Religious, and assembles 'em under one and the same Discipline and Government; without this, Monasteries are a Hell, and those that are in them Devils; but with this, Monasteries become a Paradise upon Earth, and their Inhabitants Angels Incarnate. Moreover, to speak truth, what greater Hell can we imagine, than to be continually together, and always to have different Wills and Judgments, opposite one to another? When on the the other side, what is the living in Union of Wills, but to live the Life of an Angel here below, and to begin to taste in this World, the Peace and Tranquility they enjoy in Heaven? This truth is confirm'd by Saint *Basil*, when speaking of Religious, he says, * “Those that live in the true Spirit of a Community, imitate in a manner the Lives of Angels: Amongst which there are no Law-suits, no Disputes, no Quarrels. And Saint *Laurence Justinian* affirms, that nothing in this World, so represents that admirable assembly of the Heavenly *Jerusalem*, as a Society of Religious, who are perfectly United together by Charity: The Life they lead is truly Heavenly and Angelical: † *Our Lord is truly amongst 'em: The place they live in, is, no other than the House of God, and Gate of Heaven.*

† Si autem, & Satanas in seipsum divisus est, quomodo stabit regnum ejus? Luc. 11. 18.

* Omne regnum in se ipsum divisum defolabitur. Luc. 11. 17.

† Hæc (id est charitas) Religiosos, hæc Monachos facit: sine hac Cœnobita sunt tartara, habitatores sunt dæmones: cum hac verò sunt paradisi in terris, & in eis degentes sunt Angeli. Hieron. in regul. monast.

* Hi vitæ communitate diligenter tenent, Angelorum vivendū ritum xmulantur; nulla est inter Angelos lis, nulla contentio, nulla contraversia. Basil. in Const. Monast. c. 19. Laurent. Just. de Discipl. & perfect. Monast. c. 10. † Verè Dominus est in loco isto: non est hic aliud, nisi domus Dei, & porta Cœli. Gen. 28. 16. 17.

Tom. I.

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But

But to treat this matter in less general terms, I will come to the particular necessity we our selves have, to live in this Union and Fraternal Charity. Wherefore Saint Ignatius speaking of the means that might contribute to the good and Spiritual advancement of the SOCIETY, says, that one of the chief things that can conduce or contribute to it, 'is the Spirit of Union and Charity. We have already touch'd some general reasons, sufficient to let us see how necessary it is in all Religious Communities; yet besides these, we have particular considerations, which render it far more necessary amongst Us. The first is, that our SOCIETY is like a Battalion of Soldiers, which God has sent as a recruit to his Church, to aid and assist it, to sustain the Holy War it wages against the Devil and the World; and to gain Souls to Heaven: 'Tis this that the Patent of our Institute makes mention of; 'tis this, that the Church proclaims in it's Bull, for the Confirmation of our SOCIETY:

† Quicumque
vult sub Crucis
vexillo Deo
militare, &
soli Domino,
& Ecclesie
ipsius sponsæ
servire.
Bulla Julius III.
anno 1550.

† *Whosoever desires to Fight under the Standard of the Cross, and Enroll himself alone in God's Service, or in that of the Church his Spouse, must abound in Charity.* And 'tis this which is giv'n us to understand by the Name of Company or Society, which we have taken. We are a Company of Soldiers, we beat our Drumm's; we display our Colours, we gather Recruits, and list new Soldiers, to fight against the Enemies of the Cross. If the Battalion be well United, and if it Marches in good Order, 'twill surmount all Obstacles, and vanquish whatsoever opposes it self against it's Power: And 'tis for this reason that the Holy Ghost speaking of the Church, says, that 'tis

* Terribilis
ut castrorum
acies ordinata.
Cant. 6. 3.

* *Terrible as an Army Rang'd in Battel.* 'Twill not therefore be possible to break throu' this Battalion, if it be always well United, if the Soldiers remain in an exact Discipline, and always firmly keep their Rank's; because 'tis by this means, and after this manner they defend one another: But if they come to be disunited, 'twill be presently broken, and intirely Defeated. David having obtain'd a signal Victory over the Philistians, † *The Lord, says he, has divided my Enemies before me, as Waters are divided.* And the Field of Battel was call'd,

† Divisit Dominus inimicos meos contra me, sicut dividuntur aquæ.

1 Reg. 1. 20.
* Baal-pharasi, id est locus divisionis.
Ibid.

* *Baal-pharasi, that is, the place of Division:* Which shews that to divide and to overcome, is one and the self same thing, and that the place of Division, is taken for the place of Victory. In effect, those who have Writ

con-

concerning Warlike Affairs, say, † *That the Troops that March out of order, go rather to the Butchery, than to a Battel*; and there is nothing more recommended in Military Discipline, than to keep the Ranks well, and take care that the Battalion be so united, that all the Soldiers mutually succour one another, remaining always firm in their Post. This alone makes it invincible, and this secures not only the general good of the whole Body, but the particular good of every Soldier; whereby security or loss, are inseparably united to the Victory or Defeat of the Battalion. We may say the same thing of our SOCIETY, provided we conserve the Spirit of Union, if we assist one another, if we march well united, and set upon our Enemies in good order; we shall infallibly overcome, and never fear to be routed in any encounter.

* *The Brother that is assisted by his Brother, is as a strong City*, says the Wise Man; † and *A triple Cord is hardly broke*. All the little threads, of which the string of a Cross-bow is made, are very weak of themselves, if taken one by one; yet notwithstanding when they are united and interlac'd one with another, they are able to bend a Bow of steel: Thus powerful will all Religious be, when United one with another, by the bond of Fraternal Charity.

Saint Basil desirous to encourage us to this Vertue, bid's us consider, what that Union of the *Machabees* was, when they Fought for the Lord. Consider, says he, what was that of the *Israelites* also, who having compos'd an Army of more than three hundred thousand Men, * *March'd*, says the Scripture, *as if all of 'em had been but one Man*. That is, they March'd all with the same Resolution and Courage; and from thence it happen'd, that they struck fear into their Enemies, and gain'd most signal Victories over 'em. We ought to Fight after the same manner in our Spiritual Warfare which we sustain for our Lord; and by this means we shall produce great advancement of Perfection in our Souls, and fill our Enemies with Terror. The Devil himself will tremble, and not dare to Attack us; and as long as he sees so many persons United against him, he will loose Courage, and despair of doing us any harm.

Our Holy Founder speaking of the chief reason for which 'tis necessary we shou'd live in a perfect Union, says in one place, "We ought to take very great care to procure a strict Union amongst our selves, without permitting

† Multitudo inordinata portus est victima, quam pugna. Veget. de re milit.

* Frater qui adjuvatur à Fratre, quasi Civitas firma. Prov. 18. 19. † Et funiculus triplex difficile rumpitur. Eccl. 4. 12.

Basil. in conf. Monach. c. 18.

* Egressi sunt quasi vir unus. 1 Reg. 11. 7.

3. p. Conf. c. 1. §. 18. c. Reg. 42. sum. 8. p. Conf. c. 1. §. 18.

"it to be wounded or hurt in any thing; to the end, that being thus United by the bond of Fraternal Charity, we may employ our selves more efficaciously to the service of God, and our Neighbor. He says in another place, "That without this Union, the SOCIETY cannot long subsist, nor arrive to the End for which it was Instituted. And indeed 'tis evident, if there be any division, any caballing, or dissention amongst us, we shall be so far from arriving at the End for which our SOCIETY was Instituted, which is to gain Souls to God; that we shall not even be able to maintain or conserve our selves. If the Soldiers destin'd to Fight with their Enemies, turn their Arms one against another, 'tis not to be doubted, but that instead of overcoming 'em, they will infallibly destroy themselves. * *Their Hearts are divided*, says *Osée*, and they will presently perish. And the Apostle Writing to the *Galatians*, † *If you bite or devour one another, take care that you come not to be destroy'd amongst your selves*. Behold what's to be fear'd in Religion: For as to other things we have nothing to fear from without; and all the Persecutions and Tempests which the World can excite, will never be capable to hurt us, so long as Charity and Peace shall be Establish'd amongst us.

'Tis this which Saint Bernard says, when speaking to his Religious upon this subject, * *What can there be from without*, says he, *that can contristate or trouble you, if you be in a good state within, and you enjoy Fraternal Peace? And Who can do you any harm, if you are animated with a true Zeal, and a Holy Emulation?* As long as we are what we ought to be, and live in a perfect Union one with another, all contradictions from without, are so far from doing us any hurt, that on the contrary they will contribute to our good and advancement. Thus when the Church was Perfected in the first Ages, it receiv'd no more damage than the Vine do's when 'tis prun'd; because for one branch which was cut off, there sprouted out many; and as a Holy Martyr sayd heretofore very well to the Tyrant, whilst he caus'd him to be torn in pieces by the Executioners, "That in shedding the Blood of Christians, he only Water'd the Earth, "to make it produce greater abundance of Fruit.

In the first Book of the *Machabees*, the Holy Scripture praises the *Romans* very much, for living in great Union amongst themselves. † *They commit*, says the Scripture, *every Year the suprem Authority to one single Man*,

* Divisum est
cor eorum,
nunc inter-
bunt.

Osée 10. 2.

† Quid si in-
vicem morde-
tis, & come-
ditis, videte ne
ab invicem
consumami-
ni.

Ad Gal. 5. 15.

* Quid ergo
à foris vos
conturbare,
aut contristare
poterit, si in-
tùs bene estis,
& fraternâ pa-
ce gaudetis?
& quis est qui
vobis nocet,
si boni æmula-
toris fueritis;
Bern. serm. 29.
sup. Cant.

† Commi-
tunt uni ho-
mini magistra-

Man, whom all Obey; and there is no Envy nor Jealousie amongst 'em. So that being united after this manner, they overcame all their Enemies, and became Masters of the World: But when they began to be embroil'd in Civil Wars, they destroy'd themselves; which gave occasion of that saying, † *That little things are augmented by Concord, and the greatest ruin'd and destroy'd by Discord.*

tum suum per singulos annos, & omnes obediunt uni, & non est invidia, neque zelus inter eos.
1 Mach. 8. 16.

† Concordiæ parvæ res crescunt, discordiæ maximæ dilabuntur.

But besides what we have already sayd, there's still another particular Reason, for which our SOCIETY has greater cause to live in extream Union, than all other Orders. And 'tis what Saint Ignatius alledges in his Constitutions; because therein we meet with many difficulties and obstacles, which hinder our living in Union; and consequently we ought to take more care to establish it amongst us, and to seek proper remedies against whatsoever may prejudice it. The difficulties we meet withal are reduc'd to three: The first, says he, is, that our SOCIETY being spread over the whole World, as well amongst the Faithful as Infidels; and all it's Subjects being thus separated one from another, 'tis very hard to know one another, or have any communication, whereby to maintain or exercise our selves in this Union. Moreover, that as it embraces so many different Nations, amongst which there seems to be such natural oppositions, and contrarieties, 'tis very hard so to overcome this aversion, with which we were born, and in which we were a long time brought up, as that we shou'd bring our selves to look upon a stranger not as a stranger, but as our Brother in JESUS CHRIST, and a Child of our Holy Mother the SOCIETY. The second obstacle is, that the greatest part of our SOCIETY ought to be persons of Learning: And we know that knowledge ordinarily puffs up the Mind of Man, and fills him with an esteem of himself, and contempt of others, and renders him very much ty'd to his own opinions: And 'tis ordinary enough, that *The Learned*, as Saint Thomas says, *are less addicted to Piety, than the Simple or Illiterate.* So that there's great reason to fear lest all this shou'd hinder Union and Fraternal Charity; and that every one desirous to follow his own opinion shou'd go a particular way, and have in prospect only his own advantage and reputation; whereby division wou'd begin to introduce it self into the SOCIETY. The third difficulty, which is not at all less than the former, is, that these very persons of whom we have spoken, looking upon themselves

S. Th. 2. 2. q. 81. ars 3. ad 3.

as persons of Merit, and endow'd with such particular Talents, as are proper for the World, hereby take occasion to enter into familiarity with Princes and great ones, and make particular ties and friendships with Magistrates and persons of Authority. From whence arise particularities; the pretending exemptions and privileges, and a desire that a distinction thou'd be made between them and others; all which cannot but be an extream prejudice, to Union and Fraternal Charity.

But as great precautions ought to be had, to hinder great inconveniences, so Saint *Ignatius* carefully marks in the same place those remedies we ought to make use of, for the overcoming these difficulties. The first of all, and that which thou'd be the foundation of the rest, is, not to receive, nor retain in the SOCIETY, any one, who has not a firm resolution to govern and overcome his Passions, and do's not effectually apply himself thereunto. For if we have not the Spirit of Mortification, we are incapable of the Spirit of Discipline, Union, or Regularity; without which, we cannot become Learned, or possess any advantage above others, without letting our selves be carry'd away with Vain-glory, contempt of our Neighbor, a desire to be preferr'd before him, and a presumptuous belief, that we have right to Dispensations and Privileges. Without which also we shall seek the favor of Princes, endeavour to be great with Persons of note, and desire to have one in particular to serve us; which kinds of singularities and distinctions, will produce nothing else in the end, but the bad fruits of Jealousie and Division. The more Learned, of greater Merit, or more eminent qualities a Person is, if he has not also the true sentiments of Vertue and Mortification, he will have just reason to fear that these Endowments will be an occasion of Division and Scandal; and that at some time or other, he may occasion great disturbances in Religion. Knowledge and great Talents in a Man that wants the Spirit of Mortification and Humility, are like a Sword in a Mad-mans hand, who turns it as well against himself as others. But if Knowledge be accompany'd with Humility, if the Learned, instead of seeking themselves, * *Seek none but JESUS CHRIST*; then all things will go well: And their example being of great power, will draw others to follow it, and we shall see Peace and Union flourish abundantly. See here the first and chief remedy; and to the end that we may practise this well, there will be no need to have recourse to any of the rest.

Saint

P. 8. Conf. c. 1.
§. 2.

* Sed quæ
sunt Jesh
Christi.
Ad Phil. 2. 21.

Saint Ignatius nevertheless is not wanting in proposing still other means unto us, to oppose the inconveniences which we have already touch'd. As for example, to take care that the distance of place hinder us not from having a knowledge one of another, and that we may have some communication together; he ordains that we entertain our selves reciprocally with Pious Letters, and those full of Edification, whereby one understanding what another do's, we may encourage each other to the same conduct; so far forth as the diversity of Nations will permit. And this without doubt is a very proper means, to reconcile and cement together that Union which is necessary for us.

But one of the most important means to keep our selves in Union, is, that which the same Saint farther prescriber, and consists in an exact observation of all that Obedience shall enjoin. For 'tis Obedience that assembles, and ties Religious Persons together, and is the cause that divers Wills, and different Judgements, make but one Will and one Judgement; insomuch, that particular Persons being depriv'd of their own Wills by Obedience, there remain's nothing but the Will of the Superior, to which all others agree and conform themselves. Moreover, the Subjects being Conform'd and United to their Superior, they are also in like manner Conform'd and United one to another, according to that infallible Rule, † *That all things that are the same, in relation to a Third, are the same amongst themselves*; and the greater conformity they have with their Superior, the more perfect also that will be, which they have amongst themselves. Obedience, Religious Discipline, and the observation of Rules make all alike, and thereby establish a great Order and an admirable Union. Amongst the Ancient Egyptians, the Hieroglyphick of Union was a Lute; for as this sort of Instrument causes a wonderful harmony, when all the rest of the strings accord well with the first; and on the contrary, if it chance that any of these strings break, or yield, 'tis no longer a harmony but a discord: After the same manner, in a Community, when Subjects agree well with their Superior, this accord produces a perfect harmony: But one who agrees not well with his Superior, is sufficient to trouble the sweet harmony of this Union. This perhaps is what gave a subject to some, to say the word *Concord* derives it self from that of *Cord* or string, but those who draw it's Etymology, from
the

p. 8. Const. c. 1.
§. 9. & p. 10.
§. 6.

p. 8. Const. c. 1.
§. 3. & p. 10.
§. 9.

† Quaecum-
que sunt ca-
dem uni ter-
tio, eadem
sunt inter se.

* Multitudi-
nis autem
erat cor u-
num, & anima
una.
18. 4. 32.

the word *Cor* or *Heart*, are more in the right; because in effect, by Concord nothing else is understood but Union, and Conformity of Hearts; according to those words in the Acts of the Apostles, * *The multitude of Believers had but one Heart and one Soul.*

Saint Bernard says, that, as that which ordinarily speaking, causes a Ship to take Water, is, that the Planks are not well joyn'd; after the same manner that which is the cause why a Community destroys and ruin's it self, is, that the Members are not well United together, by the bond of Charity. After this manner Father *Aguaviva* our General, in a Letter he Writ of Union and Fraternal Charity, says, that we ought to have a very great care to entertain this Charity and Union amongst our selves, and make account that upon this, all the good and advantage of the SOCIETY depends. 'Twas this Spirit of Union and Concord, which JESUS CHRIST, the Night before his Passion, begg'd of his Eternal Father for the Elect, as a thing absolutely necessary for their Salvation, when he sayd, † *Holy Father, conserve in your Name those that you have giv'n me, to the end they may be but one as we our selves are.* The comparifon which he makes in these Words, *as We*, deserve to be reflected upon. He desires that as the Father and Son are but one by Nature, so we shou'd also be but one by Love. Behold here what will for ever conserve us.

† Pater fan-
cte, conserva
in nomine
tuo, quos de-
disti mihi, ut
sint unum
sicut & nos.
Joan. 17. 21.

C H A P.

C H A P. III.

*Certain reasons drawn out of Holy Scripture,
which manifest the Obligation we have to
Live in the Spirit of Union and Cha-
rity with our Brethren.*

SAINTE John after he had spoken of the extream Love which God has expres'd towards us, by giving us his only Son; concludes thus. † *But if God has thus Lov'd us, we ought also to love one another.* We may with reason here object and demand, why the conclusion he draws from the love that God has for us, is that we ought to love our Neighbor; since it wou'd seem a more just and Natural one, to infer that we are oblig'd to Love God; because he has after so extraordinary a manner lov'd us? To this many answers may be giv'n. The first is, that the Apostle speaks in this manner, to let us see the excellency of the love of our Neighbor, and how great an account God makes of it. 'Tis for this reason that, as Saint Matthew recounts, a Doctor of the Law asking our Saviour JESUS CHRIST, * *What was the greatest Commandment in the Law?* Our Saviour answer'd, *you shall love the Lord your God, with all your Heart, with all your Soul, and with all your Mind; behold here the first, and greatest of all the Commandments: As to the second, 'tis like the first, you shall love your Neighbor as your self.* They ask'd him only about the first Commandment; why therefore do's he speak of the second? 'Tis to shew the excellency of the love of our Neighbor, and what esteem God has of it.

The second answer that may be giv'n, is, that the love of God and the love of our Neighbor, are like two Rings joyn'd together, and put upon a Finger, one of which cannot be taken off, without the other; but both

Tom. I.

B b

must

† Si sic Deus
dilexit nos,
& nos debe-
mus alteru-
trum diligere.
1 Joan. 4. 11.

* Magister:
quod est man-
datum mag-
num in lege?
Diliges Do-
minum Deum
tuum ex toto
corde tuo, &
in tota anima
tua, & in tota
mente tua.
Hoc est maxi-
mum, & pri-
mum manda-
tum. Secun-
dum autem
simile est huic:
Diliges proxi-
mum tuum
sicut teipsum.
Math. 22. 36.
& seq.

must be pull'd off together: The love of God and the love of our Neighbor, are in like manner inseparable, the one can never subsist without the other; so that 'tis but one love of pure Charity, which makes us love God, and our Neighbor for God. Wherefore we can neither love God without loving our Neighbor, nor love our Neighbor with the love of pure Charity, without loving God himself; because the Motive we have to love our Neighbor, is God. Wherefore the same Apostle, desiring to let us see, that we cannot love God without loving our Neighbor, present'y adds, † *If we mutually love each other, God remains with us, and his Charity is Perfect within us.* And afterwards to let us also see that the love of our Neighbor, is included in the love of God: * *'Tis a Commandment, says he, which we have receiv'd from God, that he who loves God, must also love his Brother.*

One evident proof, that God extremely loves Man, and that he desires we shou'd in like manner love one another; is, that we cannot love God without loving our Neighbor, nor offend our Neighbor without offending God. If a King lov'd one of his Subjects so well, as to interpose himself, between all the blow's that shou'd be giv'n him, so that they cou'd never hurt his Subject without first hurting the Person of the Prince; wou'd not this be a very great love? This is what God do's to Man; he always so interposes himself, that you cannot offend your Neighbor without offending God: And he do's this, to hinder you from offending your Brother, for fear of offending him. † *Whosoever shall touch you, says our Lord, touches me in the very Apple of my Eye.* So that by offending our Neighbor we offend God, and by loving our Neighbor we love God, and by loving God we love also our Neighbor. But because the love of God and the love of our Neighbor go always together, and are included one within the other, and can never be divided, Saint John might as well have concluded in behalf of the one as of the other love; because the obligation we have to the one necessarily imply's our obligation to love the other: But he wou'd rather conclude in the behalf of the love of our Neighbor, than in behalf of the love of God; because the love of God is a Truth and Principle known by it self, and such Principles as suppose themselves, are not to be prov'd: Wherefore he passes to this conclusion; that

† Si diligamus invicem, Deus in nobis manet, & charitas ejus in nobis perfecta est.

1 Joan. 4. 12.
* Hoc mandatum habemus a Deo, ut qui diligit Deum, diligat & fratrem suum.

1 Joan. 4. 21.

† Qui tetigerit vos, tangit pupillam oculi mei.
Zachar. 2. 8.

that we ought to love our Neighbor; and expressly do's so; because perhaps another wou'd not have drawn this consequence from the proposition he had advanc'd.

The third answer is, that Saint John speaks not in this Epistle of a Dry and Steril, but of a Fruitful and Profitable love; of a love that is accompany'd with benefits and good Works. † *Dear Children*, says he, *let us not love in Words, and with our Tongue only; but let us love in effect and in truth.* And to the end he might give us a knowledge, that 'tis for the good of our Neighbors, and Brethren, that God desires we shou'd perform these good Works, according to the passage repeated in the Gospel, out of *Osée*, * *I desire Mercy, and not Sacrifice*; he draws no other conclusion from his proposition, than the love of our Neighbor. It happens very often that a Creditor who is absent, Writes thus to his Debtor, *You will do me a favor in paying to such a one, that which you owe me; and what you shall deliver him, I shall esteem as receiv'd by my self.* 'Tis after this manner that Saint John speaking in God's behalf, to whom we owe so much for the many obligations, and benefits receiv'd, says to us: *If God has lov'd us after so extraordinary a manner, we ought also to love one another.* The love which each of us owe him, is a Debt he has made over to our Neighbor; and the Charity you exercise towards your Brother, you exercise towards God, who receives it as if it were done to himself. 'Tis this which JESUS CHRIST assures us in these Words, † *Verily I say unto you, that whatsoever you do to the least of my Brethren, you have done it unto my self.* And without doubt this ought to be a powerful motive, to excite us to love our Brethren, and to do them all the good we can; because tho' it seem's to us, that we do it to those, to whom, we owe nothing; yet if we look upon God, and make a reflection upon the infinite obligations we have to him, and consider that he has transferr'd all his right to them, we shall find that we are indebted to them for all we have. Wherefore Father *Avila* speaking upon this subject, says, when the Carnal Man that is within you, shall represent to you what great obligations have I to such a one, to move me so far as to do him any favor? And how can I be able to

Bb. 2.

love

† Filioli mei, non diligamus verbo, neque lingua, sed opere, & veritate. 1. Joan. 3. 18.

* Misericordiam volo, & non sacrificium. Osee 6. 6. Matih. 12. 7.

† Amen dico vobis, quod qui fecerit uni ex his fratribus meis minimis, mihi fecerit. Matih. 25. 40.

Avila cap. 96. Audi filia.

love him, since he has so injur'd me? Answer him, that perhaps you shou'd give Ear to what he says against your Neighbor, if your Neighbor were the only motive, object, or cause of this your love: But that JESUS CHRIST himself is the cause and object thereof; and 'tis he himself who receives the good you do to your Neighbor; and looks upon the pardon you bestow upon him, as if it were a favor and a pardon you bestow'd upon himself; and thus whosoever your Neighbor is, and whatsoever injury he can have done you, yet there is nothing that ought to cool your Charity towards him, or hinder it's effects; since 'tis not him, but JESUS CHRIST you ought to consider, in all your thoughts and actions. Wherefore, 'tis a most just consequence that Saint John draws, who after he had prov'd the great love that God has for us, infers the obligation we therefore have to love our Neighbor: Whereupon we ought to observe, that to move us so much the more, he takes notice of the Mystery of the Incarnation of the Son of God, in the same proposition from which he draws this conclusion. For setting before our Eyes, † *That God had sent his only Son into the World*, he gives us occasion to consider, that God has ally'd himself to Man, and consequently wou'd have us think, that since they are ally'd to God, and Brothers of JESUS CHRIST, we ought to love 'em as such.

† Quoniam
alium suum u-
nigenitum mi-
sit Deus in
mundum.
1 Joan. 4. 9.

C H A P. IV.

*What this Union is, which we ought to have
with our Brethren.*

Basil. g. 175. c.
breviarib.
Aug. hom. 15.
ex 50.
1 Cor. 12. 12.

SAINTE Basil and Saint Austin, desirous to explicate what that Union is which ought to be amongst Religious, makes use of what Saint Paul says, of the Union and Correspondence there is between the Members of a Mans Body. Behold, say they, how they serve and help one another: The Eyes direct the Feet; the Hands defend the Head; and all joyntly endeavour to succour and help the weakest Part; as
experience

experience sufficiently teaches us, when we have receiv'd any hurt or incommodity. In the distribution of nourishment that is made, each Member receives so much as is necessary for it, and leaves the remainder for the other Members. Besides, there is such a sympathy between 'em, that the Stomack for example cannot be out of Order, but also the Head suffers and feels it. * *All the Members interest themselves one for another. The pain of one Communicates it self to all the rest; and is no sooner cur'd but all the others are eas'd and comforted:* Saint *Austin* examines this perfectly well. † "It happens, says he, that "the Foot treads upon a Thorn: what is 'more remote "from the Eyes than the Feet? 'Tis indeed by situation "very far off, but 'tis very near by the mutual and charitable "correspondence with all the rest of the Members. Wherefore "as soon then as the Foot is prick'd with the Thorn, the "Eyes presently go to find it out, the Body stoopes to "facilitate their approach; the Tongue ask's where it is, "and the Hands endeavour to pull it out * Yet the Eyes, "the Hand, the Body, the Head, and the Tongue are all "very well, and aile nothing, and the Foot it self is only "hurt in one place: 'Tis therefore because all the Mem- "bers are in pain one for another, and feel the pain the "others suffer. Behold after what a manner we ought to carry our selves towards our Brethren; we ought to have as great a care of 'em as we have of our selves: That is, we must rejoyce as much at their good fortune, as at our own, and their misfortunes and sufferings, must be no less sensible to us than our own afflictions.

Saint *Basil* says, † that the two chief marks of the love of Charity, are to feel and suffer pain, as well in the Spiritual, as in the Corporal sufferings of our Neighbor: And to feel a joy when any good Fortune happens to him; according to the words of the Apostle: * *Rejoyce with those that rejoyce, and weep with those that weep.* 'Tis by such a feeling as this, that Saint *John Climacus* says, we are to try whether we truly love our Neighbor, we must see whether we deplore the faults he commits, and rejoyce at the grace and favors he receives from God, and at the progress we perceive he makes by corresponding with 'em. Saint *Angela* was wont to say, † that God had rewarded her with more and greater favors, after she had lamented the Sins of her Neighbor, than after the

* Pro An-
gem sollicita
sunt membra.
Et si quid pati-
tur unum
membrum,
compatiuntur
omnia mem-
bra. Sive glo-
riatur unum
membrum,
congaudent
omnia mem-
bra.
1 Cor. 12. 25.

† Ecce pes
calcat spinam;
quid tam lon-
ge ab oculis
quam pes?
longe est loco,
sed proximus
affectu chari-
tatis.

Aug. ubi. sup.
* Sani sunt
oculi, sana est
manus, cor-
pus, caput,
lingua; sanus
est pes, & pro
invicem soli-
cita sunt mem-
bra, & compati-
untur omnia
membra.

† Basil. in Reg.
brevior. q. 175.

* Gaudere
cum gaudenti-
bus, flere cum
flentibus.
Ad Rom. 12. 15
S. Joan Climac.
cap. 4.

† S. Angela de
Fuligno c. 890.

she had deplor'd her own. Whereby we are to understand, that we ought not in reality to be touch'd with more sorrow for the Sins of our Neighbor, than for our own; but that we may be convinc'd by this exaggeration, how agreeable the Charity we bear towards our Neighbor, is to Almighty God. The two effects it produces, are according to Saint Bernard's opinion, † the two Breasts of the Spouse, between which her beloved repos'd: *And the one and the other, says he, have a proper and particular Milk; the one of Joy and Congratulation, the other of Sweetness and Consolation.*

But what is still to be consider'd in Saint Paul's Comparison, is of the one side, the diversity of Members, their Congruities, Qualities, and different Functions: And on the other side, their strict Union, mutual Correspondence, and satisfaction which each one takes in it's distinct use and employment, not at all envying the higher employments that another has. Thus we ought to do, each of us ought to be content with the charge and employment he is in, without envying those that are in greater, and more honorable Offices. Moreover, as in the Body, a Superior or more noble Member despises not the Inferior, but on the contrary esteems, conserves and helps it as much as it can: So those that are establish'd in the chief employments of Religion, ought not to contemn, or to have a less opinion of those in Inferior Offices; but on the contrary they ought to esteem, and carefully assist 'em in their necessities, and consider 'em as Members absolutely necessary. * For *The Eye cannot say to the Hand, I want not your help; nor the Head, in like manner say to the Feet, I have no need of you; but those Members that to us seem the most contemptible, and the weakest, are in effect those that we stand most in need of.* Take notice for example how necessary our Feet are, and to what an exigency we shou'd be reduc'd, shou'd we want 'em? And God by his Infinite Wisdom, has order'd things after this manner: † *To the end,* says Saint Paul, *that there may be no Divison nor Disunion in the Body.* 'Tis the same in a Religious Body or Community; one is the Head, another the Eyes, another the Feet. and another the Hands; and the Head cannot tell the Hands, I want you not, nor the Eyes, that they stand not in need of the Feet: But it seems on the contrary, that each one properly seems to be that, we stand most in need of in Religion,

† Habet ubera
& non vacua,
nec cessat ex-
primere, de
ubere congratulationis lac
exhortationis,
de ubere vero
compassionis
lac consolationis.

Bern. Serm. 10.
in Cant.

* Non potest
autem oculus
dicere manus:
Opera tua non
indigeo; aut
iterum caput
pedibus: Non
estis mihi ne-
cessarii. Sed
multo magis
quæ videntur
membra cor-
poris infirmi-
ora esse, neces-
saria sunt.

1 Cor. 12. 21. 22.

† Ut non sit
schisma in
corpore.

Ibid. 25.

* Per chari-
tatem spiritus
servite invicem

Ad Gal. 5. 13.

Religion; and without doubt the Providence of God would have things dispos'd and order'd in this manner, that there might be no Schism or Division amongst us; and that we might always live in a strict Union of Minds, and in a perfect Charity of Hearts.

Behold here the Model of a Holy Union and true Fraternal Charity: From whence we ought to Learn to assist and serve one another, because there is no means more proper than this, to conserve and augment this Union; it being what the Apostle Saint Paul so earnestly recommends to us, when he says: † *By Charity of Spirit serve one another.*

Moreover, 'tis a most commendable thing in Religious Persons to be Officious, Serviceable, and always ready to content every Body; because hereby we shew that we have the Spirit of Charity, Humility, and Mortification: Instead of shewing the contrary; when out of an unwillingness to Mortifie our selves, or to undergo the least pain, or loose the least moment of our Pleasure, we cannot find in our Heart to please our Brethren, nor accommodate our selves to them. There is no doubt, but that in the Action our Saviour did in Washing his Disciples Feet, he would give us an example of Humility, nay, even of such an active Humility, as applies it self to the exercise of Charity towards our Neighbor:

* *If then I have Wash'd your Feet, says he, I who am your Lord and Master, you ought also to Wash the Feet of one another; for I have giv'n you this Example, to the end you do to one another as I have done unto you.*

† Per charitatem spiritus servite invicem.
Ad Galat. 5. 13.

* Si ergo ego lavi pedes vestros Dominus & Magister; & vos debetis alter alterius lavare pedes. Exemplum enim dedi vobis, ut quemadmodum feci vobis, ita & vos faciatis.
Joan. 13. 14.

C H A P.

CHAP. V.

What Union and Fraternal Charity particularly requires of us, and the most proper means of conserving it.

† Charitas
patiens est,
benigna est;
charitas non
emulatur,
non agit per-
peram, non
inflatur, non
est ambitiosa,
non querit
quæ sua sunt.
1 Cor. 13. 4. 5.

† **C**harity is Patient, says the Apostle Saint Paul, it is Benign, it Envoies not, it deals not Perversly, 'tis not puffed up with Pride, 'tis not Ambitious, nor seeks it's own particular Profit. As 'tis certain, that all Vices are an Obstacle to Fraternal Charity, and that Pride, Envy, Ambition, Impatience, Self-love, Stubbornness and the like, are so many Enemies which continually fight against it: So 'tis very true that the practise of all Vertues are necessary for it's Conservation. And this is what Saint Paul teaches us in those Words I just now cited, *Charity is Patient, Charity is Benign*. Behold two things very essential; and in effect nothing can be of greater importance, and more necessary to conserve this Union with one another, than to suffer patiently from every one, and to do good to all the World. We are all of us Men, and consequently full of faults and imperfections; so that we all afford our Neighbor sufficient matter of Patience. But as we are in like manner very Weak and Infirm, we have also need of their assistance to do us good, according to Saint Paul's Precept: * *Carry one anothers burdens, and by this means you will fulfill the Law of JESUS CHRIST*. Saint Austin explicating these Words, brings an excellent Comparison to our purpose: He says, that the Naturalists report, that when Staggs wou'd pass over an Arme of the Sea, to seek fresh Pastures in any Island, they observe this order. Their Horns being very heavy, with which their Heads are charg'd, they put themselves all in a line one after another, and each one to help another, rests his Head upon that which

* Alter alterius onera
portare, & sic
adimplebitis
legem Christi.
Ad Gal. 6. 2.
August. lib. 83.
c. 9. 71. &
7. 10. Jer. 21.

which goes before him, and so they all Swim after this manner without any pain at all, excepting the first, which carries it's head in the Air and willingly suffers this weariness for the ease of it's Companions. But to the end that this one alone, may not suffer all the difficulty; as soon as it begins to be weary, it passes from being the first, and becomes the last of all; and then that which follow'd it, conducts all the rest; and thus they change places by turns, till they get on the other side. We ought in like manner reciprocally to assist and ease one another; and as Charity requires this of each of us, so 'tis extremely broken when we avoid labor, and suffer the whole burden to lie heavy upon our Neighbor. Let us consider, that the more pains we take, the greater will be our Merit, and consequently that we labor for our selves, no less than for our Neighbors.

Saint *Austin* says also in the same place, that one of the things which gives the greatest beauty and splendor to Charity, is the knowledge how to support the ill humors and imperfections of our Neighbors: * *Bear with one another*, says Saint *Paul* to the *Ephesians*, and be careful to conserve a perfect Union of Spirit in the bond of Peace. Because † *Charity*, says he in another place, *suffers all*, *Charity bears all*. But if you are able to suffer nothing from your Brethren, and have not sufficient sweetness of Nature to support patiently their defects, be assur'd, that what reflection soever you may make, what means soever you may use, and what remedies soever you may apply, you can never be able to conserve Charity. If a love that has no other source than Flesh and Blood, is able to accommodate it self without any pain, to whatsoever it suffers in assisting a Sick person; or, as experience daily teaches us, Mothers continually undergo in bringing up their Children, or in assisting their Sick Husbands; without doubt Spiritual love, which has it's Origin in God himself, thou'd make us undergo and tolerate the infirmities and weaknesses of our Brethren, with all patience and sweetness possible. But this, you'll say, is a very difficult task, so to accommodate our selves, as continually to support their defects; but remember, says Saint *Austin*, that 'tis an employment that cannot last always, and that we shall have nothing to suffer in the other Life. Wherefore, let us suffer at present in this, to be happy in the other; let us not loose the good occasion offer'd us; the pain we undergo will not be long, and the recompence we Merit

Tom. I.

C c

thereby.

* Supportantes invicem in charitate, solliciti servare unitatem Spiritus in vinculo pacis. *Ad Ephes. 4. 2. & 3.*
† Caritas omnia suffert, omnia sustinet. *1 Cor. 13. 7.*

thereby will never have an end. 'Tis of so great importance, says the same Saint, to bear with our Neighbor, and to assist him in what we are able, that the whole Life of a Christian is contain'd in these two Points. And he advances this proposition not without great reason; because a Christians Life being founded upon Charity, and the Perfection of Charity being the fulfilling of the Law, by consequence the Consummation or Perfection of Charity is the Consummation or Perfection of a Christian Life.

* *Charity*, says the Apostle, *is not puffed up with Pride*; and Saint *Ambrose* says, *that Friendship knows not what Pride is*: And 'tis for this reason, that the Wise Man tell's us, † *We ought not to be ashamed to salute a friend*. For amongst friends there is no standing upon points of Civility; and without taking notice who shou'd salute in the first place, each one ought to endeavour reciprocally to prevent one another. Friendship is a stranger to these sorts of Ceremonies, and has a more free, simple and equal way of acting; and 'tis for this reason that *Aristotle* * will have *Friendship to be amongst Equals*; and a Latin Poët says, † *that Love and Majesty agree not well together, nor live under the same Roof*. The Elevation of a Throne do's not very easily stoop or accommodate it's self to Friendship; and if we desire to have true friendship, it ought to abase it's self, and must render it self equal to it's Friend, and become another like to him. 'Tis after this manner that the love which God has born to Men, wrought so much upon him, that it made him debase himself so far, as to render himself like 'em, * *He became in some manner Inferior to the Angels*, and made himself Man, like unto us. For which reason, he says, † *He call's us not Servants, but Friends*; to signify as it were an equality between himself and us; in which we cannot too much admire the great excess of his love.

For infinite, how much soever a Subject may be in his Princes Favor, and of how great condition or quality soever, yet 'tis never say'd of him, that he is a Friend of the King; but they call him a Favorite, because the Word *Friend*, imports an Equality. Notwithstanding, God whose Majesty is Infinite, renders himself so familiar with us, and loves us with so great a tenderness, that instead of treating us as his Servants, he openly gives us the Title of his Friends. 'Tis therefore necessary
in

* Amicitia
superbiam
necat.

Ambros. l. 3.
Offic. c. 15.

† Amicum
salutare non
confundat.
Eccl. 22. 31.

* Amicitia
debet esse in-
ter aequales.
Arist. 8. Ethic.
c. 6. & 7.

† Non bene
conveniunt,
neque in una
sede morantur
Majestas &
amor.

* Minuisti
eum paulo
minus ab
Angelis.
Psalm. 8. 6.

† Jam non
dicam vos ser-
vos, sed ami-
cos.

Joan. 15. 15.

in imitation of him, that our Charity in Religion shoud be so far from any sort of Pride, that in all things it shoud introduce an extream equality; and this self same equality, which is an effect of Charity and Love, will contribute very much to augment Charity, and conserve Union; the one ordinarily maintaining it self by the other: From whence it happens, that when the Spirit of Humility and Equality reigns in any place, 'tis a sign that the Spirit of Union and Fraternal Charity reigns there also. Wherefore, as by the Mercy of God, we see that Charity Shines forth in a particular manner in our SOCIETY; so we perceive also that the Spirit of Equality and Simplicity is carefully observ'd in it; each one following what is prescrib'd in our Rule, *in preferring others before himself, and esteeming 'em as if they were his Superiors.* Whosoever was of any condition in the World, glories more, says Saint *Austin*, in the alliance with his Brethren in Religion, tho' Poor, than of being born of Rich Parents; for being persuaded that in Religion no account ought to be made of any thing but Vertue, he easily contemns all things else. But the better to confirm what I have say'd, and to make it more appear, how much Equality helps to conserve Charity, let us conclude with the Words of Saint *Ambrose*, upon this subject. * "Nothing do's more contribute, says he, to fortifie Charity, than when according to the Doctrin of the Apostle, we yield to one another; and each one esteems his Neighbors more than himself; the Inferiors taking pleasure to serve, and Superiors not permitting themselves to be puffed up with Pride: "When the Poor are not angry, that the Rich are preferred before 'em; and the Rich are pleas'd that the Poor are made equal to 'em; when Nobility of Blood, renders not Persons of great Quality Proud; and those of Mean Extraction take not any Vanity in seeing themselves equaliz'd with those of Nob'e Birth; insine, when we have no greater consideration or esteem for Riches, than for good manners; and have no greater regard, for the power and ostentation of the bad, than for the equity and simplicity of the good.

Reg. 29. sum-
mar. Consi.

Aug. Reg. 3.
c. 5.

* Multum enim ad roborandam dilectionem valet, cum secundum doctrinam Apostolicam invicem se homines, honore praeveniunt, & alter alterum superiorem existimantes, amant servitute subiecti, & nesciunt tumere Praelati. Cum & pauper divitem non sibi dubitat anteferrere, & duces pauperem sibi gaudet aequari. Cum & sublimis non superbiunt de claritate propriae, & pauperes non extolluntur de moribus, neque

communione naturae. Cum denique non plus tribuitur magnis opibus, quam bonis major ducitur phalerata iniquorum potentia, quam rectorum inhonorata iustitia, *Ambros.*

ep. 84. ad sac. virg. Demest.

C H A P. VI.

Of two other things that Charity still requires of us.

† Charitas
non æmulatur.
1 Cor. 13. 4.

CHARITY is not envious, says the Apostle, but on the contrary, he who truly loves another, wishes him as much good as himself, and rejoices as much at the good fortune and advantage of his Friend, as at his own. Saint *Austin* confirms this by the example of *Jonathas*, who lov'd *David* after such a manner, as the Scripture says, * that *His Soul seem'd to be gliev'd to the Soul of David*, and that *Jonathas lov'd him as his own Soul*. From whence also it happen'd that tho' he was the Son of *Saul*, yet he rather desir'd to see the Crown upon *David's* Head, than upon his own. † *You shall Reign*, says he to *David*, and *I will be the first after you in the Kingdom*.

*August. l. 1. de
amicitia. c. 24.*

* anima *Jonathas* conglutinata est animæ *David*, & dilexit eum *Jonathas* quasi animam suam.
1 Reg. 18. 1.

† Tu regnabis super *Israel* & ego ero tibi secundus.
1 Reg. 23. 17.

This effect of Charity is still more particularly explicated, by the example which many Holy Men propose to us of the Blessed. In Heaven; say they, those who enjoy a less degree of Beatitude, envy not the Happiness of others; but on the contrary, each one of 'em desir's to see, if it were possible, the Felicity of others encreas'd, and wou'd even give 'em part of their own; and this after such a manner, that they desire, that the least of all were in as great, if not more elevated Glory than they. So that every Blessed Soul, has as great a joy for another's Glory, as for his own; and this is not hard to comprehend, for if love in this miserable World, makes us as much interest'd in the good of our Children, as in our own, ought we not with greater reason to suppose the like sentiment in the Blessed? In whom their love is incomparably more Perfect, and more purif'd than that of Nature. Charity, says Saint *Austin*, ought to work the same effect in us, that without Robbing any of what belongs

*Aug. Hom. 15.
ex 50.*

to

to them, and by rejoycing only in the good our Neighbor do's, we may make all his Merits, and all the good Actions he performs, our own. Nor is there any thing in this to be wonder'd at; for, if it be true, that we become guilty by the Sin of another, when we rejoyce at it; 'tis not strange, that the joy we take at the good of our Neighbor, thou'd make us participate of his Merit; and this chiefly, because God is more dispos'd to reward, than punish. Let us then consider on the one side the excellency of Charity, and the advantage we may draw from thence, because by this means, and by the joy alone we shall take in the good Actions of our Brethren, we may appropriate all of 'em to our selves; with so much the greater certainty, by how much more we are freed from all occasions of Vain-glory, which here can have no place: And on the other side take notice, how detestable and pernicious Envy is, since it makes the advantage of another, our own punishment; wherefore let us by these different motives, endeavour to shie and avoid the one with so much care, as we ought with Zeal to embrace the other.

From what we have say'd, necessarily follows what the Apostle add's, † that *Charity is not Ambitious, and searches not it's own proper Advantage*; so that it makes the advantage of another it's own, and is far from entertaining any kind of thought of proper Interest or Ambition. Nothing is more contrary to Charity and Union than Self-love, and that certain tye we naturally have to our selves, and our particular commodities. Wherefore Saint Ignatius call's it the Mortal Enemy of all kind of Order and Union; and the Learn'd *Humbertus* call's it the plague of a Religious Life, and the bane of all sorts of Communities. It also Infects, and Ruins all things; and tho' 'tis true that 'tis the common Enemy of all Vertues in general, yet 'tis also very often the particular Enemy of Charity. The very Name of Self-love gives us to understand this; because the word *Self*, imports a formal exclusion of all kind of Communication, and consequently renders Self-love intirely opposit to Charity; which seeks nothing more than to communicate it self. Self-love includes it self totally within it self, and introduces division every where else; thinks of nothing but it self, endeavours always to turn all things to it's own particular interest, all which is directly contrary to Charity and Union.

† Charitas non est ambitiosa, non querit suam suam sunt. 1 Cor. 13. 5.

8. p. Confir. c. 1. §. 8.

Humb. in Resol. 5. Aug.

Gen. 13. 6.

* Ubi enim est meum, & tuum, illic omnium litium genus, & contentionis occasio. Ubi autem hæc non sunt, ibi secura versatur pax, & concordia.

Chrys. Homil. 33. sup. Gen.

† Nec quicquam eorum quæ possidebat, aliquid suum esse dicebat; sed erant illis omnia communia.

Act. 4. 32.

The Holy Scripture recounts, that *Abraham* and *Lot*, had so numerous Flock's of Sheep, that the Land in which they were, not being able to furnish sufficient Pastures for 'em, and their Shep-heards daily quarreling upon this subject, 'twas necessary at last for the preservation of Peace, that they shou'd seporate one from another. * "The reason of this, says Saint *Chrysostom*, is, that wheresoever "we make the distinction of *Mine* and *Thine*, there "also arises a continual source of quarrels, and a perpetual occasion of disputes: But where all is in Common, there reigns a constant Peace, and an inviolable "Concord. Thus in the Primitive Church, there was so great an Union amongst 'em, that they had but *one Heart* and *one Soul*: And this happen'd, add's the Saint, † *Because none of 'em Poss'd any thing to himself; but all things were in Common amongst 'em.* All sorts of Religious also, Instituted and Inspir'd by God, and Founded upon Holy Scripture, have lay'd Poverty for their Foundation; and 'tis of this, we make our first Vow, to the end that having nothing amongst us, which any particular person can say is his, hereby Self-love also will find nothing to unite it self unto, and we shall all of us have but one Heart and one Soul.

There is no doubt but for the conservation of Charity and Union amongst us, 'tis a very great point intirely to disingage our selves from the propriety of all Corporal things. But 'tis not sufficient that we have no propriety in these alone: We must also disingage our selves from all other things, without which 'twill be impossible that Union and Charity shou'd flourish amongst us. For if you desire to gain esteem to your self; if you desire to be honor'd; if you aspire to great employments; if you seek your own ease and commodities; you will hereby also, disunite your self from your Brethren. Behold then what ordinarily molests Charity, behold from whence there often arises a kind of Envy, which we conceive, because another values the Talents he has receiv'd, and because he is esteem'd and prais'd for 'em: For we wou'd rather draw and appropriate this esteem and praise to our selves, and look upon that which another receives, as a Theft, and as a good he takes from us. Behold from whence proceeds a certain malignant and base Joy, or at least, a certain sort of secret satisfaction we feel in our Souls, that anothers business has succeeded ill; for then we imagine that this will Humble him. and his humiliation

humiliation will encrease our esteem: In fine, behold here from whence also it proceeds, that sometimes we endeavour directly or indirectly to lessen our Brothers esteem; either by endeavouring to confound him in some dispute, or in Mortifying him by some sudden Word, that our Heart being full of Envy, inconsiderately lets slip at unawares: All this is nothing else but the irregularity of Self-love, which Ambition, Pride and Envy makes use of, intirely to destroy Union and Charity. † Because *Charity*, says the Apostle, *rejoyses not at Evil, but is over-joy'd at Good*; it rejoyses not at the humiliation of our Neighbor, but on the contrary, wishes his prosperity; and the greater it is, the greater also is it's joy. * *You are our Brother, prosper therefore, and let your encrease amount unto Millions*; encrease in Vertue, in Esteem, and in Honor: Since your encrease and your advantages are so much mine, that 'tis impossible I shou'd not always enjoy a most sensible pleasure in 'em. After a Marchant is in a Company, or Association with others; their dexterity in Trading, and the gain they make, is so far from giving him any trouble, that 'tis a great cause of joy; because all conduces to the profit of the Company: And he will receive as good a return for his part, as any of his Partners. We ought in like manner to do the same; and rejoyce as much at the Vertues, good Qualities, and Advancement of our Brethren; because all turns to the advantage of our SOCIETY, of the goods of which, we our selves do each of us in particular participate.

† Charitas
non gaudet
super iniqui-
tate, congaudet
autem
veritati.
1 Cor. 13. 6.

* Frater no-
ster et, crescat
in mille millia.
Gen. 24. 60.

C H A P.

C H A P. VII.

*That we ought both to have, and to testifie a
great esteem of our Brethren; and always
Speak well of 'em.*

† Qui viderit
fratrem suum
necessitatem
habere, &
clausit vi-
scera sua ab eo,
quomodo cha-
ritas Dei ma-
net in eo?
1 Joan. 3. 17.
Aug. lib. 8.
c. 72.

Basil. q. 162.
a brevior.
* In hoc co-
mouvimus cha-
ritatem Dei,
quoniam ille
animam suam
pro nobis po-
suit, & nos
debemus pro
fratribus ani-
mas ponere.
1 Joan. 3. 16.

BUT the Charity we entertain one for another, ought not only to be Interior, but must also appear Exteriorly in our Actions; according to the Words of Saint John. † *Who-
ever shall see his Brother in any necessity, and
shall shut his Bowels of Mercy against him, how do's the
Charity of God remain in him?* When we shall come to
Heaven, and stand in need of nothing, then our Actions
says Saint *Austin*, shall be no longer necessary to conserve
Charity. Fire when 'tis in it's Sphear, has no need of
Fuel to conserve it self, but here below 'tis extinguish'd as
soon as it wants a supply: So also in this World Charity soon
grows cold, if not fomented by Action. Saint *Basil* alledges
to this purpose, what Saint *John* says in his first Epistle,
* *In this we have known the Charity of God, because he
has giv'n his Life for us; and we according to his Example,
ought also to give our Life for our Brethren.* From whence he
very well infers, that if the love which JESUS CHRIST
would have us bear towards our Brethren, ought to be
so great as to give our Lives for 'em, it ought there-
fore with far greater reason, to extend it self to innume-
rable other things that daily present themselves, and are
far easier to be perform'd.

One of the chief things that Charity requires of us,
which will serve very much to conserve and increase it;
is the esteem of our Neighbor: And 'tis upon this Foun-
dation that the Magnificent Building of Charity is rais'd.
For Charity is not a blind Passion, nor a love proceed-
ing from a sudden and light Imagination, nor the effect
of a simple tenderness of Heart; but 'tis a love of Reason, a
love

love of the Superior part of our Souls, of which all the motions are Spiritual and Heavenly. 'Tis a love that is call'd the love of Esteem, that springs from that which we have for God; and is the cause, that esteeming God above all things, we esteem our Neighbor as one belonging to him. The esteem we conceive of our Brethren moves us to Love, Honor, and Respect 'em, and to perform all duties towards 'em that Charity requires of us; and according to the proportion whereby this esteem encreases in us, according to the same proportion also both Charity, and all those other sentiments which it inspires, will encrease. The Apostle also Writing to the *Philippians*, Exhorts 'em to live, † *In Humility, always esteeming their Neighbor above themselves;* and in like manner recommends to the *Romans*, * *To prevent one another with Testimonies of civility and Respect.* Whereupon Saint *Chrysostom* takes notice, that Saint *Paul* wou'd not have 'em only simply Honor one another, but even obliges 'em reciprocally to prevent each other with Testimonies of kindness. We ought not to expect till another begins, and first expresses his Civility in advancing towards us, but we must endeavour to advance before him; we ought to shew him the way, and † *Be glad,* as says Saint *Ignatius*, *to prevent one another in all sorts of occasions.*

But to give a more particular instruction upon this matter, one of the things whereby we ought most of all to testify the esteem of our Brethren, is always to speak of 'em after such a manner, as to make known to others the esteem we our selves have of 'em. We Read in the Life of Saint *Ignatius*, that he always spoke so well of all Persons whatsoever, that every one easily persuaded himself, that he was a particular Favorite of his; and upon this account, he was in like manner belov'd and respected by all. There is nothing so much inflames our Charity towards our Brother, or better conserves it, than to know he loves us, has a good opinion of us, and speaks to our advantage upon all occasions. Let every one make a reflection upon himself; and think upon the satisfaction he finds, when any one tell's him that such a one has a kindness for him, or has done him any good Office or Favor; and think with himself how he may return the like, and how he may take the same occasion to say all the good he can of him. We cannot exaggerate how great and good effects

Tom. I.

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this

† In humilitate superiores sibi invicem arbitantes.
Ad Phil. 2. 3.
* Honore invicem prevenientes.
Ad Rom. 12. 10.

† In omnibus procurando, atque optando potiores partes aliis deferre.
3. p. Const. cap.
1. §. 4.

si vis amari,
ama.
Sen. Epist. ad
Lucilium.

this produces; and *Seneca* knew very well the Nature of love, when he sayd, *If you will be Lov'd, Love*: Because in effect there cannot be a better means than this, since Love can never be better recompenc'd than by Love it self.

* Omnia ergo quaecumque vultis ut faciant vobis homines, & vos facite eis. Matth. 7. 12.
† Vis beneficia, capere, confer beneficium alteri; vis misericordiam consequi, miserere proximi; vis laudari, lauda alium; vis amari, ama; vis partibus praeferri, concede illas prius alteri.
Chrys. hom. 13. ad Pop. Ant.

'Tis this which Saint *Chrysostom* very well takes notice of in the Words of our Saviour, * *Whatsoever you wou'd that others shou'd do for you, do that also for them.* † "Do you desire, says the Saint, that others shou'd do good to you? Do so to them: Wou'd you have 'em bear Compassion towards you? Have Compassion of your Neighbor. Wou'd you be Prais'd? Praise others. Wou'd you be Lov'd? Love. Do you desire the first Place? Be you the first that yields it. But that which ought to move us to speak always well of our Brethren, is, that this evidencing a great Union amongst us; our Neighbor will be extremely Edifi'd thereat, and on the contrary, the least Word that seems either directly or indirectly to touch any one of 'em, the least demonstration we give of not esteeming 'em, and the least thing they perceive of this nature, will be an occasion of Scandal. They will also judge that there is Envy and Jealousie amongst us; and therefore we ought diligently to avoid any thing that may give the least ground of suspicion in this kind. Tho' your Brother has his defects, 'tis hard also if he shou'd not have something commendable in him: Take notice therefore of what is good in him, and mind not what is bad: Imitate the Bee who lights upon Flowers only, not minding the Thornes that surround 'em: And follows not the example of the Beetle, which lights upon nothing else but Ordure.

C H A P.

C H A P. VIII.

That we ought to take care of Reporting any thing, that may anger the Person to whom we relate it.

MY Intention is not to speak at present of Detraction, because I shall Treat of it in another place, but shall only take notice of one thing here, of very great importance, and very conformable to this Subject; which Saint Bonaventure also takes particular notice of. As one ought to take particular care of not speaking ill of another, so when we hear any thing sayd of him, which may give him any displeasure or resentment, we ought also to take care not to tell him, such a one has spoke thus and thus of you: For this serves only to exasperate their Mind's, and Sow Discord amongst Brethren: There being nothing so pernicious to the good of Religion, nor that God has a greater Horror of. † *There are six things, says the Wise Man, that our Lord Hates, but his Soul has a perfect Detestation of the seventh, the Sower of Discords amongst Brethren.* When we wou'd expresse the Horror we have against any thing, we say, we Detest such a thing from our Hearts, and the Scripture in this, accommodates it self to our manner of speaking, that we may the better understand, how disagreeable those who cause or foment Divisions, are in the sight of God. But if God Detests such as these, Men do Abhor 'em also. * *The Whisperer or Tale-carrier, says the Wise Man, defiles his own Soul, and shall be hated by all; and he who lives with him shall become odious to the whole World.* Wherefore, says he in another place, † *Be not stil'd a Tale-bearer.* That is, give no subject or occasion for any one to give you this Title. And to speak Truth, there is no quality so unworthy not only of a Religious Man, but of any Man whatsoever.

D d 2

for

Bona. de informat. Novit. p. 1. c. 24.

† Sex sunt quæ odit Dominus, & septimum detestatur, anima ejus. Eum qui seminat inter fratres discordias. Prov. 6. 16. & 19.

* Sufurro co-inquinabit animam suam, & in omnibus odietur; & qui cum eo manserit, odiosus erit. Ecclef. 21. 31. † Non appelleris, sufurro. Ecclef. 5. 16.

for what is more dangerous in a Community than a Seditious Spirit, which is good for nothing else but to create dissensions amongst his Brethren? Whereby he charges himself with an employment that belongs to the Devil, who is the Father of Discord and Division.

That which is here to be taken notice of, is, that oftentimes for the setting two Persons at Variance, 'tis not necessary that the thing we report, be of any consequence. Sometimes a meer trifle is sufficient to do it; the least and slightest thing in the World, that amounts not even to a Venial Sin, is able to do it. Wherefore we must take great care, not only, whether what we recount is in it self of importance or not, but whether it be not sufficient to trouble him to whom you tell it, or make him discontented with his Brother, and cause a mis-understanding between 'em. One has perhaps let fall a Word, that may have somewhat lessen'd the esteem of anothers Wit, Capacity, or Merit; and thereupon you tell the Person what is sayd of him, with less consideration than it was spoken at first; what bitterness of Heart do you think this will give him against the Person that sayd it; you think you have done no hurt at all, and you have Wounded him to the very Heart. † *The Words of the Whisperer appear simple,* says the Wise Man, *but they penetrate the bottom of the Heart*: There are certain things that many Persons make no account of at all, and I know not which way, or in what manner they look upon 'em, or whether they take any the least notice of 'em; but they appear to be of so great consequence, to those that behold 'em as they shou'd do, that seeing the inconveniencies and the bad effects, there is cause to fear, that they are thereby guilty of a Mortal Sin: And these, of which we speak, are of the same quality.

But if it be thus prejudicial to our Neighbor, and so disagreeable to God, to carry about such sort of Stories, and thereby Sow Discord amongst Brethren, what will it be to Sow Discord between Superiors and Subjects, and to cause a Division between the Head and the Members, between a Father and his Children? May we not very justly say, that this wou'd be much more abhor'd by God, than the other? Yet notwithstanding little care is taken to keep our selves from falling into so great an inconveniency as this. The People of *Israel* were extreemly affected to *David*, and

† Verba surronis quasi simplicia, & ipsa perveniunt ad intimaveritis.
Prov. 26, 22.

2 Reg. 15. 3. 6. is.
13.

and had oftentimes giv'n him evident proofs of their Affection and Obedience; yet frequently Revolted, having heard *Abfolon* speak ill of him, who blam'd the Conduct of his Father, and decry'd his Government. How often has it happen'd that a Religious Person who liv'd well with his Superior, had a high Opinion of him, Interpreted all his Actions in good part, lay'd open to him upon all occasions, even the most hidden Secrets of his Heart; and yet all this is suddenly destroy'd, by a Word that some one has inconsiderately let fall, and perhaps without the least ill Intention. From whence succeed Suspitions, Diffidences, Dissimulations, Rash Judgments, Detractions, and other ill Offices; and sometimes it happens that the Evil encreases it self after such a manner, that secretly Whispering and Communicating the matter to one another, the Contagion hereby spreads it self over the whole Community: So that one cannot sufficiently exaggerate how Prejudicial these sorts of Reports, and Stories may, and do often prove to Religious Union, Peace and Tranquility.

But some may answer, 'tis sometimes convenient, that our Brother shou'd know what is objected against him, to the end he may stand more upon his guard, and for the future give no occasion of having such things sayd of him. 'Tis true; but 'tis sufficient to tell him the thing, without Naming any one, tho' it shou'd even be sayd in Publick; and by this means we may excuse our selves, because another might as well have told him the same. Wherefore every one ought to look to himself, † *For Woe be to that Man, by whom the Scandal happens.* And how urging soever your Friend may be, to get you to discover the Author, deny him still, and take care that his Importunities, and the great Favor you imagine you shou'd do him, force you not to discover what he desires. For this were a dangerous condescendence; and by giving him a mark of your Friendship, you wou'd at the same do him hurt, as well as the Person of whom you shou'd speak, and your self also; and therefore you ought to have a very great Scruple of the damage you may cause to either side. The inconveniency also that there wou'd be herein, may easily be comprehended by this, that when any one advertises the Superior of the faults of his Brethren, to the end that by his Paternal care, he may be able to apply a remedy, the

Rule

* Verumtamen vix homini illi per quem scandalum venit.
Matth. 18. 7.

Reg. 9. sum.
Conit. & 10.
commun.
Et Reg. 125.
Previnc.

Rule declares that the Superiors ought not to signifie from whence he receiv'd this Information, and to take great care to keep it very secret; for fear lest the knowledge thereof, shou'd exasperate or cause any alienation amongst our Brethren. But if, when things of this nature are mannag'd with so much prudence and caution, out of a Spirit of pure Charity, and with a prospect of greater good, there are oftentimes many inconveniencies to be fear'd, and great circumspection to be had; with how far greater reason ought we to apprehend those inconveniencies, when any one discovers to another, the Person who has not spoke so well of him; and this, not in Complying with the Rule; or out of a Motive of Charity, but after a disobliging manner, out of Imprudence, and Indiscretion, and perhaps out of Jealousie, and Envy also, or infine out of some other unreasonable Motive, or at least that will pass for such a one in the Mind of him you spoke of? Saint *Austin* praises extreamly his Mother Saint *Monica*, upon this account, that those who were at Variance one with another, they coming severally to make their complaint to her with a great deal of bitterness, she never told either of 'em what the other sayd; but doing 'em the good Office, to procure a right understanding on both sides, she recounted only what she thought wou'd sweeten and mollifie their Hearts, and contribute to their Reconciliation. We ought to practise the same thing, and thereby become Angels of Peace.

Aug. lib. 9.
Conf. cap. 9.

C H A P.

C H A P. IX.

That good and fair words, help very much to preserve Charity, as on the other side the contrary conduce to it's destruction.

ONE of the things that may contribute very much to conserve and augment Fraternal Charity are soft and fair Words. † *A sweet Word multiplies Friends, and appeases Enemies*, says the Wise Man, and on the contrary, * *A harsh Word raises up Fury*, and occasions Quarrels and Dissensions. For we being all of us Men, these sort of Words touch us to the quick; and when the Mind is once Incens'd, we look not upon our Brother as we did before; but presently find something blame-worthy in his Conduct; and sometimes stop not, at blaming him only in our Hearts; but go farther in speaking ill of him. This being so, 'tis of very great importance that our discourse be always so season'd with sweetness and affability; that thereby we may gain the good Wills of our Brethren, according to that saying of the Scripture: † *A prudent Man renders himself amiable by his Words*. For which end, 'tis good that first of all, we shou'd be advertis'd of one thing, which ought to be the Ground or Foundation of what we have to say upon this Subject; which is, that we deceive not our selves, by letting fall any hard or biting Words, upon pretence that our Brethren have both Wit and Vertue; and therefore will not look so very near, as to be Scandaliz'd at a Word. The Question at present, is not what they are, but what you ought to be; and how you ought to carry your self towards 'em. If you say, they will not be angry for so small a thing: * *The smaller it is*, answers Saint Bernard, *the easier 'tis for you to abstain from it*. Saint Chrysostom goes farther, and says, that the same lightness of the matter, is that which aggravates

† Verbum dulce multiplicat amicos, & mitigat inimicos.
Eccles. 6. 1.
* Sermo durus suscitatur furorē.
Prov. 15. 1.

† Sapiens in verbis seipsum amabilem facit.
Eccles. 20. 13.

* Quanto levior est, tanto à te levius potuit non committi.
Bern. serm. 29. sup. caus.

† An oculus
tuus nequam
est, quia ego
bonus sum?
Chrysost. hom.
29. in Matth.
20. 15.

aggravates the fault; because the easier it was to overcome, the more faulty you are, that you did not do so. † *Is your Eye bad*, says our Saviour, *because I am good?* And because your Brother has a great deal of Moderation, ought you to have none at all? 'Tis very true that we ought to have a good opinion of our Brethren, and not believe they are of so easie and tender a resentment, as to be angry for any small matter; but this do's not exempt us from our endeavour in managing, and conversing with 'em with so much caution and circumspection, as if we knew they were very sensible of the least thing; and therefore we ought to take as much care not to shock 'em, as if they were more brittle than Glas; so that we must have a very great care never to give 'em any occasion of offence, how cholerick or sensible soever they may be. 'Tis to this we shou'd apply our selves, as well upon our own, as our Brothers account; because the Wisdom of our Neighbor excuses not our own indiscretion; and because all are not, or at least not always dispos'd, to take things in the best part, and not resent the faults committed against 'em.

* Intellige
quæ sunt
proximi tui
ex teipso.
Eccle. 31. 18.

That which remains is, that 'tis not hard to comprehend what words those are, at which our Brethren may, or may not be offended; it being what every one may easily come to know by himself, following the Rule which the Holy Ghost gives us, by the Mouth of the Wise Man. * *Judge of your Neighbor by your self.* Let every one consult himself, and see whether he be content they shou'd speak coldly of him, that they shou'd answer him sharply, and command him after a haughty and Imperious manner; and if he finds this will touch him to the quick, let him abstain from doing the like; because his Neighbor is a Man like himself, and may have the same sentiments and feelings as he himself has. Humility also is a very proper means, to make us never speak, but as we ought to do. For if we be humble, and esteem our selves the least of all, we need no other precaution than this; this alone is sufficient to teach us how to carry our selves towards all the World; so that we shall never speak a hasty word, at which any one may be offended; but we shall always speak to every one with respect and sweetness.

'Tis certain, that a simple Religious will never take the liberty to speak otherwise to his Superior, than as it becomes him; because,

because, considering himself as his Inferior, he has a respect for him; and when it happens that he speaks sharply to his Brother, 'tis because he thinks himself not Inferior to him, and therefore respects him not as otherwise he would do. Let us therefore be humble, and following the Counsel of the Apostle, esteem our selves the least of all, and we shall soon learn, both what Language we ought to use, and after what manner we ought to speak to others. But besides these general Rules I have set down, and the general remedies I have hitherto prescrib'd, I will now speak more in particular, of such Language we ought to avoid, which is intirely contrary to Charity.

Ad Phil. 2. 3.

CHAP. X.

That we ought to abstain from all kind of Raillery, that may offend our Brother, or give him any Displeasure.

WE ought first to abstain from speaking any sharp Words, such as those are, which touch our Neighbor, either in his Person, or in his Wit, or any way else; for such discourses as these, are very much against Charity. Sometimes we utter 'em after a Witty and Crafty manner, to recreate and please our selves; and then they become more prejudicial, than otherwise they would be; because the more Wittily, and with the greater Grace they are say'd, the deeper Impression they take, and stay longer in the Memories of those that hear 'em. And that which is still worse, it often happens, that he who speaks 'em, is very much pleas'd with himself; thinking he has met with a good occasion to shew his Wit, when in reality he very much deceives himself, and instead of shewing his Wit, he only makes appear his bad Inclinations; because he employs the Wit God has giv'n him to serve him, in speaking such fine things as Wound and Scandalize his Brethren, and trouble Peace and Charity.

Tom. I.

E c

Albertus

Alb. Mag.
Tract. de Virt.
c. 2. de humi-
litate.
Bern lib. 2.
de confid. ad
Eugenium.

Albertus Magnus says, that as a stinking Breath is a sign of a disorder'd Stomack; so sharp Words are a sign of a Corrupted Heart. But what would Saint *Bernard* say of a Religious Man, that thou'd offend his Neighbor by Raileries? For if all sorts of pleasantry, appear'd to him as so many Blasphemies and Sacrileges, in the Mouth of a Religious Person; what Name would he give such Jest as gave offence? Nothing is more opposite to the Spirit of Religion, than such discourses as these; wherefore any thing, that has an air or likeness thereof, is to be avoided: As for example, the inventing ridiculous Similitudes, scoffing at any one, playing the Mimick or counterfeiting anothers actions, or insine, playing upon any one after any other manner whatsoever; all this ought to be so far from the practise of any Religious Person, that he ought not either in jest or any other way, to assume to himself any such liberties as these, of which let each one judge by himself. Would you be content that any one thou'd apply to you a ridiculous Similitude, that would make all the World Laugh that heard it, reflecting upon the resemblance it has with your self? Since therefore you would take no pleasure therein, do not that to another, you would not have done to your self; because this is an excellent Rule of Charity. Would you be content, supposing you thou'd let slip an unhandson Word, that it thou'd be presently Repeated, and be Divulg'd also in Publick? Certainly you would not: Wherefore would you then that another suffers that from you, which you would not be content to suffer from another, and whereby you would think your self highly injur'd? The very Names also that they use in such sort of jestings and pleasantry, have a certain kind of a harsh Sound, in the Mouth of a Religious Man: Wherefore let us avoid all such kinds of Raileries, and exactly observe Saint *Pauls* Precept. † *Lead such a civil life as becomes Saints to do; let none hear out of your Mouth such Words whereby Fornication or any other kind of Impurity, or dishonest Actions are explicated, nor insine, any other Foolish Speeches or Scurrility mis-becoming your Profession.* All which agree not with a Religious Profession; and if at the Day of Judgment we must give an account of all the idle and unprofitable Words of our past Life, what an account will be requir'd of other Words? What will be requir'd of those, whereby we have offended our Brother, or any way done him any Injury or Prejudice?

† Fornicatio
autem & om-
nis immundi-
tia nec nomi-
netur in vobis,
sicut decet
sanctos. Aut
turpitudinis,
aut scurrilitas,
quæ ad rem
non pertinet.
Ad Ephef. 5. 3.

C H A P. XI.

That we ought to abstain from Disputes and Contentions with our Brethren, and also from Reprehending 'em.

WE must also carefully avoid entring into any dispute or contention with any one, it being a thing very contrary to Union and Fraternal Charity; of which Saint Paul gives us warning, when Writing to Timothy, he says: * *Do not dispute or contend in Words, for it serves for nothing else but to subvert, and give Scandal to the hearers:* And a little after he adds, † *A Servant of God must not be Contentious but Mild and Sweet towards all Men, and be Patient, and apt to Learn.* All the Saints recommend the same thing to us, and Saint Ignatius in particular, has inserted this point into his Rules. Saint Dorotheus says, that he had rather things shou'd be left undone, than perceive any disputes or contests arise amongst Brethren in doing 'em; and moreover adds, that shou'd he repeat this sentiment of his a thousand times, he shou'd not repeat it too often. Saint Bonaventure also affirms, that there is nothing more unworthy or mis-becoming God's Servants, than to be at Variance and contend one with another about nothing, as Women are wont to do. And Saint John Climachus moreover assures us, that Obstinacy, tho' it be in a matter of truth, can come from none but the Devil. The Reason is; because that which usually moves a Man to maintain his own Opinion with any heat, is, the desire he has of being esteem'd; from whence it happens, that to appear more able or knowing than his Adversary, he endeavours to convince him that he is in an Error; and if he cannot come off Victoriously in his Dispute, he endeavours at least to make it appear he had not the worst on't; and thus 'tis always the Devil of Pride, who is the occasion of this Obstinacy.

E c 2.

But

* Noli contendere verbis: ad nihil enim utile est, nisi ad subversionem audientium.

† ad Tim. 2. 14.
† Servum autem Domini non oportet litigare, sed mansuetum esse ad omnes, docibilem, patientem.
Ibid. 24.
Reg. 28.
Communium.

Bon. in Spec.
disp. c. 3. p. 3.

Climac. c. 4.

But in this two sorts of faults may be committed; the first and greatest is his, who first contradicted the other; because 'tis he who begins the dispute, and first kindles the Fire. And tho' for the most part, the subject they dispute about, is in reality of so small consequence, that 'tis no matter whether the thing in debate, be the one way or the other; yet 'tis of great importance, not to loose Peace or Charity, which ordinarily are very much impar'd by these sorts of debates. One, for example, proposes what he thinks true, and because he is persuaded 'tis so, let him alone in his opinion; because you are not at all interest'd therein; following the Counsel of the Wise Man: * *Dispute not about what do's not concern you.* The Spirit of Contradiction is a very bad one; wherefore endeavour to cast it off, tho' the thing in hand be of Consequence; and if you imagine that your Brother may indeed receive some prejudice, by adhering to his erroneous opinion; yet you ought to bear with him for the present, by not opposing him; but what remains, is, that upon the first occasion, you take him aside, and sweetly inform him of the truth, and then in private convince him of his mistake. By this means you will be able to fulfil your duty, or at least to avoid such inconveniencies as otherwise may be fear'd

The other fault we must avoid, is, the maintaining with two much Obstinacy, what we have once propos'd; wherefore, if it happens that any one contradicts you; insist not much upon it, nor suffer your self to be carry'd on with a desire of getting the better of him; but explicate your Mind once or twice, with all mildness possible, and shew him your sentiment of the question, and after that, let him believe what he pleases; and impose Silence upon your self, as if you had nothing more to say about the matter. But do not as many frequently do, who tho' they yield in appearance, yet either by muttering to themselves, or some other exterior signs, they make it appear, that they submit only out of Civility, and that they lay down the dispute only for quietness sake, and that they still judge their own opinion to be the right. † *He that avoid's Contentions, gains Honor*, says the Wise Man, and without doubt, there is a great deal of Merit got, by civilly yielding to another, and permitting ones self seemingly to be overcome in such like occasions. In effect he that do's thus, exercises at the same time

* De ea re,
quæ te non
molestat, ne
ceteris.
Eccles. 11. 9.

† Honor est
homini qui se
separat à con-
tentionibus.
Prov. 20. 3.

time an act of Charity towards his Neighbor, avoiding such disquiets and heats, as ordinarily accompany these disputes; he exercises an act of Humility, overcoming the desire that all Men, have to get the better of another, and gain glory to themselves; and he exercises also an act of love towards God, cutting off the occasion of many Sins, which are almost inseparable from such sorts of debates, according to what the Wise Man says: * *Abstain from all debates, and you will diminish the number of Sins.* On the contrary, he that contests, besides the Scandal he giv's, is the cause that Peace and Charity is broken; he intermedles and introduces himself into the debates and disputes of his Brethren, from whence many other inconveniencies happen; and instead of gaining esteem thereby, as he pretended to do, he makes himself pass for an obstinate, and quarrellsome Person, who is ty'd to his own Opinion, and seeks always to have the upper hand, never yielding upon any account to another. 'Tis recounted of Saint Thomas of Aquin, that in his Disputations, he always propos'd his Opinion with Meekness and Sweetness, with an unspeakable Moderation; without any shew of Presumption, and without the least offence to any one; but carry'd himself as a Man who regarded not gaining the Victory, but merely endeavour'd to make known the Truth. The passage of the two Old Men is sufficiently known, who having liv'd a long time together in one Cell, without the least Contention; wou'd one day try, whether they were able to dispute about a subject: And casting their Eyes upon a Brick, which accidentally lay before 'em in their Cell, they resolv'd to contend, to which of the two it belong'd; but they reciprocally yielding the right to each other, cou'd never enter into any dispute. We ought to have such a disposition of Mind as this was, so far estrang'd, from all kinds of debates, as if we were absolutely incapable of 'em.

Moreover, we ought not to intrude our selves into occasions, of finding fault with our Brethren, tho' we shou'd perform it with never so much Precaution and Charity; for this belongs only to the Superior; and tho' perhaps we may be able to suffer one or two of these, to admonish and reprehend us, for our faults; yet we do not willingly permit, those who are not our Superiors, to Usurp to themselves this Authority over us; and infine, generally speaking,

we

* Abstine te
à lite, & mi-
nues peccata.
Eccl. 23. 10.

In Hist. Ord.
Prad. p. 1. 13.
c. 14.

In Vit. Patr.
p. 2. §. 92.

Reg. 31. comm.

we desire not to be reprehended by our equals. We have also a Rule, that forbids every one either to command, or reprehend another, without first having express orders from the Superior to do so. And in effect, it do's not become every one to do it; and even the Superior himself, if he desires that the reprehension he gives, shou'd be well taken, and become profitable to him he reprehends, ought to think well of it beforehand, expect a fit conjuncture, and consider very well what he will say, as well as in what manner he will do it; since he cannot be too circumspect in this point. And yet a particular Person, without reflecting upon any thing, out of a pretended Zeal, will sometimes take upon him to reprehend his Brother, without any consideration at all, even as soon as he has committed the fault, at which time he is less dispos'd to hearken to, or profit by, that which is sayd unto him. This is not the effect of a discreet Zeal, but what is very contrary to Charity, and what is wont to do more hurt than good. For tho' you may have reason for what you do, yet 'tis very probable 'twill exasperate your Brother, and make him think within himself, nay perhaps even object to you: † *Who has set you over us, to be our Judge?* Why do you meddle with what do's not belong to you? And if you tell him it belongs to you, because what he do's is against the Rule, he may answer you very well, 'tis also contrary to our Rules, that you shou'd take upon you to correct him.

† Quis te constituit principem, & judicem super nos?
Ezech. 2. 14.

Refer. Pbet.

We Read of *Socrates*, that dining one day with his Friends; and happening at a full Table to reprehend a little too sharply one of the Guests, *Plato* who was present, cou'd not refrain from correcting him; saying, had it not been better for you, to have deferr'd this reprehension to another time, and secretly to have told him of his fault? But wou'd not you also, reply'd *Socrates*, have done much better to have told me of mine in private? And thus he answer'd one reprehension with another; letting him see that he fell into the same fault he admonish'd him of. Behold here to how little purpose, such unseasonable reprehensions as these, are made; which for the most part proceed not from a motive of Zeal and Charity, but are an effect of ill Nature, Impatience, Anger, and Lightness of Mind; which make us formalize after this manner upon our Brother's fault, and oftentimes upon what is no fault at all; so that something we cannot refrain, even from telling the Person himself of it; which

which when we have done, our Heart seems to be at ease, and we find a satisfaction and content within us. Thus thô we cannot Mortifie our selves, or at least will not; yet we desire that others shou'd be Mortifi'd. 'Tis good therefore that every one shou'd have the Spirit of Mortification, severity, and rigour towards himself; and the Spirit of Love, Meekness, and Sweetness towards his Brethren: 'Tis this that the Saints recommend to us in their Writings; 'tis this they Teach us by their Examples; and 'tis this that helps very much to preserve Union and Fraternal Charity. By what has been sayd, we may see, that if 'tis not permitted to reprehend our Brother, when it seems to be done with Civility, Charity and Sweetness; 'tis far less lawful or permitted, when 'tis done without these circumstances, and when we keep not such measures as these; wherefore, we must abstain from reprehending our Brethren, and generally from saying the least Word, that may give 'em any Mortification.

Cassian reports, that the Abbot *Moses* disputing with the Abbot *Macharius*; and having sayd a cross and mortifying Word, God presently chastis'd him upon the place, permitting the Devil at the same time to Possess him; and such a foul Devil also, that made him speak all sorts of Filthy and Impure Words; which punishment lasted, till the Abbot *Macharius* by his Prayers, deliver'd him from so miserable a Slavery. Such a Chastisement, in so great a Person, and such a Servant of God, as the Abbot *Moses* was, being a Man of approv'd Sanctity, very clearly evidences, that God extreemly abhors such faults as these. We Read in the Chronicles of Saint *Francis*, that in imitation of this Punishment, an Ancient Brother, permitting himself to be so transported with anger, as to give some Harsh and Cholerick Words to his Companion, in the presence of a Gentleman of *Assisum*; he presently perceiving that his Brother was mov'd, and the Secular also, Scandalis'd, resolv'd to revenge this fault upon himself; wherefore, gathering together a great deal of Dirt, he cram'd it into his Mouth, *Let my Mouth*, says he, *Eat this filth, since it has vomited out such Gall and Poyson against my Brother.* The Secular was so surpris'd, and also Edifi'd with the Fervor wherewith this good Religious punish'd his own fault, that he became more addicted than ever, to those that liv'd under that Rule, and offer'd both his Person and whatsoever belong'd to him, to the service of the Order.

C H A P.

Cass. col. 2.
c. 27.t. p. l. 2 c. 25.
bist. Min.

C H A P. XII.

*Of the Sweetness we ought to have in our words
and Actions, whereby to acquit our selves well,
in the Practise of Charity.*

* In eo ad-
gila, ut ad la-
borem corpo-
ris, verborum
etiam lenita-
tem adhibeas.
Basil, in prin-
cipio 2. tom.

† Fili, in bo-
nis non des
querelam, &
in omni dato
non des tri-
stitiâ verbi
mali: nonne
ardorem refri-
gerabit ros?
Sic & verbum
melius quàm
datum. Non-
ne ecce ver-
bum super
datum bo-
num?
Eccles. 18. 15.

* Sermo ve-
ster semper in
gratia, sicut sit
conditus, ut
sciat quomodo
oportet
vos unicuique
respondere.
Ad Coloss. 4. 6.

SAINTE Basil gives a very profitable Instruction for the Conduct of those, who are employ'd in the exterior Functions of a Religious Life. * *When it happens*, says he, *that you are employ'd in these sorts of Offices, take care that Sweetness of Words, be joyn'd with the Labor of the Body.* 'Tis not enough that you take pains, and torment your selves very much, but you must also perform the good you do, with a good grace; and take care that there be Sweetness and Modesty in your Words; to the end, that others knowing you act with the Spirit of Charity, your service may thereby be more pleasing to them. 'Tis this that the Wise Man Counsels us when he says: † *Son make no Complaint, whilst you do that which is Good; and whensoever you give any thing, Mortifie none with Harsh Words. The Dew tempers the Days great Heat's, and a Sweet Word excell's whatsoever you can give; 'tis above all your other Presents.* The agreeable manner wherewith you serve another, and the Sweetness with which you answer 'em, is more regarded and esteem'd than all you can do; and on the contrary, what pains soever you shall take, know, that if you appear not to take 'em with a good Will, if you perform 'em not with a good Grace, and if your Words be not always accompany'd with Sweetness, all the pains you take will be esteem'd as nothing, and you will have labor'd in vain. * *Let your discourse*, says the Apostle, *be always season'd with a certain kind of Salt, that may render it agreeable, in such sort, that you understand what answer to give to every one;* and this Salt is nothing else, but that Sweetness, of which we speak at present. Tho' you shoud be so employ'd, that you were

not

not able to perform what is desir'd of you, yet you must not upon this account rudely deny your Brother, but on the contrary, 'tis then, that you shou'd harken more mildly to 'his Petition; 'tis then you ought to signifie, that you shou'd be extreamly glad, were you able to perform what he desires; and that nothing but the pressing affairs you have in hand, cou'd hinder you from performing at present, what you will joyfully do as soon as you are a little more at leasure. Thus the knowledge which hereby he will have of your good Will, will make him depart as satisfi'd, as thò he had obtain'd what he came for. But if your difficulty proceeds from not having leave to do what he desires, you may answer, that you will go presently to the Superior, to ask leave for what he you'd have you do, act thus also in all other occasions; and when 'tis not in your power to perform what is desir'd of you, endeavour by fair words to supply your want of performance; that at least they may never doubt, but that you have the greatest inclination in the World to serve 'em. † *Good Words*, says the Holy Ghost, *abound in the Mouth of a Vertuous Man*; and in effect they help extreamly to maintain Union and Charity in our Minds.

† Et lingua,
Eucharis in
bono homine
abundat.
Eccl. 6. 5.

'Tis the opinion of Saint *Bonaventure*, that when we happen to give such a rude answer as is able to offend our Brother, or to give him the least disquiet; we ought to be extreamly atham'd of it, thò what we sayd, were in it self of very small moment, and were only the effect of a sudden and first Motion; and the Saint adds, that when any thing in this kind has happen'd, we must presently Humble our selves before God, and endeavour to make our Brother satisfaction, by begging his pardon. We Read in the Life of Saint *Dosicheus*, that he spoke to every one with great Sweetness, and Charity; and took great care in avoiding all kinds of dispute with any one. But his Office of Infirmarian obliging him to have to do with a great many; occasion'd sometimes some little disputes; as with the Cook of the Monastery, because he took not that care he shou'd, in Dressing the Meat for the Sick; or sometimes also with the Dispenser, because he gave him not that which was best for the Sick, or made him expect too long for it, or because he carry'd that into the Refectory, which he wanted for the Infirmary; whereupon it sometimes happen'd that he spoke lowder than ordinary.

Tom. I.

F f

or

or a little more sharply than became him. But when this happen'd, he had so great a Confusion for it, that retiring to his Cell, he there prostrated himself, and Wept so bitterly, that his Superior Saint *Dorotheus* was often forc'd, to go to him to ask him what he ail'd, and to urge him to tell him the cause of his trouble. *Father*, Reply'd *Dositheus* Weeping anew, *I have spoken with Contempt to my Brother: Whereupon Dorotheus* reprehended him severely for his fault; saying, *Eye, is this the Humility you ought to have? You have offended your Brother, and yet you do not Die for shame to have committed such a fault as this is?* And having thus chid him, he added, *well, take courage now, and get up, God has pardon'd you, let us now endeavour to begin a new Life.* The good Disciple rose at these Words with as much joy, as if his pardon had been pronounc'd by the Mouth of God himself, and made a new and firm resolution never more to speak rudely to any Person whatsoever.

But to the end that as well those, who are employ'd in the Offices of Charity, as those towards whom 'tis exercis'd, may equally make their profit, both of the service they render, and that they receive. Saint *Basil* proposes two excellent expedients. Would you know says he, how you may perform well those services you do to your Brother? Make account, says he, that in serving him, you serve *JESUS CHRIST*, who has assur'd you, * *That what you do to the least of his Brethren, you do unto himself.* Do therefore your Actions as if it were God and not Man whom you serve, and by this means you will never fail to serve your Brethren as you shou'd do. But wou'd you be inform'd, continues the Saint, in what manner you ought to receive the service your Brother renders you? After the same manner that a Servant ought to receive any service that his Master is pleas'd to do him; and after the same manner that Saint *Peter* receiv'd that, which the Saviour of the World was pleas'd to perform, when he wash'd his Feet. By crying out full of Confusion: † *How! What do you O Lord, Wash my Feet?* By this means Humility will be conserv'd alike in both the one and the other; because the one will not disdain to serve their Brothers, when they look upon 'em as Children of God, and Brethren of *JESUS CHRIST*; they will make account that in serving them they serve *JESUS CHRIST* himself; nor will the others

*Basil. c. 160.
& 161. ex
brevior.*

* Quamdiū
fecistis uni ex
his fratribus
meis minimis,
mihi fecistis.
Matth. 25. 40.

† Domine, tu
mihi lavas
pedes?
Joan. 13. 6.

others be puffed up with Pride, to see themselves serv'd; but on the contrary will thereby find occasion of Humiliation and Confusion, when they consider themselves Inferior to those that serve 'em; and when they consider, that those who serve 'em, look not upon them, but upon God himself. What remains is, that Fraternal Charity, which is so highly recommended to us, will hereby be conserv'd, and still more and more augmented.

C H A P. XIII.

How we ought to behave our selves towards our Brethren, when there has happen'd any Dispute, in which we have given 'em any occasion of trouble.

BUT because we are all of us Men, and even the greatest part of us stand not always so upon our guard, but that we let slip sometimes a harsh Word, and thereby give discontent to our Brethren; 'tis good that I speak here, how we are to carry our selves towards 'em, in such like occasions.

First, when it happens that any one has spoken to us after a rude manner, we must not answer him in the same Tone or Language, but must have so much Moderation and Humility, as to suffer it with Patience, and dissemble it with Humility. The fire of our Charity must not be so ill lighted, as it may be exstinguish'd by a few drops of Water; and the Apostle Saint Paul speaking of Charity, gives it, says Saint Basil, * for no other reason the Epethite of *Fraternal*, but to signifie that it ought not to leave so weak an impression upon our Hearts, as may be easily effac'd or blotted out; but that it ought to be solid, fervent, and strong. 'Tis without doubt very much to be with'd, that neither by Word nor Action, any one shou'd give the least discontent to his Brother; and 'tis also equally to be desir'd, that we shou'd not easily take fire, or

Basil. q. brev. 9. 242.

* Charitas fraternitatis maneat in vobis.

Ad Hebr. 13. 1.

* Charitate fraternitatis invicem diligentes.

Ad Rom. 12. 10.

be incens'd; nor stand so much upon our points, as to fall out, raise our Voice, be disquieted in Mind, and loose the Peace of our Soul for nothing. I know very well that 'twould be much better that none shou'd take upon 'em to reprehend another, nor intermeddle with what belongs to anothers Office; yet if it happens that any one shou'd take this liberty, we must not upon this account presently reproach him to his Face; ask him who gave him this Authority, and tell him that our Rule forbids us to intrude our selves into anothers Office. All this serves only to make a disturbance, about that which wou'd not have been worth taking notice of, if in the beginning, he cou'd have dissembl'd and not minded it at all, but held his Peace. When two hard Bodies hit one against another, they make a great noise, but if a hard Body strikes against a soft one, it makes none at all. A Cannon Bullet beats down a Tower with a terrible noise, but if it be shot against Wooll-sacks, the force is damp't, and presently lost. * *A Civil and Meek answer appeases Wrath, says Salomon, but a Rude Word provokes one to Fury.* The Holy Ghost also Counsels us, † *Not to Contend with a Man of Haughty Words, this being to lay Wood upon the Fire.* Take heed therefore of disputing with him, or of Incensing him by your replies: But on the contrary, endeavour to have so much Sweetness and Moderation, that whatsoever he says, tho never so rude and provoking, may make no noise or any impressiion tho never so touching, but may be stiff'd and extinguish'd by your Moderation and Silence.

Saint *Dorotheus* Teaches us a manner how to answer very Humbly; which we may make use of in such like occasions, and says, that when any one speaks very sharply to us, or reprehends us for any Fault, or reproaches us for what we have not been guilty of; we must always receive the correction with an equal temper of Humility, and say whether we have wrong done us, or not, * *Dear Brother Pardon me, and Pray for me.* He Learn'd this Doctrin from an Ancient Father, who was wont to practise it himself, and Counsel others to do the same; and without doubt, if we practise this with the like Spirit of Humility, and that on the one side, we endeavour with all possible care to beware of giving our Brother any discontent, and on the other side, are dispos'd to receive all things in

* Responso
mollis frangit
iram; sermo
durus suscitatur
furorem.

Prov. 15. 1.
† Non litiges
cum homine
linguato, &
non strues in
ignem illius
ligna.
Eccli. 8. 4.

* Ignosce,
frater, & ora
pro me.
Doro. Doct. 15.

in good part, we shall live in a strict Union, and in an admirable Peace and Concord.

But nevertheless, if perhaps you chance to fail in this, for example, if you happen to have had any difference or dispute with your Brother, because he took the liberty to say something that displeas'd you, and you had not sufficient discretion and Humility to dissemble and support it; if there has happen'd any dissention or brawles between you, and you resent'd it from one another; you because he first attack'd you; he because you answer'd him very sharply; you ought says Saint *Bonaventure*, to reconcile your selves one with another, by a speedy and mutual Satisfaction; to the end that † *The Sun sets not upon your Anger*: And the means to reconcile your selves, is mutually to beg pardon one of another. Saint *Ignatius* prescribes the same thing in his Constitutions: We ought not to permit says he, that any difference or animosity arise amongst us; but if it happens, either by our own weakness, or by the instigation of the Devil, who is never wanting to blow the Coales, and kindle the Fire of Discord between Brethren, we must presently endeavour to reconcile those that are at Variance, and oblige 'em to make one another a convenient satisfaction. But this satisfaction, as he has noted, in some other Spiritual Instructions he left Written, must be to ask pardon of each other. So that there is nothing but Humility, says Saint *Bernard*, that can truly repair a breach of Charity; and therefore we must always have a great facility in demanding and granting Pardon; † *Bearing with one another*, as Saint *Paul* says, *mutually forgiving all the occasions or subjects of Complaints, that may have happen'd*. Nay, we must do more yet, we must endeavour to prevent our Neighbor; * *For fear he takes our Crown from us*; for he who first humbles himself, and ask's Pardon infallibly gains it. Wherefore the more Ancient, and he who either is, or ought to be the more perfect in the practise of Vertue, and Self-mortification, ought not to take notice whether he be the Person offended, or be less to blame than his Brother; but without a demur upon any Human consideration, he must think of nothing else, but to advance in Humility, by making the first step to Charity. When the Shepherds of *Abraham* and *Lot* quarrel'd about the Pastorage of their Flocks, *Abraham* spoke first of all to *Lot*, and

† Sol non
occidat super
iracundi-
m
vestram.
Ad Eph. 4. 26.
3. p. Conf. c. 1.

* Sola hu-
milis est
laetitia chari-
tatis reparatio.
Bern. serm. 2.
de Natal. Do-
mini.

† Supportan-
tes invicem,
& donantes
vobismetipsis,
si quis adver-
sus aliquem
habet quere-
lam.

Ad Colof. 3. 13.

* Ut nemo
accipiat coro-
nam tuam.
Apoc. 3. 11.

† Ne, quaeso,
sit iurgium
inter me & te,
& inter pasto-
res meos &
pastores tuos;
fratres enim
sumus. Ecce
universa terra
coram te est;
recede à me,
obsecro. Si ad
sinistram ieris,
ego dexteram
tenebo: si tu
dexteram ele-
geris, ego ad
sinistram per-
gam.
Gen. 13. 8. 9.

* Si ergo of-
fers munus
tuum ad alta-
re, & ibi re-
cordatus fue-
ris, quia fra-
ter tuus habet
aliquid adver-
sum te, relin-
que ibi munus
tuum ante
altare, & vade
prius recon-
ciliari fratri
tuo, & tunc
veniens offe-
res munus
tuum.
Matth. 5. 23.

and yielded him up that right, he might justly have taken to himself, by giving him his choice of what part he pleas'd, of those he propos'd to him: † *I pray, says he, let there be no difference between you and me, nor between your Shepherds and mine, for we are Brothers: Behold the whole Land is before you, I beseech you separate from me. If you take the left Hand, i'll take the Right, if you chuse the Right; i'll retire to the Left.*

We Read in the Chronicles of the Cistercian Order, of one of these Religious who receiv'd this Grace and Favor from God, that every time he Communicated, he felt a Sweetness, as it were of a Hony-Comb, which frequently remain'd in his Mouth, for three days together. It happen'd that having one day reprehended one of his Brethren somewhat sharply, he hereupon went to Communicate, without being first reconcil'd to him, and that day, he had his Mouth fill'd with a greater bitterness, than that of Gall or Worm-wood; and this, because he had not comply'd with that Precept of the Gospel, * *If you present your Offering before the Altar, and there remember that your Brother has any thing against you, leave your gift before the Altar, and go first and be reconcil'd to your Brother, and then come and Offer your Gift.* Hereby we may see how pleasing a speedy reconciliation with our Brethren is to God; because when we are even at the Foot of the Altar, and ready to make our Oblation to him, we must quit all, to go and reconcile our selves with our Brother.

C H A P.

C H A P. XIV.

*Three things which we ought to practise when
any one has given us any subject of
Discontent.*

FROM all that has been sayd, we may gather three things, which we must observe when our Brother has offended us, or given us cause of being displeas'd with him. The first is, that we restrain our minds from giving the least way to the Spirit of Revenge: We are all of us Brothers, Members of the same Body; And 'twas never heard that one Member injur'd by another, ever Meditated Revenge; nor ever was there yet any Child so foolish, that having bit it's own Tongue, pull'd out it's Teeth for meer spight. Let us not be then less Wise than they; but when any one has offended us, let us say to our selves, he is a Member of the same Body with my self, wherefore let us pardon him; and neither desire, nor do him any farther harm; there's mischief enough done already, and therefore I will not be the occasion of doing more: But following Saint Pauls Counsel, † *Let us not render any one Evil for Evil.* I pretend not here to speak of Revenge in matters of consequence; because I suppose no such thing happens amongst Religious, and that such Persons, are far from having any sentiments of this Nature; but I speak of Revenge in things of less moment, which we imagine may be lawful to desire or practise, without committing any great Sin. Some will say, I wou'd by no means that any ill shou'd happen to my Brother, but I must confess, I shou'd be glad to give him a Word or two that might somewhat touch him, and let him know he is in the wrong: Others will rejoyce at the reprehension and correction of the Person, with whom they had a dispute or falling out: The third sort infine, will receive a certain kind of malignant

† Nulli malum pro malo reddentes.
Ad Rom. 12. 17.

lignant joy, that he, from whom they receiv'd some slight displeasure, succeeded ill in some business, or met with some Mortification. All this is very much to be discommended, and may very deservedly be styl'd Revenge; since whoever has such sentiments as these, has not yet pardon'd his Brother from his Heart, and ought to have a Scruple when he Prays thus to God, * *Lord forgive us our Trespases as we forgive them that Trespase against us.* 'Tis also in some kind more Criminal in a Religious Person, to retain in mind these little rancours, than for a Secular Person to desire a signal Revenge upon his Enemies. Wherefore if your Brother has offended you in any occasion, say not, † *I will do to him, as he has done to me.* I will use him as he has us'd me, for this proceeds from an exasperated mind, that harbors a desire of Revenge.

But 'tis not enough that we harbor no desire of Revenge, we must also take great care of another thing, which People of the World look upon as lawful. I do not wish such a one, say they, any mischief, but i'll have nothing more to do with him; and thus they conceive such a bitterness and aversion in their Hearts, against those by whom they have been once offended, that they cannot afterwards have any concern for 'em, or converse with 'em for the future with any satisfaction. But if we condemn this in Secular Persons, so far as to call in question whether they have satisfi'd their obligation of Charity, because from hence it often happens that they converse no more together, and give Scandal thereby to their Neighbor; how much more is it to be condemn'd in us, that there thou'd still remain a distast and bitterness of Heart against our Brother, by looking upon him no more, * *As we did Yesterday, and the Day before?* This is far from the Spirit of Religion. † *Ler all sorts of Harshness, Choler, and Indignation be banish'd from amongst you,* says Saint Paul, *and be ye Sweet and Merciful one to another, Pardoning one another, as God has Pardon'd you by the means of JESUS CHRIST.* That is to say, that you pardon all from the bottom of your Heart, for 'tis after this manner that God pardons us; for after we truly repent us of our Sins, and ask pardon of him; there remains not in him the least sentiment of displeasure against us, but he treats us after the same bountiful manner, as he did before;

* Dimitte nobis debita nostra, sicut & nos dimittimus debitoribus nostris. *Matth. 6. 12.*

† Nec dicas, Quomodo fecit mihi, sic faciam ei. *Prov. 24. 29.*

* Sicut heri, & nudius tertius. *Gen. 31. 2.*

† Omnis amaritudo, & ira, & indignatio tollatur a vobis: esto autem invicem benigni, misericordes, donantes invicem, sicut & Deus in Christo donavit vobis. *Ad Ephef. 4. 31. 32.*

before; he has the same tenderness for us, as if we had never offended him; and is so far from reproaching us with our past Sins, that he do's not so much as remember 'em.

* *I will no more remember their Sins and Iniquities;* says he by the Mouth of Saint Paul, † *He will cast, says the Prophet Micheas, all our Sins into the bottom of the Sea.* 'Tis after this manner we must pardon our Enemies,

'tis thus we ought to forget Injuries. There must remain no Aversion, no Animosity against our Brother, but we must be the same to him as if he had never offended us, and as if nothing at all had pass'd between us. If you would have God pardon you after this manner, do you after the same manner pardon your Brother; and if you do not, take heed and be afraid, lest you become like that Servant who had no compassion for his fellow Servant, whom his Master deliver'd over to have Justice executed upon him: *

'Tis after this manner, says our Saviour, that my Heavenly Father will deal with you, if every one of you pardons not his Brother from the bottom of his Heart. † Forgive, and ye shall be Forgiven; for the same Measure you make to others, the same also shall be again made unto you.

ni: eadem quippe mensurâ quâ mensi fueritis, remerietur vobis.

Luc. 6.

The third direction is giv'n us by Saint Basil, and will help still more, to evidence and clear the former. He says, that as we ought not to have any particular tye to any one, because 'tis an occasion of many inconveniencies, as we shall make appear afterwards, so we must not be prepossess'd with any particular aversion from any person, because from hence also proceed very great inconveniencies. Would it not, for example, be a very great one (which God preserve us from) that any one amongst us shou'd say, such and such a one are not well together; ever since such an accident happen'd the other day, they live not together as they were wont to do. This alone is enough to destroy Religion, and since JESUS CHRIST desires, that the affection we have for another, be the Mark that we are his Disciples; it consequently follows, that those who love not their Brethren, are not Disciples of JESUS CHRIST, nor true Religious Men. To remedy this, you must act after the same manner, as when you feel a particular inclination to any one; you

Tom. I.

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must

* Et peccatorum, & iniquitatum eorum jam non recordabor amplius.

Ad Hebr. 10.

† Et projiciet in profundum maris omnia peccata nostra.

Mich. 7. 19.

* Sic & Pater meus celestis faciet vobis, si non remiseritis unusquisque fratri suo de cordibus vestris.

Matt. 18. 35.

† Dimittite, & dimittemi-

37. 38.

Basil. serm. de Inj. Mon. c. 18.

Joan. 13. 35.

must take a particular care to cast it off, for fear lest this particular affection takes too deep Root in your Heart, and becomes Master of it; and as Spiritual Directors would then have us avoid, as much as possible, the letting it appear, upon account of the Scandal that may arise from thence; so when you find an aversion for any one, you must presently endeavour to root it out, for fear it should take root in your Heart; and must endeavour that none perceive it; because those exterior signs that we permit to appear, do ordinarily produce dissensions, and other ill consequences. But 'tis not sufficient only to hide it from all the World, if you hide it not from him also, to whom you bear it; But to prove this, without quitting the comparison I before propos'd; as there are some People, who, that they may avoid all blame and scandal, are very careful to hide from others, the particular affection they have for any one, yet nevertheless either directly or indirectly, they cannot but let him perceive such marks of it as they are able to shew; which is of a very pernicious consequence. So after the same manner, there are some that take a great deal of care for this reason, to hide from others the hatred or ill Will they have for their Brother, but on the other side they signify it to himself, both in their Looks and Gestures. They avoid his Person, keep not Company with him as before, affect a kind of Moroseness and ill Humor whilst they are with him, and in effect, endeavour hereby to let him see the resentments they retain of the injury they pretend to have receiv'd from him. But this being a kind of Revenge, 'tis also very much to be condemn'd, and we can never take too much care and precaution to avoid it.

That which we are to do, is the same we must do in Temptations; which is, when we find our selves in danger, to keep our selves more than ordinary upon our guard; for fear of letting our selves be carry'd away with the Enemies Suggestions; in the same manner when you find any motion of aversion or displeasure against any one, you must then have a more particular attention and guard upon your self, for fear that this aversion or unkindness, should be an occasion to provoke you to say or do any thing, that may let your Brother perceive your resentment; and according to the Counsel giv'n us in the Gospel, you must Pray for him, and do him all the kindness you can.

* *Let*

* *Let not your Charity be overcome by the Evil that is done you, but overcome Evil by Good,* says Saint Paul, do them more good, than they did hurt to you; † *And by this means you will heap burning Coales upon the Head of your Enemy.* You will gather together the Coales of his Love and Charity for your self, if he receives in good part all the marks of yours; and the Coales of revenge against him in the other Life, if his Heart still continues harden'd against you.

Thomas à Kempis reports, that a Holy Priest who liv'd in the same Monastery with him, going one Day about some business to another Convent, in his way, met with a Secular Person who both presently enter'd into familiar Discourse; and at length coming to speak of God and Pious things; the Secular Man told him he wou'd relate to him a passage that had heretofore happen'd to himself. Which was, that once hearing Mass, he was surpris'd, in that he saw not the Host in the Priests Hand; but imagining that it proceeded from weakness of sight, and from his being at too great a distance from the Altar, he therefore went very near it, yet still, without seeing it any more this way, than he did before; and this continu'd for the space of a whole Year: Infine, not knowing what cause to attribute it to, and finding himself in a strange perplexity of mind, he resolv'd to speak of it to a prudent Director, who after he had maturely examin'd the matter, he found that he had a long time entertain'd a hatred against one of his Neighbors, for an injury he heretofore receiv'd from him; which he wou'd never pardon. The Confessor finding so great a hardness in his Heart, fail'd not to represent to him the dangerous State he was in, gave him many reprehensions, and wholesom Counsels, and infine, told him, that he need not seek any other cause than this, why he saw not the Holy Host; and that he hop'd in vain to obtain this favor from God, if he did not pardon the injury done him by his Neighbor. This Man was so touch'd with these Words, that he immediately, intirely pardon'd his Enemy; and having ended his Confession, and receiv'd his Penance and Absolution, he enter'd into the Church, heard Mass, and without any difficulty saw the Holy Host, and fail'd not ever after to render due thanks for so great a favor, and continually to bless him for those other wonders he daily works for the good of his Servants.

* Noli vinci à malo; sed vince in bono malum.
Rom. 12. 21.
† Hoc enim faciens, carbones ignis congeries super caput ejus.
Ad Rom. 12. 20.

Tb. à Kemp.
in vita Henrici
Bruni. c. 7.

C H A P. XV.

Of rash judgments, and in what their hainousness particularly consists.

* Tu autem,
quid iudicas
fratrem tuum?
Aut tu quare
spernis fra-
trem tuum?
Ad Rom. 14. 10.

BUT you, says Saint Paul, what right have you to judge your Brother; or who are you that you shou'd Contemn him. Amongst all the Temptations that the Enemy of our Salvation provides himself withal, to make War against us, one of the chief, is that which incites us to judge ill of our Brethren; to the end that having hereby lost the esteem and good opinion we had of 'em, we shou'd also loose the affection we had for 'em; or that at least our Charity may relent, and grow cold towards 'em. Wherefore we must take all care imaginable to make a Vigorous resistance against this Temptation, and assure our selves it must needs be very dangerous; because it endamages and weakens Charity. If you will therefore conserve Charity in your Heart, if you desire to keep your self in a perfect Union with your Brethren, † *Above all things*, says Saint Austin, take care you admit no Suspicions into your mind; because they are the Poyson of Friendship. Saint Bonaventure call's 'em * *A secret Plague, but very dangerous, because it drives God far from us, and tear's in pieces Fraternal Charity.*

† Per omni-
bus cavenda
est suspicio,
quæ est amicitie
venenum.
*Aug. lib. de
amic. c. 24.*

* Occulta pe-
stis, sed gra-
vissima, quæ
Deum fugat,
& fratrem
lacerat chari-
tatem.

*Ben. in stimulo
amor. c. 10.*

That which is most pernicious in this Vice, is, that it makes us injure the Reputation of our Neighbor within our one Hearts; so that upon very slight grounds we come to despise him within our selves, whereby without doubt we do an injury to our Brother. But the fault we commit is greater or less, according to the matter upon which we frame our judgments; and as the grounds upon which you fram'd 'em, are of more or less moment. The better to make us comprehend the hainousness of this Fault, by another like unto it: Consider how great a Sin it wou'd be, if you shou'd lessen your Brothers esteem, in the opinion

opinion of another, and that by staining his Reputation, you shou'd ruin the esteem and good opinion he before had of him. You cause no less a damage to him, when without reason or sufficient ground you happen to receive a bad impression, concerning him; for he desires as much to keep his Credit and Reputation with you, as with any one else. Each one may easily judge by himself the prejudice he do's hereby to his Brother. Wou'd not you be offended shou'd another harbor a bad opinion of you, without having giv'n any occasion on your side for so doing? You offend him after the same manner, judging disadvantageously of him, without any just occasion offer'd. Measure another by your self; and let Charity and Justice make use of no other means than these, to measure your Charity towards your Neighbor.

You must notwithstanding observe, that there is a very great difference, between having Temptations to judge rashly, and to let our selves be carry'd away with those we have. For 'tis the same in this, as in all other things; and as, for example, there is a great difference between having Temptations, and yielding to them; for the Crime consists not in being attack'd, but in being overcome. In like manner the Crime in this matter, consists not in being tormented by thoughts of rash Judgment. 'Twou'd without doubt be much better, that we were so replenish'd with Charity and esteem of our Neighbor, and so taken up with the consideration of our own faults, that we shou'd not be able to perceive those of our Brethren, nor imagine 'em to be guilty of any. † *Yet after all, as Saint Bernard says, a Thought cannot render us guilty, so long as there is no Consent,* and that we are not overcome by the Temptation. 'Tis true, that in rash judgments, to become guilty of 'em, we must give our Consent; because when we do so, we presently loose the good opinion we had of our Brother, and begin to undervalue him, according to what we before alledg'd out of Saint Paul: In which case 'tis not sufficient when we go to Confession, to say, there pass'd several rash judgments against our Brethren in our minds; but we ought more fully to express that we Consented to them; and yielded to the Temptation. Divines say moreover, that we must take care not to speak of those suspicions that came into our minds against our Brother, lest that shou'd give

† Non nocet.
sensu, ubi
non est con-
sensus.
Ber. de inter.
dom. c. 19.

give occasion to another to have the same, or confirm him in that which perhaps he might before have had of him: For our inclination is so perverse, that it carries us to believe rather what is bad, than what is good of our Neighbor; wherefore they forbid us even to Name in Confession, either the Person of whom we made the rash judgment, or him who has giv'n us an occasion of Scandal, for fear lest it shou'd make any impression in the mind of our Confessor; whereby he might have a less esteem of 'em. Behold how far the Holy Doctors push us on to practise this circumspection, they require we shou'd have, in what concerns the Honor and Reputation of our Neighbor; and yet notwithstanding, you wou'd upon light conjectures, make him loose the reputation he before had with you; and which he had right to have with all the World, until his Actions give sufficient proof of the contrary.

But besides the injury we do in this to our Neighbor, we also do a very great one to God; by usurping his jurisdiction to our selves, contrary to what our Saviour forbids in these words: * *Judge not, and you shall not be Judg'd; Condemn not, and you shall not be Condemn'd*: Saint Austin says, that by this, the Son of God forbids all rash judgments; as to Judge the Intention of the Heart, and generally all other things that are hidden from us; because God has reserv'd the knowledge of these to himself; and wou'd not have Men pretend to such a knowledge. But Saint Paul explicates this still more perfectly. † *Who are you*, says he, *that take upon you to Judge the Servant of another? It belongs only to his Master to Absolve or Condemn him.* * *Wherefore, take care of Judging before the time, till our Lord comes himself, who will Illuminate even the thickest Darknes, and discover the greatest Secrets of Hearts; and then every one shall receive Praise from him.* The reason he alledges, why we shou'd not Judge, is, because the things we Judge are very uncertain, and very hidden and abstruse; as therefore God alone is only able to penetrate 'em; and if it belongs only to him to Judge, so whosoever takes upon him that Office, Usurps God's right, and intrenches upon his Divine Jurisdiction. We Read in the Lives of the Fathers, that a certain Anchorite having upon small grounds Judg'd ill of another, heard presently a Voice from Heaven

* Nolite judicare, & non judicabimini: Nolite condemnare, & non condemnabimini. Luc. 6. 37. Aug. lib. de ser. Dom. in ment. c. 28.

† Tu quis es, qui judicas alienum servum? Dominus suo stat, aut cadit. Ad Rom. 14. 4. * Itaque, nolite ante tempus judicare, quoadusque veniat Dominus, qui & Illuminabit abscondita tenebrarum, & manifestabit consilia cordium; & tunc laus erit unicuique à Deo. 2. Corin. 4. 5.

Heaven, that sayd to him. *Men Usurp to themselves that right of Judicature which I have reserv'd to my self, and encroach upon my Jurisdiction.*

But if it be criminal to judge ill of our Brethren, even when there is some appearance of evil; how far worse must we believe it is, when the things are good in themselves? And yet we refrain not to make an ill interpretation of 'em, and judge they are perform'd with an ill Intention, or out of Human Respects? This is properly to Usurp God's Jurisdiction, to pretend to penetrate the secrets of Hearts, and to judge the most hidden Thoughts and Intentions. † *This is to become Judges, full of unjust Thoughts.* * *This is like those who Divine, and by vain conjectures wou'd know what they are ignorant of.*

† Facti estis
judices cogi-
tationum ini-
quarum.
Jacob. 2. 4.
* In similitu-
dinem arioli,
& conjectoris
æstimat quod
ignorat.
Prov. 23. 7.

CHAP. XVI.

Of the Roots and Causes from whence rash judgments proceed, and the remedies we must apply against 'em.

THE first Root from whence rash judgments commonly rise, is Pride, which tho' 'tis the Root of all other Sins, yet 'tis much more particularly of this. Saint *Bonaventure* upon this subject remarks, what is worthy to be consider'd: He says, that those who think themselves more excellent in Spirituality, are more frequently Tempted than others to judge and censure their Neighbors; as if these words which the Apostle sayd in another sense, † *The Soiritual Man judges all things*, had been sayd to give 'em power and a right to judge all the World. They imagine themselves to possesse the great gifts of God; and instead of being the more humble thereby, they are puffed up with a greater Pride, replenish'd with a good opinion of themselves, look contemptibly upon those, who seem too much employ'd in exterior occupations, and becoming Criticks and Reformers, they so far forget themselves, as they make it their only business to censure the Lives of others. The Saints

*Ecce, in si-
mulo amoris
ca. 10.*

† Spirituales
autem judicat
omnia.
1 Cor. 2. 15.

Saints say, that *Simplicity is the Daughter of Humility*; for he who is truly humble, has not his Eyes open to see the faults of his Neighbor, but only to discern his own; and finds so many things to confider and deplore in himself, that he never takes notice or amuses himself in thinking of the faults of others. If therefore we were truly humble, we shou'd be far from these kinds of judgments: 'Tis also a very excellent remedy for this, as well as for many other defects, never to open our Eyes but to behold our own Infirmities; that * *We may know what we want*; and to keep 'em shut to the defects of others, for fear lest if we do otherwise, the same may be sayd to us; that was sayd to the Hypocrite in the Gospel, † *How come you to see a Mote in your Brothers Eye, who have a Beam in your own*? We cannot sufficiently express how great an advantage it is, to have our Eyes always fix'd upon our own defects; because this sight gives us humility and confusion, augments the fear of God in a Soul, keeps it in Recollection, and produces in it, the fruits of peace and tranquility. The contrary custom, in observing the faults of others, is frequently the cause of many evils, and inconveniencies; it carries along with it Pride, Rash-judgments, Indignation against our Neighbor, Contempt of our Brethren, Remorse of Conscience, Indiscreet Zeal, and a thousand other imperfections, which agitate and subvert the Heart. Wherefore, if it happens that you discern any fault in your Neighbor, endeavour to gather from thence some fruit for your own amendment. When you perceive in your Brother any thing worthy of reprehension, turn your Eyes upon your self, says Saint *Bonaventure*, before you judge him, examin your self well; and if you find you are guilty of the same fault, pronounce the Sentence against your self, and condemn that in your self, which you wou'd have condemn'd in him, by saying with the Royal Prophet. * *'Tis I who have Sinn'd, 'tis I that have done Evil*. I deserve not to kiss the ground he treads upon, and that which I perceive in him is nothing, to what I find in my self. Saint *Bernard* teaches us another means, whereby we may extreemly help our selves. † *When you perceive in your Neighbor, says he, any thing that pleases you, see if you possess the same; and if you have it, think how to conserve it; but if you have it not, endeavour to acquire it, and by this means you will make your profit by all things.*

* Ut sciam
quid desit
mihi.
Egal. 38. 5.

† Quid autem
vides festucam
in oculo, fra-
tris tui, &
trabem in
oculo tuo
non vides?
Matth. 7. 3.

Ben. in Reg.
Novit. cap 12.

* Ego sum
qui peccavi,
ego inique
egi.
2 Reg. 24. 17.

† Cum vides
aliquid quod
tibi displicet,
vide si hoc est
in te, & ab-
scinde. Si
verò vides ali-
quid quod tibi
placet, vide si
hoc est in te,
& tene; & si
non est, as-
sume.
Ber. in for.
bonest. vita in
docum. ibi
addito.

Saint

Saint *Thomas* ascribes these rash judgments, of which we speak, to other causes. and says, they proceed from some corruption within, and so judging the inclinations of our Neighbor by our own, we easily suppose that to be in him, which we find within our selves. * *A Fool*, says *Ecclesiastes*, believes all he meets, to be *Fool's* like himself, and 'tis a common saying, that † *A Robber* believes all the *World* Thieves. When one looks upon any thing throu' a colour'd Glass, all things appear of the same colour of the Glass; so a Wicked Man judges all to be like himself; he takes all things in the worst part, so that he behold's 'em throu' a bad *Medium*; and as he has such or such a prospect in what he do's, and governs himself by such and such a Maxim, so he believes that all others govern themselves by the same Motives and Considerations. Norwithstanding you * do not consider, says Saint *Paul*, that you Condemn your self by the Judgment you pass upon another, for that Judgment is a sign that you your self are guilty of the same thing, you suspect in him. A Vertuous Man looks upon all things and explicates 'em after the best manner; and tho' sometimes he perceives something to doubt of; yet when he considers it may be taken two ways, 'tis not a good sign that he endeavours to take it in that which is less favorable. Saint *Dorotheus* says, that as a Man who is of a good Constitution, and has a good Stomack, converts even those Meats that are hard of digestion and unwholesom, into good Nourishment; and on the contrary, a bad Stomack turns even the best Meats into choler and bad humors: So he who possesses a good and right Soul, and gives himself to Vertue, interprets all things well; whereas he who knows not what Vertue is, Poysons all things, and interprets 'em in the worst sense.

The Saints add moreover, that tho' there is no Sin, in Judging that an Action is bad, when 'tis evidently so; yet shoud that which they see be manifestly culpable, yet 'tis a Vertue and Perfection, to endeavour to excuse our Brother all we can. † Excuse the Intention, if you cannot excuse the Action, says Saint *Bernard*, believe it proceeds from Ignorance. Surprise, happens by Chance, or is an effect of the first Motion, which he could not help and was not Master of. If we lov'd our Brethren as our selves, and look'd upon 'em as our second selves, as in effect they really are, we shoud not want reasons, or industry

Tom. I.

H h

to,

S. Th. 2. 2. q. 60. art. 3.

* Sed & in via stultus ambulans, cum ipse insipiens sit, omnes stultos existimat.

Ecl. 10. 3.
† Pienfa el ladrón que todos son de su condición.
Prov. E/p.

* In quo enim judicas alterum, teipsum condemnas: eadem enim agis, quod judicas.
Mat. Rom. 2. 1.

Dorot. doct. 26.

† Excusa intentionem, si opus non potes, puta ignorantiam, puta subreptionem, puta casum.
Bern. serm. 42. sup. Cant.

to excuse 'em. Self-love always furnishes us with an infinity of excuses; it affords us helps to defend our selves, and teaches us how to lessen our own faults; and without doubt we shou'd make use of the same means in behalf of our Neighbor, if we lov'd him as well as we love our selves. But if the fault shou'd be so evident and Criminal, that we cannot excuse it; believe then, says Saint Bernard, and think thus with your self, that if I had been set upon with the same Temptation, and God had permitted the Devil to have the same power to Tempt me, what might not happen'd to me? We Read of Saint Ignatius, that when any Action was so evidently bad, so that he found no way to excuse or colour it, he suspended his Judgment and adhering fast to the Holy Scripture, he sayd, † *Take heed of Judging before the time.* * *There is none but God who sees the Heart.* † *A Servant cannot be absolv'd or condemn'd, but by his Master.*

Besides all the causes already set down, Saint Thomas, still alledges another, and says, that rash Judgments often proceed from Envy, Jealousie, or some secret Aversion: For as * *We easily believe what we desire*, so the bad disposition we are in, in regard of our Brother, is the cause that we find something to blame in all he do's, and interpret all his Actions in the worst sense, if we have but never so little light to perceive 'em. This will be better conceiv'd by an example in the contrary: When we have a Passionate affection for any one, we approve of all his Actions; and are so far from giving 'em any bad interpretation, or taking 'em in ill part, that tho' we cannot but discover his faults, yet we presently think how to palliate and diminish 'em as much as we are able. † *Charity*, says Saint Paul, *never admits a thought to his Neighbors disadvantage.* The same fault, accompany'd with the same circumstances and appearances, seems not to be the same in him we love, as it do's in him we have no kindness for: And daily experience teaches us, that there are some sort of Persons who displeasure and hurt us; whilst at the same time there are others, who treat us perhaps worse than they, with whom we are not the least offended, or so much as see or take notice of what they do to us. 'Tis this which the Wise Man prudently notes, when he says, * *Hatred provokes Quarrels, and Charity covers all kinds of Defects.* So that we may say with truth, that

Lib. 5. c. 6.
vis. S. Ignatii.

† Nolite ante
tempus judi-
care.

† Car. 4. §.
* Dominus
autem intue-
tur cor.

† Reg. 16. 7.
† Domino
suo stat, aut
cadit.

Ad Rom. 14. 4.
§. Tb ubi sup.

* Facile cre-
dimus quæ
volumus.

† Charitas
non cogitat
malum.
† Car. 13. §.

* Odium su-
scitat rixas, &
universa de-
licia operit
charitas.
Prov. 10. 12.

that 'tis want of Charity that makes us Judge rashly: 'Tis also want of Charity, that causes, even what is no fault in our Brother, to shock and trouble us very much: His Air, his Gesture, his Discourse, his manner of Conversation, and even his good Qualities, become sometimes insupportable to us; and this ought to make us understand, that as Simplicity helps very much to conserve Mutual Charity; so Charity helps extremely to preserve Simplicity, and that these are the two Vertues that aid and very much help one another.

To hinder us from falling into all these inconveniences, we have here set down, 'twill be of great advantage to us, if we consider attentively the craft and malice of the Devil; who for matters of no moment, and for things which are not faults, or at least very slight and small ones, even such as none are exempted from, endeavours to make us loose the affection and esteem we have for our Brethren. For in this Life no one is free from Imperfections, and Venial Sins: † If we say there is no Sin in us, says Saint John, we deceive our selves, and there is no Truth in us. And the Wife Man assails us, that * The Just Man shall fall seven times a day, that is to say many times, without ceasing notwithstanding to be still Just. This being so 'tis very unreasonable, that what we cannot take from him, which is the Grace of God, and the quality of being Just, thou'd at the same time make him loose our good Will or Esteem: For Christian Charity has stronger Tyes, and more solid Foundations, than Worldly Friendships, which are dissolv'd by the least trifles, as for some insignificant interest, or a Complement we neglected to make; but Christian Charity is founded in God alone who can never fail. Wherefore let us follow God's example, who notwithstanding our Defects and Imperfections, ceases not to love us. And to have an equal tenderness for us: He tollerates out of his Goodness an Infinity of faults we daily commit against him; and yet we cannot tolerate a small fault our Brother commits against us, without resentment, and bearing ill Will against him. This shews that we do not truly love him for God; for if we lov'd him after this manner, we thou'd not be vex'd or troubl'd for what God is not displeas'd at: If he who is Master is not at all angry, why thou'd we who are but Servants be displeas'd? He looks upon our Brother as his

† Si dixerimus, quoniam peccatum non habemus, ipsi nos seducimus, & veritas non est in nobis.
1. Joan. 1. 8.
* Septies enim cadet justus.
Prov. 24. 16.

† Si sic Deus
dilexit nos,
& nos debe-
mus alteru-
trum diligere.
1 Joan. 4. 11.

Greg. lib. 34.
Moral. ca. 15.

Son, he tenderly loves and cherisheth him; 'tis therefore but just that we shou'd have the same sentiments for him that he has. † *If God has Lov'd us, after such a manner as this, we ought in like manner to love one another.*

Let us reflect upon a thought of Saint Gregory, and many other Saints; which is, that God sometimes refuses a lesser Grace to those, whom he has replenish'd with far greater; and thus by the adorable Order of his Providence, leaves 'em to combat with slight and small Imperfections; to the end, that by their constant endeavour to correct 'em, without ever being able to effect their intent; and seeing that notwithstanding all their care, all their resolutions, they continually relapse into the same; they may the better be conserv'd in Humility, and remain convinc'd, that of themselves they can never overcome great difficulties, since they are not able to surmount such small ones as these. Thus the same Man at the same time, may have arriv'd to a high pitch of Vertue, and a very eminent degree of Sanctity; and yet be subject to some defects, which God was pleas'd to leave in him, thereby to exercise him; that by Humility he may keep himself in possession of those greater gifts he has receiv'd. The conclusion therefore we must draw from hence, is, that we ought never to judge ill of our Brother; nor condemn him for those small imperfections he may still retain; or prefer our selves before him; because we believe our selves free from the like. Remember what Saint Gregory says, that he who has these kinds of Imperfections, may for all this be Perfect; and that on the contrary we may still be very Imperfect, notwithstanding we are free from 'em. This consideration will help us, not only to keep our selves in the Spirit of Humility, but will also conserve in us those sentiments of Charity, we ought to have for our Brother, and prevent our judging rashly of him.

C H A P.

C H A P. XVII.

A Confirmation of the foresaid Doctrin by Examples.

WE Read in the Lives of the Hbly Fathers, that Abbot *Isaac*, going one day to an Assembly of Religious in the Desert, had an ill opinion of a certain Person amongst 'em, and upon something he had seen amiss in him, judg'd him worthy of correction; and having return'd again to his Cell, he there found an Angel standing at the Door, who oppos'd his entrance. The Holy Abbot demanding the cause, the Angel answer'd that our Lord had sent him, to know what he wou'd have done with that Religious Man, he had already condemn'd within himself: the Abbot presently acknowledging his fault, and prostrating himself to ask pardon of God, the Angel told him, that God pardon'd him; but for the future he shou'd be more cautious in making himself Judge of his Brethren, and condemning those, whom God the Universal Judge, had not Condemn'd.

Saint *Gregory* reports, that *Cassius* Bishop of *Narni*, and a very great Servant of God, had naturally a red and fiery Face; and that *Totila* King of the *Goths* having seen him, judg'd this to proceed from a great excess of Drinking. But God took upon him the defence of his Servant, by permitting the Devil to seize upon an Officer, who bore *Totila's* Sword, and to torment him upon the place, in a most dreadful manner, in sight of all present, till at last being carry'd to the Saint, he deliver'd him, by making the Sign of the Cross upon him; whereupon *Totila* chang'd his opinion, and had ever after a very great esteem of the Holy Bishop.

In the Lives of the Holy Fathers, mention is made of two Holy Religious, who liv'd together in very great Union; to whom God had granted this favor, that by a certain exterior

*Gregor. lib. 3.
Dial. ca. 6.*

exterior mark, each of 'em knew the Interior State of his Companions Soul: It happen'd that one of 'em going abroad upon a *Friday Morning*, saw a Religious eating of something, and presently condemning him in his Heart, without examining at all the necessity he might have, of eating so soon; tell's him in a chiding tone, *What makes you eat thus early upon a Friday Morning?* When he return'd to his Cell, his Companion not perceiving the Mark of the Grace of God, he was wont to have upon him, was extremely troubl'd thereat, and sighing, ask'd him what he had done since he went abroad. I know not answer'd the other that I have done any thing amiss. Whereupon the other desir'd him to think well, whether he had not spoke some idle Word; whereupon he remember'd what he had sayd to the Religious he met, and the rash Judgment he had made; but the Mark of Grace he was wont to have, appear'd not again, till after he and his Companion, had both fasted a fortnight together, to satisfie for this fault.

1. p. lib. 6.
ca. 9. Hist.
Ord. Min.

In the Chronicles of Saint *Francis*, a wonderful Vision is recounted, with which our Lord favor'd one of the Companions of this great Saint, call'd Brother *Leo*. He saw one day a great Company of the Religious of his Order, glittering with light and splendor, amongst which there was one more bright than all the rest, out of whose Byes there came forth such resplendent Rays, that the good Brother was not able to behold their lustre. He ask'd who that Person was, and 'twas answer'd him, that he was Blessed *Bernard of Quintaval*, the first Companion of Saint *Francis*; and that the light which darted from his Eyes, proceeded from that good interpretation he made, of whatsoever he saw in his Neighbor; and also, because he believ'd all the World better than himself. When he met the Poor all cover'd with Rags and Patches, These, says he to himself, observe Poverty far better than I; and judg'd thus advantageously of 'em, as if in effect their Poverty had been as Voluntary as his own. When he saw Persons of Quality Richly Glad, he sayd in his Heart, Perhaps these perform greater Austerities than I do; perhaps they wear a Hair-cloath underneath their Rich Cloaths, and secretly Chastise their Flesh, and that 'tis to avoid being surpris'd with Vain-glory, that they Cloath themselves after this manner. In fine, he look'd upon all things on the best side, and the innocency of

of his Eyes, deserv'd to have such a recompence of Glory bestow'd upon 'em by God himself. Behold here, after what manner we must judge of our Neighbor; and this is that Spirit, which Saint *Dorotheus* requires of us, when he says; if entering into your Brothers Cell, you find it all in disorder, think that he is so absorpt in God, that he minds not exterior things; but if on the other side you perceive he takes care to keep it very neat and handsom, believe his Interior is like the Exterior.

Doro. lib. 16.

The same Chronicles also make mention, that Saint *Francis* going to Preach in some parts of *Italy*, met in his way a Poor Man, who lay very Sick; and being touch'd with commiseration, he spoke to his Companion with great signs of tenderness and compassion, whereupon the good Religious making this answer, that in truth he appear'd very Poor, but perhaps he was as Rich in desires, as even the Rich Men of the World were; Saint *Francis* presently gave him a severe reprehension for this rash judgment he made, and told him that if he desir'd to remain with him, he must perform the Pennance he shou'd impose upon him, for the fault committed against his Neighbor. The good Brother submitting himself with great Humility, to what he shou'd please to order, Saint *Francis* commanded him to cast himself Naked at the Beggars Feet, to ask his Pardon for the rash judgment he had made of him, and beg he wou'd intercede by his Prayers to God for him; and the good Religious presently obey'd the Saint.

Cap. 38.

We Read also in another place of the same Chronicles, that the same Saint, having for a time almost quite lost his sight by too much weeping, sought to divert himself with one of his Religious, call'd Brother *Bernard*, who had a very particular Talent in discoursing of God, with whom he sometimes spent whole Nights in Spiritual Discourse. Having once sought him, at his Cell, which was in a remote part of the Mountain; and having call'd out to him, that he wou'd come to a Poor Blind Man; Brother *Bernard*, who was at the same time so wholly absorpt in God, that not hearing him call, he made no answer to the Saint, who having call'd him again a second time, and finding he made no answer, return'd very sad, murmuring within himself, that Brother *Bernard* wou'd not admit him into his Cell. In this anxiety of mind, he went a little before his Companion; and having put himself in Prayer, he heard a Voice that sayd, *Why*

Cap. 75.

ATB

art thou troubl'd? Is it reasonable that Man shou'd quit God for a Creature? Brother Bernard was with Me when thou call'd'st him, and cou'd not go to meet thee, nor answer thee, because he did not hear thee. The Saint getting up at these words, return'd presently to Brother Bernard, to accuse himself of his fault, and beg a Pennance of him for it; and finding him just risen from his Prayer, he cast himself at his Feet, declaring the suspicion he had harbord of him, and the reprehension he had receiv'd from God for it; commanding him in Vertue of Holy Obedience, to punish him after the manner he shou'd declare to him; but Brother Bernard fearing that the Saint, according to his custom, shou'd put himself upon some very extraordinary Humiliation, and desirous to find out some means to excuse himself, answer'd, that he wou'd do whatsoever he shou'd ordain, upon condition he wou'd also perform what he shou'd desire of him. The Saint who was always readier to Obey, than Command, easily accepted the condition; wherefore having layd himself all along on the Ground upon his Back, I command you says he in Vertue of Holy Obedience, that you first put one of your Feet upon my Mouth, and then the other upon my Neck, and that you pass three times over me in this manner, laying, *Remain here upon the Ground you wretched Son of Peter Bernardone; whence could'st thou conceive so much Pride in thy self who art worthy to be contemn'd by all?* Brother Bernard understanding what the Saint requir'd of him, doubted for some time whether he shou'd comply with his orders; but infine, both to satisfie his Obedience, and out of fear of afflicting him, he resolv'd to do it, but executed his commands with all respect possible. After this the Saint having bid him, now to command him in his turn, what he thought fit: I command you then, says the good Religious, that as often as we shall hereafter be together, that you severely reprehend me for my faults. The Saint who had a very great Veneration for Brother Bernard, by reason of his extraordinary Vertue, was so Mortifi'd by the command he had receiv'd, that to avoid the occasion of reprehending so Holy a Man, he durst not afterwards remain any long time in his company, but every time he went to visit and speak with him of God; he took leave of him as soon as the Conference ended.

SUTTING

Sirius reports that Saint *Arsenius* being Sick, a Priest of a Neighboring Parish came to visit him, together with an Ancient Hermit, and finding him layd upon a Carpet, and his Head resting upon a Pillow, The Hermit, who knew not what *Arsenius* had been in the World, was Scandaliz'd to see a Man so fam'd for Sanctity, treat himself so tenderly, and with so much niceness. The Priest, who was a prudent Man, perceiv'd this very well, and taking him aside, I pray Father tell me, says he, what kind of Life you led before you embrac'd this of an Hermit? The Old Man having answer'd him, that being always very Poor, his Life was much the same, with that he liv'd at present; know then, reply'd the Priest, that *Arsenius* before he came to the Desert, was a Man of an Eminent Quality, very Rich, and a great Favorit of the Emperor, to whom he had also been Tutor: Consider he has quitted all these things to embrace Poverty and Humility, and judge, if in a Man, who had all his Life been brought up in Abundance and Pleasures, and who at present is worn out with Age, and Sicknes, 'tis two great a Niceness and Delicacie to have a Pillow and Carpet to lie upon. The Hermit, who with astonishment had heard all he sayd, presently conceiv'd a very high esteem of the Sanctity of *Arsenius*, and a very great confusion for the rash judgment he had made of him.

Cassian recounts, that the Abbot *Macquetius*, desirous all shou'd know, that they ought not to judge hardly of any one, sayd, that heretofore he had taken the liberty to judge his Neighbor, and that particularly in three things. The first was, that a certain Religious, who having a swelling in his Mouth, had recourse to Surgeons, thereby to be eas'd of his pain, he had ascrib'd this to Impatience in him, and to a want of courage. The second was that some others, finding themselves constrain'd, to relent something of that Austerity they liv'd in, and to make use of Coverlets made of Goats Hair, either to lie upon, or to cover themselves withal; he had believ'd there was a certain Delicacie or Niceness herein, that was contrary to the Spirit of their Profession. The third was, that seeing Religious Bless the Oyle they gave to Secular Persons, who out of Devotion had desir'd it; he thought there was a great deal of Presumption in this, and a certain kind of Ostentation of Sanctity. But he Confess'd, that God in Punishment

*Cassian. lib. 5.
de Institut. re-
nunciantium
ed. 30.*

of these rash judgments, let him afterwards fall into the same faults, for which he had condemn'd others; for first a swelling happening in his Mouth, he was forc'd by the Violence of the pain, and by the command of his Superiors, to cause himself to be dress'd by Surgeons; and this very incommodity, had forc'd him to make use of a Coverlet; and infine, yielding to the importunity of many Secular Persons, he had also giv'n 'em Oyle which he had Bless'd. In conclusion he advis'd all his Religious, to take example by him, and to judge none, for fear of falling as he did, into the same faults for which he reprehended his Brethren.

The Abbot *Anastasi*, who Flourish'd at the time of the Sixth General Council, reports, that in the Monastery of Mount *Sina*, where he was Abbot, there was a certain Religious, who so easily dispens'd with himself in the the Spiritual Exercises of the Community, that he pass'd amongst 'em for none of the most Exemplar and Religious Persons. He fell Sick, and the Abbot perceiving that instead of being troubl'd at the approach of Death, he on the contrary exprest a very great joy, severely reprehended him, saying, he was astonish'd, that he who had liv'd after so loose a manner, shou'd have so great a Peace and Tranquility of Mind, when he was upon the point of rendering an account to God for all his Defects. I pray Father be not at all astonish'd, answer'd he: Since our Lord has sent an Angel to me, with an assurance of my Salvation, and that he will keep his Word, and the promise he has giv'n, when he sayd; * Judge not and you shall not be judg'd; Condemn not, and you shall not be Condemn'd. For tho' tis very true, that either for want of Health, or out of Tepidity, I have not exactly comply'd with the duties of the Community, yet I have never fail'd Patiently to suffer the ill treatment I have receiv'd for it, and to pardon it with all my Heart; and have been so far from judging ill of those that thus Treated me, that I have always taken it in good part, and judg'd well of all their Words and Actions: And this is that which at present gives me so much Joy and Comfort.

* Nolite judicare, & non judicabimini; nolite condemnare, & non condemnabimini.
Luc. 6. 37.

C H A P. XVIII.

*Of three sorts of particular ties and Friendships,
which are to be reprehended.*

WE have hitherto treated of the ties and Friendships that are made by Charity, now we will treat of such, as are contrary both to the Spirit of Charity and Religion. Saint *Basil* in his Monastical Constitutions, says, there ought to be a very great Union amongst Religious, but all sorts of particular ties or Friendships between two or three Persons only, must be retrench'd; for how Holy soever these ties may appear, nevertheless this strict Union with one particular Person, is a formal dis-union from the rest. He takes notice also of this, yet more precisely, in his first Sermon of the Institution of Monks, where descending more to particulars, he says, *† If any one be found, who upon any account whatsoever either of Kindred or any thing else, seems to have a greater tie or affection to one Religious more than to another, he must be punish'd, as one who do's an injury to common Charity.* He add's also, the reason in the same place, and still more expressly in the following Sermon; where he explicates the injury we do in this to a Religious Community: * *Whoever, says he, loves one of his Brothers better than another, by this alone he shews he do's not perfectly love the rest; and consequently offends others, and injures the whole Community.* But if God be so sensible of one offence to a particular Person, that he says, *Whosoever touches him, touches the Apple of his Eye*, how displeas'd will he be at the offence against a whole Community? Wherefore the same Saint expressly forbids all his Religious, to have any particular tie, affection, or familiarity, more with one than another, *† For fear of giving any one the least occasion of offence, and will have us, in imitation of the Goodness of God, * Who makes the Sun shine as well upon the Good as the Bad, and makes it Rain upon the Just and Unjust:*

I i 2

That

*† Basil. in Const.
Monast. ca. 30.*

*† Quod si quis
inventus fue-
rit, qui majori
quodam animi
propensione,
Monachum
fratrem, vel
propinquum,
vel alium
quemvis, qua-
vis de causa
videatur dili-
gere, hunc
castigare ope-
tebit, ut in-
jurium publi-
cæ charitati,
Serm. 1. de In-
stit. Monach.*

** Qui enim
unum aliquem
magis quam
ceteros dili-
git, is quod
non perfecte
ceteros dili-
gat, de seipso
inditio est.*

*Id. serm. 2.
Zachar. 2. 8.*

*† Nemini
dantes ullam
offensionem.
2 Cor. 6. 3.*

** Qui solem
suum oriri facit
super bonos & malos,
& pluit super
justos & in-
justos.*

Matth. 5. 45.

*Bagl. ferm. 2.
de Injst. Men.*

That we shou'd have an equal Charity for all our Brethren. He adds, that these particular friendships in Religion, are a continual Seed of Envy, Suspensions, Distrusts, and Enmities; and give occasion of Divisions, Cabals, and Secret Assemblies; which are the destruction and ruin of Religion. For these, one discovers his particular designs; another speaks of the judgments he has made; a third opens the subjects of his complaints; a fourth reveales those secrets he shou'd not speak of. In these Cabals also they murmur, speak ill one of another, betray all sorts of defects, and spare not even the Superior himself; and by a most unhappy contagion they presently communicate all that is bad one to another. Infinite, such kind of particular friendships as these, cause the breach of many Rules, and very often, moving 'em to follow the inclinations of their friend, they cease not to commit many things contrary to their Duty and Profession.

† Familiaritates ac colloquia ejusmodi haud exiguum detrimentum pariunt animæ.
*S. Eph. tom. 1.
p. 51.*

Saint *Ephrem* speaking of this subject, says, that † *These kinds of friendships and ties, bring great prejudice to the Soul*: Wherefore we must avoid 'em with a great deal of care, and act upon this principle; that in Religion we must have no particular friend, with whom we entertain any familiarities, that may prejudice the Community. Our friendships must be all Spiritual; they must not be founded upon Flesh and Blood, or whatsoever other Human foundation; but in God alone; and as we are all of us Children of God, and Brethren of JESUS CHRIST, we must also equally Love one another, without suffering our Hearts, which must be ty'd to none but God, to have any particular affection for Creatures. We Read in the Chronicles of the Order of Saint *Francis*, that a Holy Religious Man Nam'd Brother *John de Luques*, very carefully avoided all sorts of conversations, and particular friendships; and that another Religious, who had a great esteem and affection for him, and had profitted very much by his conversation, complaining one day to him of his manner of proceeding, and asking him why he carry'd himself so coldly towards his friends. 'Tis for your good that I do so, answer'd the Servant of God, for thereby I shall be more useful to those, who also desire my good; for all particular friendships are so many amusements, that serve only to turn me from God, and consequently do hurt to us both.

3. p. l. 5. ca.
49. Hist. Ord.
Min.

CHAP. XIX.

Of the second sort of friendships we ought to avoid.

THERE is another sort of particular friendship, which differs from the former, because it has a different end; but 'tis often no less hurtful to the good of a Community, and to Union and Fraternal Charity than the former: And 'tis when any one desirous to distinguish himself from the rest of the Community, to be advanc'd in employments, and to be had in consideration and esteem, do's unite and joyn himself to those, whom he thinks able to assist him to compass his ends. *Cassian* says, that the great distempers of the Soul, are like those of the Body, form'd by degrees. Wherefore I shall now explicate how this distemper forms it self in the Mind of a young Religious, how it enters in, and by what means it afterwards comes to corrupt and destroy him. A Religious Man for example having ended his Novitship, wherein by the Mercy of God, he had considerably advanc'd himself in Vertue, leaves it with a high esteem and great affection for Spiritual things; and from thence is sent to a Colledge, there to finish his Studies; from which time throu' the friendship he has contracted, he begins to relent in his Spiritual exercises, either he cuts off part of 'em, or makes 'em out of custom, after a negligent manner; and hereby he gathers no fruit for his advancement in Perfection. Thus he continues for some time, and as on the one side he wants his Spiritual Armes, by reason he acquits himself so ill in these exercises of Piety; and on the other side, puffing up his Mind with the Knowledge that he gets, it happens that the esteem for human Learning and reputation, gains upon him daily, and encreases insensibly in him; the love of Humility and Vertue grows less. Behold this is the Gate throu' which all disorders commonly enter; this is that which turns Young Religious Persons out of the good way they were in, against which they cannot have too great a precaution. By little and little they permit

*Cassian. coll. 6.
Ab. Theod.*

1 Cor. 8. 1.

permit, that the esteem they before had for Humility, Mortification, Obedience, and whatever else concerns their Spiritual progress, be destroy'd in them: And are daily more and more prepossess'd with the merit and esteem of Learning, and of the advantage there is, in making themselves able Men; and they imagine that 'tis by this means they must advance and recommend themselves. Afterwards they begin to take their measures how to arrive to the end they propose to themselves; they do all they can to gain the esteem of such as pass for Wise Men; they think of nothing else, but how to defend well, how to come off with Honor and Applause in any Publick Action, and aspiring after nothing but such things as these, they continually seek occasion to make themselves appear, even perhaps, to the lessening the Worlds opinion of the Knowledge and Learning, of those that dispute with them. From whence going still farther, they endeavour to gain the good Will of those, they imagine may be able to serve 'em, and maintain their esteem with Superiors, contracting a particular Friendship with 'em, only upon account of gaining reputation, whereby to promote themselves, and gain the favor of others in all occurrences.

This is one of the most pernicious friendships that can happen in Religious, and which is most opposite to Union and Fraternal Charity. For what can we imagine to be worse, than to see Ambition creep into our SOCIETY? And to hear it sayd, that every one must take care of himself, and help himself the best he can; and that we must govern our selves in Religion as in the World, and consequently must set our selves out, and make it our own business, if we desire not to be layd aside, or be forgotten and condemn'd. God forbid that such discourses as these shou'd ever be held amongst us, and that we shou'd in Religion meet with such unhappy Persons, who begin to spread about such Poyson as this, in the Hearts of such as live in all Candor and Innocency. These kinds of sentiments are far from the Spirit of our Institute, and Religious Simplicity: And 'tis for this reason, that Saint Ignatius so recommends to us in his Constitutions, that we shou'd apply our selves to solid Vertues and Spiritual things, and to make a greater esteem of 'em than of Human Learning, and of all other Talents either Natural or Acquir'd. Take heed therefore of letting your self be seduc'd by the Old Serpent,

and

and from persuading your self that in breaking God's Commandments, and in eating the forbidden Fruit, * *You shall become as God's*: Take care of believing that hereby you shall be honor'd and esteem'd, tho' he tells you so, and promises you never so much; for he lyes, as he is wont to do; and if you believe him, you will in the end gain nothing but Contempt and Confusion. But if you follow the path of Vertue, and prefer your Spiritual advancement before all other things, you will profit in all kinds, because God then pouring down upon you in great abundance, all sorts of his Graces and Favors, you will be better able to acquire at the same time, both the Perfection you aspire to, and the Honor also you look not after; whereby you will equally be esteem'd both by God and Man.

We have a great example of this in the third Book of the Kings. Where the Holy Scripture recounts that God appearing to *Salomon*, bid him ask whatsoever he desir'd, and he shou'd obtain it. And *Salomon* having demanded the Spirit of Wisdom and Prudence, † *This Petition*, says the Scripture, *so pleas'd our Lord, that he sayd to Salomon, because you have begg'd of me a thing of this Nature, and have not ask'd a long Life, nor great Riches nor the Death of your Enemies; but have only desir'd Wisdom to be the better able to judge, I grant you what you have desir'd; I give you the Spirit of Wisdom and Understanding, in such a manner, that none ever had the like before you, nor shall any Person ever have the same after you*. But that which makes particularly for our purpose, is, that the choice which *Salomon* made in asking Wisdom, was so pleasing to God, that he not only gave him the Wisdom he ask'd, but also other advantages he had not demanded. * *I give you also*, says he, *other things that you did not ask me, as Riches and Glory, and these after so ample a manner, that not any King in past Ages ever equal'd you*. Thus will God deal with you, if you make a good choice; if you apply your self to ask true Wisdom, that is to say, such Vertues as are truly Christian and Religious; he will assuredly grant 'em; because you cannot make a more welcome Petition: And he will also do more yet, and procure that you shall be esteem'd and honor'd, by your Brethren. We see every day by experience, that those who take this way, do equally

* Eritis sicut
Dii. Gen. 3. 7.

† Placuit ergo
sermo coram
Domino, quod
Salomon postu-
lasset huiusce-
modi rem. Et
dixit Dominus
Salomoni :
Quia postulasti
verbum hoc,
& non petisti
tibi dies mul-
tos, nec di-
vicias, aut a-
nimas inimi-
corum tuo-
rum, sed pos-
tulasti tibi sa-
pientiam, ad
discernendum
iudicium :
Ecce feci tibi
secundum ser-
mones tuos,
& dedi tibi cor
sapientis, & in-
telligens in
tantum, ut
nullus ante te
similis tui fue-
rit, nec post
te surrecturus
sit.
3 Reg. 3. 10.
& seq.

* Sed & hæc
quæ non pos-
tulasti, dedi
tibi, divicias
scilicet &
gloriam, ut
nemo fuerit,
& similis tui,
in regibus
cunctis retro
diebus.
Ibid.

† Qui se humiliat, exaltabitur.
Luc. 14. 11.

equally gain both the Grace of God, and esteem of Men. For the Promise of JESUS CHRIST is infallible. † *He who humbles himself shall be exalted.* The more you shall debase your self, the more you shall be exalted; and glory is annex'd to Sanctity of Life, as a shadow is to the Body, which never follows you more, than when you fly from it. Those on the other side who feed upon the Air like *Camilions*; who nourish and puff up themselves with Vain-glory, the more they seek the esteem and approbation of Men, the less they obtain it: And 'twill happen, that even what they thought wou'd most have contributed to their elevation, will serve only to debase 'em, and they will fall into disgrace by the same ways, whereby they hop'd to have gain'd esteem and reputation. For they'll be presently known for Proud and disquiet Persons, who are good for nothing but to trouble the Peace of Religion; and then there will want nothing else, to make an end of covering 'em with confusion, but to cut 'em off, as rotten Members, for fear they shou'd infect and corrupt others.

* Ego quidem sum Pauli :
Ego autem Apollo : Ego vero Cephas.
1 Cor. 1. 12.

But to return to our Subject, I say, that as in Religion we must strip our selves intirely of all kind of Ambition; so we must do the like of all particular Friendships, contracted upon this account; we must not tie our affections to any one in particular, nor give occasion to have it sayd amongst us, * *For my part, I am for Paul, for mine, I am for Apollo, and I am for Cephas.* We must not be for one Person more than another; we must only stick close to the Superior; 'tis with him alone we must be United, but a particular Union with any one else, must not be entertain'd. In Religion we have nothing to do with God-fathers or Protectors; we need not make our court to any one, nor Insinuate our selves into their favor, by Flatteries: And as we did not enter into Religion to make our Fortune, but work our Salvation; so in it we ought not to have any other pretention but this. Be a good Religious, apply your self seriously to your duty, and to that which regards the end for which you renounc'd and quitted the World, and you will have no business, but what belongs to God and his Service. Only those who live after this manner, are able to find peace and comfort in Religion: The others are never content or enjoy any repose; and they themselves experience and confess it to be so. A Religious Man ought to be asham'd, to pass for a Man.

Man that seeks Patrons, and endeavours to Insinuate himself into the grace and favor of this or the other Person, to be supported by them; for 'tis a sign he finds himself very weak, that he is not alone able to keep up or maintain himself: A House that wants a prop is in danger to fall, and a Tree also that must be held up by poles, shews that 'tis very weak, and has not yet taken deep Root in the Earth. After the same manner, if you take supporters, if you want People to hold you up; you are still very weak, and are very little Rooted or Grounded in Vertue, or even in Religion it self. Wherefore Father *Aquaviva* General of our SOCIETY, particularly admonishes our Young Religious, not to seek the support or protection of the Ancients; and recommends particularly to the Ancients not to take upon 'em the protection of any Person in particular. They must not also desire or seek, that any should make their court to them, in order to help or serve themselves with their Authority; nor offer their service or protection to others; and much less look upon it as an honor, to have many Persons address themselves to them; or be offended if they are backwards herein, imagining that they neglect and undervalue them, and perhaps find fault with their Brother, upon this account for being too arrogant and too reser'd. Who is so far from being culpable in this, that he deserves to be prais'd for it, and 'tis in this that he lives according to that disingagement and liberty of Spirit, which we ought to have in Religion: To act otherwise is to imitate those of the World, and to govern our selves according to it's Maxims. But if any one makes his complaint to you upon this account, he complains of what is Vertuous, and of that, which as long as you remain a good Religious, you ought to be estrang'd from, as being contrary to the sentiments of Religion; and God grant they may have never a greater occasion than this, to complain of your conduct.

Claud. Aquaviva, in Institut. Scolast. §. 3.

C H A P. XX.

Of the third sort of Tie or Union, very Prejudicial to Religion.

THE third sort of Tie or Friendship, is still worse than the two former, and far more contrary to Union and Fraternal Charity: By this Tie or Union, we understand that which is made, when any particular Persons Cabal together, to change the Institute of Religion, and such other things, as are piously ordain'd and establish'd therein. That which Saint Bernard says upon these Words of the Canticles: † *The Children of my Mother fought against me*, is very much to our purpose. The Spouse by these Words makes her complaint, in the Name of the Church, of the Evil she had suffer'd from her Children: * 'Tis not, says this great Saint, *that she did not very well remember, all that the Jews, Gentils, and Tyrants had made her suffer; but that which she most of all Lamented, and which touch'd her most sensibly, and what she believ'd was with the greatest care imaginable to be avoided, was the internal and domestick War, as I may call it.* We must apply this to the Religion, into which we are enter'd; which being one of the principal Members of the Church, it follows the steps thereof: My Dear Children, says she, are revolted and risen up against me, those I have with so much care and pains brought up and instructed, to the end they might fight against the World, and Convert Souls to God, have turn'd the Armes I gave 'em, against my self; and us'd 'em to make War against me their Mother. Where behold and judge, whether this be not a very sensible Affliction: But as sensible as it is, yet we must not wonder that such sorts of Persecutions as these, happen to us. Because Saint Francis in his Life time, saw his Order expos'd to the same difficulty: And the Holy Catholick Church, even whilst the Apostles liv'd, was not exempted

† Bern. Serm. 29. sup. Cant. Cant. 1. 6. Filii Matris meæ pugnaverunt contra me.

* Sed perfectio id expressius plangit, quod & sentit differentius, quodque vigilantius nobis cavendum existimat, malum utique interitum atque domesticum. Ibid.

exempted from the like Persecution of her own Children; who rose up against her, and by their errors endeavour'd her Destruction. The Members must follow their Head, which is JESUS CHRIST; he has led 'em the way, throu' Labors and Sufferings; therefore they must follow throu' the same; to the end that as Gold is refin'd in the Crucible, so the Elect may be try'd and purifi'd by Labors and Persecutions. † 'Tis necessary, says Saint Paul, *that there shou'd be Heresies, to the end that those of sound Principles may be the better known amongst you*; * 'Tis necessary, says JESUS CHRIST, *that Scandal shou'd happen; but woe be to those, who are the cause thereof*.

Saint Basil speaks very severely against these sorts of Leagues. † If any of you, says he, *voluntarily separating themselves from others, make particular Cabals in the Society you are of, these sorts of ties are very Pernicious: 'Tis a Sedition, 'tis a Divisjon; and we cannot but judge amiss of those who are united after this manner*; because under the pretence of Reformation, under the shadow of the good and profit of Religion; they think upon nothing else, but how to change it's Rules, and molest the Order of it's first Institute. Wherefore, he wou'd have such as these first of all admonish'd, and reprehended in secret; and afterwards in presence of all their Brethren as the Gospel directs us; but if all this, says he, do's no good, * *Look upon 'em as Heathens and Publicans*. Separate 'em totally from the rest, as those who are infected with the Plague, for fear this Contagion spreads it self, and infects the whole Body. 'Tis the very same that Saint Ignatius ordains in his Constitutions; which is also conformable to Saint Paul's Spirit, who Writing to the Galatians, † *God grant, says he, that those who trouble you, may be cut off from amongst you*.

'Tis so very easie a thing to know how great this Evil is, of which we now speak, and how prejudicial it is to Religion; that 'tis sufficient only to set it before you, to let you see it's Enormity, and seems not worth our while, to trouble our selves in exaggerating it. But because this matter is of very great importance, I will dilate my self somewhat more upon it, and hint at those reasons, which I believe will be sufficient, not only to excite in us a detestation of these sorts of Unions, but also make us conceive a just horror of 'em, and

† Oportet, & hereses esse, ut & qui probati sunt, manifesti fiant in vobis.

1 Cor. II. 19.
† Necessè est, ut veniant scandala: verumtamen vix homini illi, per quem scandalum venit!
Matth. 18. 7.

† Si qui à reliquis sua sponte abscissi, disjunguntur, in cœtu, cœtum efficiant, vitiosa hujusmodi amicitia conciliatio est: seditio est, & divisio, & eorum qui sic cœvunt, improbitatis indicium.
Basil. in cons. Men. c. 30.

* Sic tibi sicut ethnicus, & publicanus.
Matth. 18. 17.

P. 2. Const. c. 2. D.

† Utinam, & abscindantur, qui vos turbant!
Ad Gal. 5. 12.

always confirm and strengthen us more and more to maintain our Institute. Religious Societies are not the invention of Men; but are an effect of the particular disposition and order of the Divine Providence; so that the things that are Instituted, whether they be for the conservation, or for the encrease of these Societies, must not be regarded, only as Human inventions; and as the project of some particular Person, but look'd upon as the projects and inventions of God himself. For at the same time that God chose, Saint *Francis*, Saint *Dominick*, Saint *Ignatius*, and other Saints to be Founders of those Orders which they Instituted; at the same time he Inspir'd 'em with those means they made use of to Establish 'em. He has done also more than this; for * *The Works of God are always Perfect*; which his Institutions wou'd not be, if they shou'd be wanting in any thing; and because the Founders of themselves cou'd not foresee all things that shou'd happen; he therefore discover'd to them whatsoever he saw necessary for the Maintaining, and for the Spiritual Progress of their Orders. Thus we see in the Life of Saint *Ignatius*, that to a very important Point that concern'd the Establishment of our SOCIETY, he made the same answer, that Father *James Laynez* did, tho' far separate from him, concerning the same subject; which clearly evidences, that in more essential matters, which are as the Foundation of our Institute, God who is the first Author, has Reveal'd or Inspir'd all things to him, whom he has chosen to be our Head, and chief Founder after himself. The manner also which Saint *Ignatius* us'd in framing the Constitutions which he left in Writing, is also a proof of this truth; for how many Prayers, how many Tears must each Word have cost him? Since only for the determining, whether Protest Houses shou'd have any particular Rents, design'd for the Fabrick of their Churches, we Read that for forty Days together, he offer'd his Mass and gave himself to more fervent Prayer, than ordinarily he was accusom'd to use. By this 'tis easie to perceive, that these his Constitutions were very well weigh'd, and consulted with God, and that he receiv'd great lights therein, both to choose and resolve upon, what was most pleasing to the Divine Majesty: But tho' what I have sayd is sufficient to prove our proposition, † *Yet we have still a greater Testimony than this*, and to the end it be not objected that

* Quia perfecta Dei sunt opera.
Deut. 32. 4.

Lib. 5. c. 1.
Vita S. Ign.

Lib. 4. c. 2.

† Habemus testimonium majus his.
Joan. 5. 36.

that we give Testimony of our selves, 'tis good that I propose 'em here; because 'tis of very great consequence to have this principle well establish'd.

The Rule of Saint *Francis*, not being yet approv'd, but by the living Voice of *Innocent* the III. And this great Saint being about to represent this to the Pope, to obtain a Bull for it's Confirmation: He retir'd with two of his Companions to a Mountain near *Reate*; Fasting there with Bread and Water for forty Days, and persevering Day and Night in continual Prayer, he there compos'd his Rule, according to what God pleas'd to inspire him; and having brought it with him from the Mountain, he gave it to Brother *Elias*, his Vicar General, to keep, a very prudent and experienc'd Man as to Worldly Affairs: Who finding it was Founded upon too great a Contempt of Temporal things; and too Excessive a Poverty and Humility, lost it on purpose, to the end that this Rule not having been confirm'd, another shou'd be made, more suitable to his Genius. Saint *Francis* who desir'd rather to follow the Will of God, than of Man, and wou'd not rely upon the Sentiments of Worldly Wisdom, return'd to the same Mountain to make another retreat for forty Days, and to obtain by his Fasting and Prayer, that God wou'd vouchsafe to Inspire him anew to Compose another Rule. Brother *Elias* knowing his Intention, propos'd to himself the hindering this design, and for this effect, having assembl'd some of the chief and ablest Men of their Order: He told 'em that the Saint wou'd make so strict a Rule, that it wou'd be impossible to observe it. Whereupon they begg'd of him, that as Vicar General, he wou'd go to the Saint from them, to let him know that if he persisted in making too strict a Rule, they pretended that they were not at all oblig'd to observe it. But Brother *Elias* not daring to charge himself alone with such a Commission, offer'd to go along with the rest, so all of 'em going together towards the Mountain, when they came to it, and approach'd near the Cell where the Saint was in Prayer, Brother *Elias* call'd him. The Saint who knew him by his Voice, went out to him, and perceiving so many Religious assembl'd together, ask'd him what they desir'd? They are, answer'd *Elias*, the chief Members of the Order, who hearing you are about to make a new Rule, and fearing you shou'd make it too Austere, they come to protest

In Hist. Min.
I. p. lib. I. c. 9.

protest to you, that if it be so, you may keep it your self, but as for them, they will not follow it. The Saint hearing these Words, cast himself upon his Knees, and lifting up his Eyes to Heaven cry'd out, Lord did I not tell you, that these wou'd not believe me? And presently they heard a Voice from Heaven that sayd; Francis, *there is nothing in the Rule that is yours, all that is in it is Mine, and I will have it observ'd, according to the Letter, according to the Letter, according to the Letter, without Gloss, without Gloss, without Gloss. I know what Human Weakness is capable of, and what succours I can and will give; let those that will not observe this Rule quit your Order, and permit others to observe it.* Whereupon Saint Francis turning himself towards the Religious. Have you heard, says he, have you heard, have you heard? Do you desire that I shou'd obtain of God, to have the Words repeated again to you? Hereupon Brother *Elias* and all the rest Trembling, and even out of themselves for fear, full of Confusion for their Fault, return'd without making any reply. The Saint apply'd himself again to Compose his Rule, and made the very same, with that which our Lord had before Reveal'd to him; which being done, he carry'd it to *Honorius* the III. and the Pope saying, he found it very hard to be put in practice, by reason of the great Austerity and extream Poverty, to which it oblig'd; Holy Father, reply'd the Saint, I have not put in this whole Rule, so much as one Word of my own, but 'tis *JESUS CHRIST* who has Compos'd it; and as it comes from him who only knows all that is necessary for the Salvation of Souls, for the advantage of Religious, and for the Maintenance of this Order; and that he only sees, as present to him, all things that shall happen to his Church in General, and to this Order in particular; I ought not consequently to change any thing he has once Establish'd. The Pope being then touch'd by a particular Inspiration from Heaven, Confirm'd the Saints Rule, and caus'd a Bull to be made for that end. Behold then in what manner God is wont to prescribe to Founders of Religious, all that they are to Insert into their Rules. 'Tis after this manner also that he prescrib'd the same to Saint *Ignatius*, of which also we have a more Authentick proof, than of the precedent Passage: Because there are two Apostolical Bulls
of

of Gregory the XIII. which make particular mention thereof, in which, after having in the one and the other, first reported what our Institute is, and particularly those things that seem'd to have the greatest difficulty; and because he knew several Persons, and even some of the SOCIETY wou'd stick at 'em, he expressly adds in formal terms. * Wherefore the same Ignatius, by Divine Inspiration, judg'd that *was after this manner he ought to Dispose the Body of the SOCIETY, into it's Members, into such Order, and into those Degrees as are in it.* Can any one more clearly declare, that the Rule was Inspir'd to him by God himself?

* Quapropter Societatis corpus, in sua membra ordinem, & gradus idem Ignatius divino instinctu, ita duxit disponendum.

This being then suppos'd, let us come now to the Point, and discuss it with those, who make these particular Assemblies, to alter the Institute of our SOCIETY, and such things, as are Establish'd in it by our Holy Founder. Do you not perceive that 'tis an unsupportable Pride for a particular Person, to presume of himself, out of his one Judgment, to go so far as to dare to say, that the Way Saint Ignatius has mark'd out in his Constitutions, is not good; 'twere better we shou'd take another way that seems to me far better; without doubt, 'twou'd be a difficult thing to frame to ones self, so great a folly as this; and yet this may be still more easily understood by another kind of folly; which the following example will afford us light, wherewithal to perceive more clearly what we have sayd of the first. Heresie is without doubt one of the greatest Evils, and the most Enormous of Sins, that can happen in the Church of God. I do not at present examin whether there can be any other Sin greater than this; because 'tis certain that to hate God formally, is still a crime of a greater Magnitude. But since 'tis very seldom, that we meet with such sorts of Sins as these amongst Men; and that in Hell only, such Sins are committed; I say, that of all Sins to which Man is commonly subject, Heresie is look'd upon to be the greatest; by which we separate our selves from the Church. And without doubt this opinion is very well grounded; for to say nothing, of Heresies overturning the Foundation of Christian Religion, which is Faith; and without recounting many other reasons which are alledg'd; is it not a Pride that even passes Imagination, to have so great an opinion of our selves, and to be so obstinate

in our own opinion, that we inconsideratly believe, what ever comes once into our Heads, to be a greater truth, than all that is decided by the *Roman Church*; approv'd by so many Councils; follow'd by so many Persons, Eminent both for Sanctity and Learning; cemented together by the Blood of so many Thousand Martyrs; and confirm'd by so great a number of Miracles? What folly can be greater than this, what Pride more insupportable, and what greater Blindness can one conceive, than to prefer before all these, either our own Visions or Fancies, or those of *Luther*; and in good earnest to believe, an Apostate, a Vicious Man, a Lewd, Debauch'd, Sacrilegious Wretch, before God? We do very nigh as bad as this, when we prefer our own particular Judgments, before his, whom God has chosen to be the Head and Founder of our SOCIETY; and persuade our selves, that the Way we have found out is far better, than that which was Inspir'd and Reveal'd by God himself; this Presumption is truly Diabolical. What? Has God hid from Saint *Ignatius*, whom he made choice of to be the Head and Founder of the SOCIETY, the way which ought to be taken to Govern it well, and has discover'd it to you? Is not this alone sufficient to convince you, that 'tis a deceit and illusion of the Devil, who would make use of you as his Instrument to wage War against the SOCIETY, of which he is an irreconcilable Enemy, and to disturb the Peace and Union thereof, as he made use of an Heretick to disturb the Peace of the Church? But you perhaps will tell me you desire nothing else but the Reform thereof. You deceive your self; and the Devil as Father of Lies, blinds you with a specious pretence. 'Tis not a will or desire to Reform the SOCIETY, but 'tis a will to Destroy and Ruin it, and let what I say be well taken notice of; for 'tis no exaggeration, but a very clear and infallible Truth. We Reform a Religion, when, after 'tis fallen from it's first Institution, we endeavour to Restore it to the Purity of it's first Origine, and cause the Rules that the Founder left in it, to be carefully observ'd: This kind of Reform is Holy and Commendable, and has been practis'd with success in many Orders, which have been re-establi'd in the Innocency and Vigour of their Origen. But to desire to change the Ancient Institute; to quit the Path which our Founder, Inspir'd by God, has taught us, and to
desire

desire to take a different one; this is not to desire to Reform an Order, but to destroy and overthrow it; this is to desire to Build upon it's ruins, one after your own mode and fancy, - as Brother *Elias* pretended to do, in the Order of Saint *Francis*. This kind of thought, cannot come from the Spirit of God, and can be nothing else but the Effect and Suggestion of the Devil.

When in the Council of *Trent*, they spoke of Reforming Religious Orders, and when thereupon they had made some very profitable and Holy Decrees; Father *James Laynez*, General of our SOCIETY, represented to the Fathers of the Council, that these sorts of Decrees, seem'd not to have place in what regarded the SOCIETY of JESUS, because it was a new Body distinguish'd from other Ancient Bodies of Religion, and had it's way of Government particular to it self, and Approv'd also by the Holy See. That by the Mercy of God, the SOCIETY had not at all relented from the exact performance of it's Rule, and first Institute; and therefore if they comprehended it in these Decrees, it wou'd not be to Reform, but to Destroy it. This reason was lik'd and approv'd by the Council, and thereupon they made this Answer, which is set down in the twenty-fifth Session in these terms. † *Nevertheless, the Intention of the Council by these Decrees, is not to Innovate any thing in the Religion of Clericks of the SOCIETY of JESUS, nor to hinder it from continuing to serve God and the Church according to their Pious Institute, Approv'd by the Holy See.* Wherefore the Council of *Trent*, wou'd not undertake to change any thing, in the Conduct and Institution that God had prescrib'd the SOCIETY of JESUS, by means of Saint *Ignatius*; but on the contrary it wou'd hereby Approve and Confirm it as the Holy See had done. But you, out of I know not what reasons and Human considerations, that you have admitted into your thoughts, darè meddle to go about the alteration and change of the Constitutions?

Marcellus Cervinus Cardinal of the *Holy Cross*, who afterwards was Pope by the Name of *Marcellus II.* had a quite different esteem of our Institute, and bore a far different respect to our Founder. A little before he was exalted to the Supreme Dignity, he had a great Dispute with Father *Olavins*, one of the most famous Divines of the SOCIETY, upon that part of our Constitutions, which forbids any one whosoever amongst us to receive any Dignity out of the SOCIETY, if not oblig'd by the Pope to accept of it, by a precept of of Obedience

Tom. I. L I under

† Per hæc tamen Sancta Synodus non intendit aliquid innovare, aut prohibere quin Religio Clericorum Societatis Jesu, juxta primum eorum Institutum, à Sancta Sede Apostolica approbatum, Domino, & ejus Ecclesie infervere possit.
Conc. Trid. Sess. 25. Decreto de Reformatione. c. 16.

Lib. 3. c. 15.
Vita S. Ignatii.

10. p. Cont.
§. 6.

under Sin. The General himself having no such Power to oblige 'em to it, but by order from His Holiness; and this Constitution is so Religiously observ'd amongst us, that every one who is Profess'd, makes a particular Vow to observe it. The Cardinal therefore pretended, that the SOCIETY wou'd do a greater Service to God's Church, by giving it good Bishops, than by giving it good Preachers and Confessors; and that the fruit that wou'd proceed from thence, wou'd be so much greater, in as much as the Power of a Bishop, is greater than that of a single Priest. He also alledg'd many other reasons upon this subject, to which Father *Olavins* answer'd in substance, that the greatest Service the SOCIETY cou'd do the Church, was to maintain it self in the Humility and Purity of it's first Institute, thereby to be the longer capable to serve it well. And when infine, the Cardinal, prepossest that his reasons were of more force, persisted still in his Opinion. If my reasons, reply'd Father *Olavins*, are not sufficient to convince and move you to change your Opinion, at least the sole Authority of our Founder, is sufficient to convince and make me believe, that his Opinion was far the better; I now yield to you, reply'd the Cardinal; and confess you have reason; for tho' it seemes to me, that I have reason on my side, yet the Authority of your Founder, is of far greater weight in this occasion, than all the reasons in the World; or to say better, 'tis reason it self, that wou'd have it to be as it is. For since he was chosen by God to Establish in his Church, such an Order as yours is, to extend and spread it self over the whole World, for the good of Souls; and to Govern it with so much Wisdom and Prudence as it do's; 'tis also to be presum'd, and it cannot be thought otherwise, but that God himself Reveal'd to him, the manner he wou'd be serv'd by this Order, and after what manner it ought to be Conserv'd and Maintain'd. Now if so great a Person as this, had so great a Submission, even against the Lights of his own Reason; with how much juster Title, ought we who are Religious, and consequently Children of Obedience, to submit our Judgments, when we perceive any thing to be Establish'd by the Rules or Constitutions of the SOCIETY; or that 'twas ordain'd by him, whom God gave us for our Head and Founder? But since all his Constitutions, all his Rules are also Approv'd and Confirm'd by all Popes since his time, and by the Sacred Council of *Trent*; and the SOCIETY, since we have observ'd 'em, has receiv'd so many Graces and

Favors

Favors from God, and produc'd such great Fruits in the Conversion of Souls, who is there after all this, that dares have the confidence or boldness, even so much as in thought, to desire to alter the Statutes and Constitutions? * *Transgressi not*, says the Wise Man, *the Ancient bounds that your fore-fathers have Establish'd.*

* Né transgressiarios terminos antiquos, quos posuerunt Patres tui. Prov. 22. 28.

But to the end that the Presumption of those, that may form or entertain a thought of such an undertaking, may still be more crush'd, by what is of greatest and most inviolable force and Authority in the Church, Gregory the XIII. in his Bull, which begins *Ascendente Domino*, after having Approv'd and Confirm'd the new Institute of the SOCIETY, Establish'd the form for their Conduct, and some other Points in particular, which might give occasion to some disquiet Spirits to make difficulties; he expressly forbids all Persons of what condition or preeminence soever (under pain of Excommunication *Lata Sententia*, and incapacity or privation of Office or Benefice, *ipso facto*, without any Declaration) to Impugne or contradict even the least thing in the Institute, or Constitutions of the SOCIETY, either directly or indirectly, whether out of colour or pretence of Dispute, or out of a desire to inform themselves more clearly of the Truth: And in case any doubt shou'd present it self upon this Subject, he declares that his Will is, they shou'd consult the Holy See, or the General of the SOCIETY, or such as the General shall upon this account appoint; and that no other Person must intermeddle therein. Gregory the XIV. ordain'd the self-same thing, in a more ample manner, and in more forcible and express Terms, in his Bull which he put forth upon the same Subject, which begins, *Ecclesia Catholica*. Let 'em consider, says he, *that it wou'd be a very great prejudice to Spiritual Discipline, and Perfection, and a great disturbance to Religious Orders, if that which was piously appointed by their Founders, and very often receiv'd and approv'd by the same Religious Orders in their General Congregations, and which is moreover Establish'd and Confirm'd by the Holy See, shou'd under any pretence whatsoever, either come to be quite chang'd, or the least alter'd, or Impugn'd: Wherefore, we Renewing the Constitutions of our Predecessor Gregory the XIII. and Confirming all the Privileges contain'd therein, by these presents in Vertue of Holy Obedience, do forbid all Persons of what Estate or Condition soever, whether Ecclesiastick, Secular, or Religious, and even all of the same SOCIETY of JESUS, under pain of Excom-*

munication Latæ Sententiæ, and of Exclusion from all sorts of Charges or Ecclesiastical Dignities, and Privation of Active and Passive Voice, which penalties are ipso facto incur'd without any farther Intimation; wherefore we reserve the Decision and Appeal to the Holy and Apostolical See, either to Impugne, or Contradict any thing of the Institute, Constitutions, or Decrees of the SOCIETY, either directly or indirectly, under colour of any greater Good, Shadow of Zeal, or any other pretence whatsoever. To all which he yet adds a more Essential Point, which is, that he also forbids to propose any thing, or to offer any Memorial upon this matter or subject, to add, diminish, or change any thing in the Institute, unless to the Pope himself, either immediately, or by his Nuncio, or Apostolical Legate; or to the General, or to a General Congregation of the SOCIETY. Paul the VI. in a Bull Publish'd in the Year 1606. for the Confirmation of the Institute, and Privileges of the SOCIETY; makes particular mention of these two Constitutions of Gregory the XIII. and Gregory the XIV; and Approves and Confirms anew, what is contain'd in them. Wherefore we may very well perceive, in what a manner all sorts of things are founded and cemented together in the SOCIETY, since neither any Religious of the same Company, nor any other Religious; nor infine, any Clerick or Layick, of what Estate, Dignity, Condition or Preeminence soever, may or can undertake to alter any thing, without falling at the same instant, into these great Penalties, and incurring immediately the greater Excommunication. Let us now conclude with the same Words, wherewith Saint Paul ends the Second Epistle to the Corinthians; † For the rest Brethren, Rejoyce, be Perfect, encourage one another, be all of one Mind and Will, Live in Peace, and the God of Peace and Love will Eternally remain with you.

† De cætero, fratres, gaudete, perfecti estote, exhortamini, idem sapite, pacem habete, & Deus pacis, & dilectionis erit vobiscum. 2 Cor. 13. 11.



THE FIFTH TREATISE OF PRAYER.

CHAP. I.

Of the Merit and Excellency of Prayer.



SAINTE John, in the fifth and eighth Chapters of the *Apocalyps*, expresses admirably well the Excellency and Merit of Prayer; and he says in the eighth, * *That there came an Angel, and stood before the Altar, having in his hand a Thurible of Gold, to whom was giv'n a great quantity of Incense, to the end he shou'd offer up the Prayers of all the Saints upon the Altar of God, which was before the Throne of God; and the Smoke of the Incense of these Prayers, rais'd it self from the hand of the Angel, to the Presence of God.* Saint Chrysostom speaking of this passage, tell's us, that one proof of the Merit of Prayer, is, that in the Holy Scripture, 'tis alone compar'd to *Thymiama*, which was a composition of Incense of many admirable Perfumes: For as the sinell of well compos'd *Thymiama* is very delicious; so Prayer also (when well made)

is

* Et alius Angelus venit, & stetit ante Altare, habens thuribulum aureum, & data sunt illi incensa multa, ut daret de orationibus Sanctorum omnium super Altare aureum, quod est ante Thronum Dei. Et accendit fumus incensorum de orationibus Sanctorum de manu Angeli coram Deo.
Apoc. 8. 3. & 4.
Aug. serm. 13. sup. Matth. 10. op. imperfect.

is very acceptable to God, and gives great Joy to the Angels and Inhabitants of the Heavenly *Jerusalem*. Wherefore Saint *John* speaking of the twenty-four Elders, relates, † that *They had Golden Cups, full of Perfumes, which are the Prayers of Saints*. So that, says Saint *Austin*, * *What can be more excellent than Prayer? What is there more profitable in this Life? What more sweet to the Mind? And what in our whole Religion more sublime?* Saint *Gregory of Nisse* is of the same opinion; and says, † that *Of all things which we esteem in this Life, none ought to be preferr'd before Prayer.*

† Habentes Angeli phialas aureas plenas odoramentorum, quæ sunt orationes Sanctorum.

Apost. 1. 8.
* Quid est oratione praelarius? Quid vitæ nostræ utilius, quid animo dulcius? Quid in tota Religione sublimius?

S. Aug. tr. de mis. tom. 18. † Nihil ex his quæ per hanc vitam coluntur, & in pretio sunt, orationi præstat. Greg. Nic. de Or. Dominic.

Per. ser. 7. sup. Cant. & Ep. 78. ad Suggendum. Abb. S. Dionys.

Saint *Bernard*, the better to make us understand the Merit of it, says, that tho' 'tis certain the Angels are often effectually (but invisibly) present with God's Servants, to defend 'em from the deceits and ambushes of the Devil, and more and more to raise their thoughts and desires to God; yet nevertheless they more particularly favor us with this presence, when we are employ'd in Prayer. He proves this proposition by divers passages of Scripture; as by this, * *I will Sing Hymns to thee in the presence of the Angels*; and † *The Princes joining themselves to the Musicians went before, in the middle of Young Damsels, who Play'd upon Tymbrels*. Understanding by the Princes, the Angels, who join themselves to those that are in Prayer, as appears by these words of the Angel to *Toby*; * *When you were in Prayer, and pour'd forth Tears, I offer'd your Prayers to our Lord*. We see by this last passage, that Prayers scarce go out of the Mouth of him that Pray's, but presently the Angels who are by us, receive and present 'em to God. Saint *Hillary* also assures us, that † *The Angels preside at the Prayers of the Faithful, and continually offer 'em to God*. So that when we are in Prayer, we are surrounded by Angels, and in effect we perform their Office; exercising at present, what we must practice with 'em for an Eternity: Wherefore they already look upon us, as their Companions, and beforehand beholding us as in Heaven, filling up the places of their fallen Companions, favor us more particularly during our Prayer, than at other times.

Saint *Chrysostom* speaking of the excellency of Prayer, and desirous to let us see it's advantages; * *Consider, says he, to what a degree of happiness you are rais'd by Prayer, and how*

* In conspectu Angelorum Psallam tibi.

Psal. 137. 1.
† Principes conjuncti psallentibus, & in medio juvenum tymbalarum tymbalistrarum.

Psal. 67. 26.
* Quando orabas cum lacrymis, &c. ego obtuli orationem tuam Domino.

Tobie 12. 12.

† Angeli præsentunt fidelium orationibus, & eas quotidie Deo offerunt. Hilary. can. 18. in Massib.

* Considera quanta est tibi concessa felicitas, quanta

how great prerogatives are attributed to it. You thereby speak to God himself, you entertain your self and converse with JESUS CHRIST; you therein desire what pleases you, and you ask whatsoever you desire. There is no Tongue that is sufficiently able to express, of how great a value this Communication is, which Man has with God, and what profit it brings along with it: We see in the World, that those who ordinarily keep Company with Wise and Prudent persons, Reform and Improve their Minds and Judgments by their Conversation; if therefore they become Vertuous by frequenting Vertuous persons; what advantage may we not believe we gain, by a frequent Communication with God? † Approach him, says the Royal Prophet, and you shall be enlightned. In effect, with what lights, with what knowledge, must we not needs be fill'd? What good, what happiness must we not assuredly gain, by this kind of Commerce? Wherefore Saint Chrysostom assures us, that nothing can so much contribute to our progress in Vertue, as frequent Prayer, and Conversation with God; so that by this means the Heart of Man comes to be fill'd, and relish the most Noble Thoughts; and is enabl'd to raise it self above all Earthly things; and infine, becomes Spiritual and Holy, and in a manner transforms it self into God.

gloria attributa orationibus, fabulari cum Deo, cum Christo miscere colloquia, optare quod velis, quod desideras postulare.
Chrysost. lib. 2. de orat. Denm.

† Accedite ad eum, & illuminamini.
Psal. 53. 6.

Chrys. hom. de Orat.

CHAP. II.

Of the need we have of Prayer.

WE have but too much experience of the need we have of Prayer; and I wou'd to God that this experience were less frequent, than it is. But Man being subject to so many Frailties, finding himself encompass'd by so many Enemies, and standing in need of so many things, both for Soul and Body, ought to have a continual recourse to God, to Implore his assistance, and to tell him, as King Josaphat did, when the Ammonites and Moabites were come against him,

† Lord

† Cum igno-
remus quid
agere debeamus,
hoc solum habemus
residui, ut oculos
nostros dirigamus ad
te.

2 Paral. 20. 12.

* Quod est
tempus, in
quo ejus auxi-
lio non indige-
mus? In
omnibus igitur
rebus, causis, & ne-
gotiis exorandas
est protector Deus,
Superbum est

† Lord in this extremity to which I am reduc'd, not knowing what to do, the only remedy I have left, is to cast up my Eyes unto Thee. I know not says Pope Celestin, speaking of the importance of Prayer, how to say any thing better to you upon this subject, than what Zozimus my Predecessor sayd of it. * When is it that we stand not in need of the Divine Assistance? Wherefore in all sorts of occasions and affairs; let us always have recourse to his Protection; for it would be an insupportable Pride, should Man dare to presume to do, or to think he can do any thing of himself.

enim, ut natura humana aliquid de se presumat. Celest. I. c. 9. contr. Pelag.

5. Tb. 2. 2. q.
83. art. 2.

Damas. lib. 3.
fides. c. 24.
Aug. lib. 2. de
serm. Do. c. 7.
Easil. in Julian.
Mart.
Chrys. hom. 30.
in Genes.
Greg. 1. 1. Dial.
c. 8.

† Petite, &
accipietis;
querite, & in-
venietis; pul-
sate, & aper-
ietur vobis.
Omnis enim
qui petit, ac-
cipit; & qui
querit, inven-
it, & pulsanti
aperietur.
Matth. 7. 7.
c. 8.

Gen. 28. 12.

Saint Thomas intending to prove the necessity of Prayer, gives an excellent and most essential reason for it, which is taken out of the Doctrin of the Holy Fathers, and has this Truth for it's Foundation: That what God has from all Eternity determin'd to give unto Souls, he gives it in time, by the means and help of Prayer: For as 'tis the Order and Disposition of the Divine Providence, that Mankind shou'd Encrease and Multiply by means of Marriage; that the Earth shou'd become Fruitful by the care that is taken to Cultivate it; and lastly, that 'tis with Materials, and by the help of Work-men, that Buildings are rais'd; so 'tis, says he, the Order and Disposition of the Divine Providence, that by the means and help of Prayer, Souls shou'd obtain many Graces, and Lights. For this reason JESUS CHRIST sayd in the Gospel. † Ask, and it shall be giv'n you; Seek, and ye shall find; Knock, and it shall be open'd unto you: Because whosoever Ask's, Receives; who Searches, Find's; and the Door is Open'd, to him that Knock's. 'Tis therefore very easie to perceive the need we have, of having frequent recourse to Prayer; because 'tis the Channel throu' which JESUS CHRIST, Communicates his Favors, assists us in our Necessities, and enriches us with his Treasures: Some Saints say, that 'tis like a Chain of Gold, Fasten'd to Heaven, and hanging down to the very Earth, where-by the Graces of God descend to us, and we are Elevated and Rais'd up unto him. We may also say, that 'tis Jacob's Ladder, that reaches from Earth to Heaven, by which the Angels continually Ascend and Descend, to carry our Petitions to God, and bring back his Blessings unto

unto us. Saint *Austin* call's it the * *Key of Heaven*, and in effect, 'tis the Key that opens all it's Gates, and by which all the Coffers of the Cœlestial Treasures are open'd. He says also, † *That as Natural Food nourishes the Body, so the Word of God and Prayer, maintain, and nourish the Soul.*

tionibus interior homo nutritur, & pascitur. Id. lib. de salut. Monitis ad quendam comitem. c. 13.

But one of the things that still shews what esteem we ought to have for Prayer, is, that it becomes a very efficacious means to regulate our Life, and help us to surmount all those obstacles we are to meet with in the way of Virtue. Wherefore the Saints say, that the whole conduct of our Life, depends upon it; and that 'tis well or ill regulated, according to our well or ill acquitting our selves in the duty of Prayer. * *He who knows how to Pray as he shou'd, knows also how to live as he shou'd,* says Saint *Austin*. And Saint *Climacus* reports, that a Servant of God told him the following Words, which are very remarkable. That in the Morning he knew very well, how the rest of the Day wou'd pass; that is to say, that when he had made his Prayer well, all the rest of the Day corresponded to this good beginning; and when he had not well acquitted himself of this duty, he was disturb'd and out of order all the day after. 'Tis the same in order to our whole Life in general; for we often experience, that when we have made our Prayer well, we find our selves in a greater Peace and Tranquility than ordinary; and we find the joy of our Souls, as well as our Holy Resolutions encreas'd in us. But as soon as we come to Relent, or neglect our Prayer, we presently perceive the truth of what Saint *Bonaventure* says, that † *Without that, Religion is Dry, Imperfect, and near it's Ruin.* Tepidity presently comes upon us, the Soul by little grows Weak, and insensibly looses the Fervor and Courage it before had for Spiritual and Heavenly things: It's good desires and Holy resolutions are dissipated and vanish away; and bad inclinations come in their place, and are again enkindl'd. Infine, we come at last to please our selves in nothing but vain and unprofitable things, and to be transported with joy for such as are even ridiculous; and also fall into a shameful negligence: And what is still worse, the desire of Vain-glory, Anger, Envy, Ambition, and those

Tom. I.

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other

* Oratio justis
clavis est cœli.
Aug. serm. 126.

† Sicut ex
carnalibus
efficit alitur
caro, ita ex
divinis clo-
quitur, & ora-

* Recte novit
vivere, qui
recte novit
orare
*Aug. hom. 4.
ex 30.*

† Sine isto
studio omnis
Religio est
arida, imper-
fecta, & ad
ruinam prom-
pior.
*Bon. de progr.
Relig. c. 7.*

other dangerous Inclinations, which we thought we had overcome and extinguish'd, begin to revive anew in our Hearts, and bring disorder and corruption along with 'em.

The Abbot *Nilus*, says, that Prayer ought to be the Looking-glass of a Religious Person; 'tis in this we daily must at leasure take a view of our selves, both to know our faults, and the means how to mend 'em. 'Tis in this Mirror, that we consider the Resplendent Vertues of *JESUS CHRIST*, wherewith to Adorn and Embellish our Souls. * *A Religious Person*, says Saint *Francis*, ought to desire nothing so much, as to obtain the grace and gift of Prayer; for without this, we cannot hope to be able to make any progress in God's Service; and with it, there's nothing we may not promise our selves. 'Tis for this reason, that Saint *Thomas* of *Aquin* sayd, that a Religious Person without Prayer, was like a Souldier without Arms in time of Battel. And Saint *Thomas* de *Villanova*, was wont to say, that Prayer was to the Soul; as Natural heat is to the Stomack. And as without heat, 'tis impossible that Food shou'd do a Man any good, or even that he shou'd be able to live; whereas with the sayd heat he turns it into good juce and nourishment, which disperfes it self throu' our the whole Body, to furnish each part thereof with sufficient strength to perform it's Functions. In like manner our Spiritual Life, cannot subsist without Prayer; for 'tis Prayer, that gives us strength to perform all the Obligations of our Profession, and to profit as we shou'd do, even by the most troublesome accidents; 'tis this that makes us easily digest all injuries and hardships, and makes 'em become easie and supportable; so that there is nothing can happen to a Soul, of which it will not make it's profit and advantage. In fine, if we make good use of Prayer, we shall therein find a remedy for all our faults, and an assur'd help; and means to maintain our selves in the Vigour and Purity of Religion. For if perhaps you have not been faithful in the observance of your Rules; if you have given your self too much Liberty in any thing; or in fine, if you find some Passions, which were before in a manner asleep, that begin to awake anew in you; have recourse presently to Prayer, and by the Grace of God you will there find, a speedy and efficacious remedy for all things. But if you shou'd fall into a Remissness and Tepidity during your Prayer; it self, 'tis still to

* *Gratia orationis viro Religioso maxime desideranda est; nullus enim sine ea in Dei servitio fructus sperari potest.*
S. Franc. lib. 2. confer. c. 201. hist. Min. l. 1. c. 27.
S. Tb. 1. p. 1. 3. c. 17.
S. Tb. de Villanova c. 11. vita sua.

Prayer that you must have recourse; for 'tis this that will restore you to that first State of Fervor, in which you were before; Prayer having proper remedies for all Evils; and even for those faults that are committed in it. Wherefore they make a very just comparison, who say, that Prayer is the same to a Spiritual Life, that the Hand is to the Body. The Hand serves for an Instrument and help to the whole Body in general, and to it self in particular; it Labors for Nourishment, for Cloathing and all the other Necessities of the Body; and also Labors for it self. For if the Hand be Indispos'd; 'tis the Hand that Dressees it; if the Hand be Dirty, 'tis the Hand that Wathes it; and if the Hand be Cold, 'tis the Hand that Warmes it self again. Infine, as the Hands do's all things, so Prayer do's the same.

CHAP. III.

Of the Obligation we have unto God, for bestowing upon us so easie, so excellent, and so necessary a thing as Prayer is.

Payer being a thing of so great value in it self, and of which we have so much need; 'tis just we thou'd consider how much we are oblig'd to God for having render'd it so easie, that we may attend to it at any time, or in any place whatsoever; † *'Tis in my power, says David, to Pray continually to our Lord, who has given me a Being.* The Gates of God's Mercy are never shut; they are always open to the whole World: We find him always at leasure, always well dispos'd to do us Good; and sometimes he even Importunes us to ask Graces and Favors of him. Some make a most Pious reflection hereupon, and say: That if God thou'd give Audience only once a Month, to all those that desir'd to speak with him, and give 'em a kind and favorable hearing; and moreover thou'd bestow several Graces

† Apud me
oratio Deo
vixit me.
Psal. 41. 9.

on 'em; this without doubt would be, what we could not sufficiently esteem; because we shou'd repute it a greater happiness than if an Earthly King shou'd honor us after this manner. Now if this be so, what esteem ought we not to have of the offer, which God makes us, by even inviting us to address our selves to him, not only once a Month, but every Day, and every Hour of the Day? * *At Night, in the Morning, and at Noon, I will recount my afflictions to our Lord.* says the Royal Prophet, *I will make known my wants unto him, and he will hear me.* God is not like Men, who reject the Petitions offer'd to them; because in giving, he do's not impoverish himself, as they do. A Man has so much the less, by how much he bestow's upon another; for he Robs himself of that which he gives, and grow's the poorer by his liberality. 'Tis for this reason then, that Men so easily refuse what is ask'd; and if they give once or twice with a good Will, they grow angry the third time, and give nothing at all; or if they do, 'tis after so disobliging a manner, that thereby they take away all assurance or confidence of asking 'em any thing another time. † *But God, says the Apostle, is always Rich, for such as implore his assistance:* Because he makes himself not the poorer by giving, nor is weary of being importun'd, nor of seeing a great many continually employ'd in begging of him. He is Rich enough to satisfie the whole World, and is able to enrich every one, without being in the least poorer than he was before. But as the fund of his Riches is Infinite, the source of his Mercy is also inexhaustible: So that, as on the one side he abounds in all things to succour our necessities, so on the other, he has a constant Will to assist us; And wou'd have us to recur unto him. 'Tis therefore very reasonable, that we shou'd have a most grateful Memory of so great a favor; and that making our profit of so ample a permission, we shou'd endeavour continually to apply our selves to Prayer. For, as Saint *Austin* says, upon these words of the Psalmist, † *Blessed be our Lord, who has not depriv'd me of the Spirit of Prayer, nor of his Mercy,* we must believe for certain, that if God withdraws not from us the Spirit of Prayer, he will neither withdraw that of his Mercy; wherefore that his Mercy may never forsake us, let us never leave of, the exercise of Prayer.

* Vespere, & mane, & meridie narrabo, & annuntiabo, & exaudiet vocem meam.
Psal. 54. 13.

† Et dives in omnes qui invocant illum.
Ad Rom. 10. 12.

* Benedixit Deus qui non amovit orationem meam, & misericordiam suam a me.
Aug. sup. Psal. 11. 19.

C H A P. IV.

Of two sorts of Mental Prayer.

Setting Vocal Prayer aside for the present, notwithstanding the practice thereof is very Holy, and much in use in the Church, we'll now speak only of Mental Prayer, as the Apostle Saint Paul design'd to do, when Writing to the *Corinthians*, he sayd, † *I will Pray in Spirit; I will Pray within my Heart; I will Sing the praises of God in my Mind, I will Sing within my Heart.* There are two sorts of Mental Prayer; the one is common and easie, the other is extraordinary and sublime; which, to speak with those who are most vers'd in it, we do not so much form in our selves, as the Holy Ghost forms it in us. 'Tis of this, the Great *Areopagite* speaks, when he says, that his Master *Hierothens*, * *Suffer'd Divine things*; that is, he was so absorp'd in God, that what he did of himself was less his own production, than the impressiion which he receiv'd from God himself. There's a very great difference between these two sorts of Prayer; for the first may in some sort be taught by words; but 'tis not the same of the other; because there are no words able to expresse it. ‡ And *No one can know what it is but he who receives it*, and experiences it in himself, nor even then can he be able to expresse, or even know what it is, nor how 'tis made; and 'tis this which *Cassian* very well takes notice of, when he relates that most Heavenly and Divine Sentence of Saint *Anthony*, very fit to our purpose, * *That Prayer is not wholly perfect, when he that Pray's has not intirely lost the knowledge of himself, or comprehends what he says.* This kind of Prayer is so high, and sublime, that it do's not permit us to think of our selves, or to make any reflection upon what we do, or to speak better, upon what we then suffer. It sometimes happens, that a Man has his Mind so taken up and absorp'd in some business, that he forgets himself: He knows not where he is, nor of what he thinks. 'Tis the

† Oratio spiritus, oratio & mente: Pfalam spiritus, pfalam & mente.
1 Cor. 14. 15.

* Erat patione divina.
Dion. c. 2. de Div. nom.

‡ Quia nemo scit, nisi qui accipit.
Apo. 2. 17.

* Divina, coelestis, & plus quam humana sententia: Non est perfecta oratio, in qua se Monachus, vel hoc ipsum quod orat, intelligit.
Cass. Coll. 9. Ab. 1 fac. c. 34.

the same in this kind of perfect Prayer; wherein Man is so ravish'd and lost in God, that he thinks no more of himself; he knows neither the things that pass within his Heart, nor after what manner they pass; and without observing any method, without thinking of passing from one point to another, he looses himself in a profound Meditation. This is that which happen'd to Saint *Anthony*, of which *Cassian* makes mention, that oftentimes having set himself to Prayer over-night, he remain'd in it till the next Day; when the light falling upon his Eyes, he complain'd that the Sun rise too soon, to deprive him of those lights, which God interiourly communicated unto him. Saint *Bernard* speaking of this kind of Prayer, says, † that *We very seldom find it, and when we do, it's stay is very short.* So that how long time soever it lasts, it seems to us only to have lasted a moment. And Saint *Austin* experiencing in himself the effects it produces: * *Lord, says he, you cause certain feelings of tenderness to arise in my Mind, that are very extraordinary; and I know no sweetness so great as this: But if it shou'd still encrease, I know not what wou'd happen.*

But this last kind of Prayer, has also it's sub-divisions and degrees. Saint *Bernard* makes mention of three, with reference to those words of the Beloved in the *Canticles*. † *Eat my friends, Drink, and be Inebriated my dearest ones.* He says in the first place *Eat*, then *Drink*; and last of all *Inebriate your selves*: And by these different gradations, he leads us to that kind, which is most of all sublime; tho' nevertheless all are most perfect, and are in us rather a suffering, or an effect of a Divine impression, than an action, or an effect that came from our own motion. Sometimes the Gardiner, to Water his Garden, is oblig'd to draw Water out of a Well, by the force of his Armes; and sometimes with folded Armes he sees the Showers of Heaven fall sweetly upon it, and Water the Earth, without his doing any thing but letting it Rain; or at most giving a little fall to the Water, that it may go in greater abundance to the foot of the Trees, that thereby they may bear the more Fruit. The same may be sayd of the two first kinds of Mental Prayer we before spoke of; the one is got by care and diligence, with which by the Mercy of God, we apply our selves to it; the other is purely giv'n us, without our attributing any thing to it. The first requires great labor and application; and yet all that, do's not intirely satisfie you.

But

† Rara hora,
& parva mora.
Bern. ser. in
Dominica infr.
oct. Epiphania.

* Introducis
me in affectum
nimis inusita-
tum, ac nescio
quam dulcedi-
nem, quæ si
perficiatur,
quid futurum
sit, ignoro.
August. li. 10.
Conf. c. 40.
Bern. ser. 32.
ex parvis.

† Comedito-
amici, & bibi-
te, & inebria-
mini, chani-
sum.
Cant. 5. 1.

But the second leads you to a Table, that God himself has prepar'd for you, without your having taken any care at all; a Table very delicious, and a Table abounding with all sorts of Heavenly Dainties. 'Tis this which is signifi'd by those words of the Spouse. * *The King has led me into his Cellar, and replenish'd me with his Love.* And that which our Lord promises in *Isay*, when he says, † *I will rejoyce in the House of Prayer.*

This last sort of Prayer, is a particular gift of God, a gift which he bestow's upon whom he pleases, sometimes as a recompence for Services done him, and for Mortifications suffer'd for Love of him; other times gratis, and as a free gift, without any regard to what is past. For 'tis a favor which proceeds from his pure liberality, and consequently he communicates it to whom he pleases, according to his own Words in the Gospel: * *Is it not lawful for me to do what I please?* And infine, 'tis a thing so far above the reach and conceit of Man's comprehension, that we can never teach, nor comprehend it. Wherefore, 'tis not without reason, that they have blam'd, and forbid certain Authors, who (imagining, that there were Rules to be found, whereby a Man might infallibly be render'd a Contemplative) wou'd take upon 'em to teach, what no one can ever apprehend; and reduce to Art, what is intirely both above Art and Nature. *Gerson* in a Book he Compos'd against *Rusbrochius*, severely reprehends him for this; and reproaches him for having separated the Flower from the Stalk. For as a Flower that we have gather'd, and carry'd in our Hands, fades presently, and looses it's beauty; so the most sublime things, (that God communicates interiorly to a Soul, which he elevates to that high degree of Contemplation) loose their beauty and lustre, when taking 'em out of their true place, we will undertake to explicate, and communicate 'em to others. After all, these Mysterious Anagogy's, these Transformations of the Soul, this Silence of all the faculties, this Annihilation, this Immediate Union, this Depth of *Thaulerius*, and all the other terms of this Nature, what wou'd they express? Can any one comprehend any thing by 'em? For my own part I must frankly confesse I do not. There is therefore this difference between Divine Knowledge, and other Sciences, as some say very well; that in other Sciences before you can Learn 'em, you must Learn their terms; when in this, you cannot understand the terms, till you

* Introduxit
me Rex in
cellaria sua;
ordinavi in
me charitatem
Cant. 2. 4.

† Et iustificabo eos in Domino orationis meae.
Isa. 56. 7.

* Non licet
mihi quod
volo facere?
Matth. 20. 15.

you perfectly possess and are Master of it. In others, the Theory precedes the Practice, in this, the Practice goes before the Theory.

I say still farther, that not only we cannot express what this Prayer is, nor teach it to others, but even no one must seek to raise himself unto it, if God himself do's not elevate him thereunto. For otherwise it wou'd be a thought of Pride, and Presumption, whereby we shou'd deserve to be depriv'd of the Grace of ordinary Prayer, and remain interiously dry. † *He has led me*, says the Spouse, *into his Cellar*; and this manner of acting which God uses, this entrance which he gives to a Soul, to Inebriate it with the Wine of his Love, is a particular Grace, and a special privilege, which he only accords to whom he pleases. Even the Spouse her self enters not, till her Beloved takes her by the Hand, and leads her in; she dares not of her self take the liberty of Kissing his Lips; she is too bashful, and reserv'd to undertake so bold an enterprise as this; she begs this favor: * *O that he wou'd bestow upon me a Kiss of his Mouth!* As if she wou'd say, says Saint Bernard, As for me I cannot by my own strength elevate my self to so high a Perfection of Love, to so glorious an Union, to so sublime a Contemplation, if he himself bestow's not this favor upon me. 'Tis therefore from him, and from his pure liberality, that we must expect such a grace and favor as this is; 'tis his goodness and bounty alone, that must elevate us to the honor of Kissing his Mouth, to such a manner of Prayer, to so sublime a Contemplation, so far above our reach; 'tis not what we are able to acquire of our selves; by our selves, we can neither learn it, nor must or can teach it to others.

† Introduxit
me Rex in
cellam vina-
riam.
Cant. 2. 4.

* Osculetur
me osculo
oris sui.
Cant. 1. 1.
Bern. serm. 5.
ex par.

C H A P. V.

*An Explication of the two sorts of Prayer,
taken out of the Holy Scripture.*

THE two sorts of Prayer, we are at present to take notice of, are clearly mark'd out by the Holy Scripture, when it says that *the Wise*, that is, *the Just Man*, † *Will from break of Day deliver up his Heart to Watch to our Lord who has made him, and will Pray in the presence of the Most High*. The Scripture first speak's of the ordinary sort of Prayer, and mentions the Morning, as a time most proper for Prayer; which it takes notice of in divers other places. * *I will present my self before you in the Morning; † I made hast and I cry'd. * My Eyes have prevented the Sun, that I might Meditate upon your words. † I sought you from the breaking of the day*. The Scripture says, that *the Just Man Gave up his Heart to Watch*; to shew that we must not be drowsie in Prayer, and only be present, in Body, whilst our Heart is wholly employ'd, or intent upon other things. 'Tis this that the Saints call * *Sleepiness, or Drowsiness of Heart*; which is a very great hindrance to Prayer; for when the Heart is thus inclin'd, it cannot remain with that respect it shou'd have in Conversing with God. But what is it, that imprints this respect in the Mind of the Just? 'Tis the reflection it makes, *That they are in the presence of our Lord who has made 'em, and that they Pray before the Most High*? And this reflection causes 'em to recollect themselves, and to have a most particular attention to all that he says. Behold by what has been say'd, with what preparation and attention we must apply our selves to Prayer: Let us now see also, what that Prayer is, which the Just makes when as the Scripture says, † *He will open his Mouth in Prayer, he will Pray to obtain pardon of his Sins*. That is to say, he will be confounded for his Sins; he will repent himself of 'em; and will make a firm purpose to fall no more into

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them.

† Cor suum
tradet ad v
gilandum dilu-
culo ad Do-
minum qui
fecit illum, &
in conspectu
Altissimi de-
precabitur.
Eccl. 39. 6.

* Mane astabo
tibi.
Psal. 5. 5.
† Præveni in
maturitate, &
clamavi.
Psal. 118. 147.
* Præven-
runt oculi
mei ad te di-
luculo, ut me-
ditarer eloquia
tua.
Ibid. 143.
† Ad te de
luce vigilo.
Psal. 62. 1.
* Cordis som-
nolentia.

† Aperiet os
suum in ora-
tione, & pro
delictis suis
deprecabitur.
Eccl. 39. 7.

them. This is properly the Prayer we must make, to deplore our Sins and Imperfections, and implore God's Mercy. 'Tis not sufficient to say I have made a general Confession in the beginning of my Conversion, and then employ'd many Days in lamenting, and weeping bitterly for my Sins, and repenting my self of 'em; for 'tis not just, that because we have Confess'd 'em, we shou'd therefore forget 'em; but on the contrary we must endeavour to set 'em always before our Eyes, as the Royal Prophet did according to his own words: † *My Sin is always against me*; that is to say, always before me, and continually present in my Mind.

Saint Bernard in his Comments upon those words of the Canticles, * *Our Bed is all cover'd with Flowers*: your Bed, says he, which is your Heart, is still very foul; 'tis still infected with the stench of Vice, and the bad habits you brought with you from the World; and notwithstanding this, you venture to invite your Spouse to lodge in it, you pretend to raise your self to Contemplation, and the most sublime exercises of Union with God; as if you had already acquir'd the last degree of Christian Perfection. Let your first Study be to cleanse and wash your Bed with your Tears, as the Psalmist tells us he did, † *I will every Night wash my Bed with my Tears*. Think also how to adorn it with the Flowers of all sorts of Vertues; and then you may like the Spouse invite your Beloved, to come and repose himself therein. Employ your self in the mean time in kissing his Feet; in humbling your self, by true repentance for your Sins; in kissing his Hands, and offering to him all the good you can do; and in endeavouring to receive from him the grace of solid and true Vertue: But as for approaching his Mouth, to wit, this sublime and perfect Union, attend and expect till God himself vouchsafes to elevate you thereunto. An Ancient Religious of the SOCIETY of JESUS, very much esteem'd for his Piety, and very well vers'd in Spirituality, remain'd as 'tis sayd, for twenty Years in the purgative way; and shall we who have scarce begun, presently grow weary of it, and desire to pass to the exercises of the Love of God? The foundations ought to be very deep and strong, before we venture to raise so high a Building. But that which is very particular in the exercise of the knowledge and sorrow for our faults, is, that besides divers other advantages we draw from thence, of which we shall speak hereafter, there is not a more special remedy, nor a better preservative to hinder

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† Peccatum meum contra me est semper. Psal. 50. 5.

* Lectulus noster floridus. Bern. ser. 56. sup. Cant. 1. 15.

† Lavabo pedes singulas noctes lectum meum, lachrymis meis stratum meum rigabo. Psal. 6. 7.

P. Dossier. Arax.

us from falling into Sin than this: For he who continually employs himself in detesting his Sins; who is always cover'd with a Holy confusion for those he has committed; and who continually exercises himself in a profound sorrow for having offended God; will be far from committing any new offence. On the contrary, the Saints take notice that the fall of some (who seem'd much addicted to Contemplation and a Spiritual Life) has happen'd from a bare neglect of reflecting upon their past Sins and Imperfections, that they might give themselves to more sublime and pleasing exercises, and from the confidence they had in their own strength; so that in not accustoming themselves to stand upon their guard (as they shou'd have done) it caus'd 'em in the end miserably to run into disorders; for by forgetting too soon their own baseness, they were on a sudden precipitated from the height of Perfection, to which they thought themselves arriv'd. Wherefore we must for a long time reduce our Prayer, to a sorrow for our Sins; and this must be our only exercise, till our Lord pleases to take us by the Hand, and say unto us, * *Friend ascend higher.*

But let us at present take notice, what that so sublime and particular Prayer is, of which God bestow's the Grace when he pleases: The Holy Scripture informs us what it is in these terms. † *If our Lord pleases, he will fill him with the Spirit of Understanding.* It says, *if our Lord pleases*; because 'tis not any thing that is due unto us; or that he has any obligation to give us, but 'tis a pure Grace, and a pure effect of his liberality. *If he pleases* then, when that you are in Prayer, a sudden light from Heaven shou'd come upon you, and as it were a flash of Lightning shou'd strike upon the Eyes of your Understanding; you will then in a moment conceive that, which you cou'd not before comprehend. Behold here what properly that gift of Prayer is, of which we speak; for how many times might the same thing have represented it self unto you, without your being touch'd, or at all struck with it? The reason therefore why the Holy Scripture calls this *The Spirit of Understanding*, is, because it gives us a knowledge of things, by a simple apprehension, and without any assistance of the imagination; or that our Understanding takes any pains at all. 'Tis after this manner that a Man who loves Painting, meeting with an excellent piece, stops on a sudden, and fixes his Eyes upon it, without speaking a word; and takes so much pleasure in viewing it, that he can scarce

Tract 8. c. 12.
p. 2. Tract.
7. c. 4.

* Amice,
ascende su-
perius.
Luc. 14. 10.

† Si enim
Dominus
magnus volu-
erit, spiritu
intelligentiæ
replebit illum.
Eccl. 1. 59. 8.

take off his Eyes. But to say better, this state in which a Soul find's it self, resembles that of the Blessed in Heaven. Beatitude consists in Beholding and Contemplating God; and when we shall be plac'd in Glory, we shall be intirely absorpt in this sole view of him for an Eternity, and thereby enjoy an everlasting felicity; without the least assistance from our Reason; or without ever having any regard to our selves. On the contrary, we shall continually be transported with a new joy: We shall find every moment a new Gust in this Heavenly Manna; and 'twill seem to us, that we continually enjoy a new subject of admiration. The same thing happens in this kind of sublime and perfect Prayer, which they call Contemplation. When God pleases to elevate a Soul thereunto, it never ceases to Contemplate; and without helping it self by discourse, or ever suffering any irksomness, it perpetually has it's sight fix'd upon God. But the Scripture do's not only take notice, that God will bestow this Grace upon the Just, but that he will also fill 'em with it; because this Grace is so abounding, that not being able to contain it self within so narrow a Vessel, as the Heart of Man is; it necessarily overflows; and therefore it presently adds, * *That the Discourses of him who is replenish'd with Wisdom, will fall like Showers from his Mouth, and in Prayer he will confess and praise our Lord.* 'Tis then, that Colloquies are made to God; 'tis then, a proper time, when the Soul is thus illuminated by this Heavenly light, and elevated above it's own force, to Converse and Entertain it self with God. Wherefore Saint Ignatius admonishes us to † *Enter into these Colloquies, when we find our selves mov'd thereunto by an interior impulse of Grace.* These words deserve to be very well taken notice of, and do in substance inform us, that when, we have apply'd all the Powers of our Soul to Meditation, when our Heart begins to be inflam'd, and we find our selves secretly incited to treat familiarly with God; 'tis then, that we must have a very great trust and confidence in him; since this is the proper time to ask and obtain all things. For the Prayer that proceeds from a Heart touch'd and inflam'd by God after this manner, is that which he hearkens unto; because, that as Saint *Austin* says, when he himself moves us to ask any thing of him, 'tis a sign that he intends to grant it. Behold then that kind of Prayer that is so sublime, which God gives to whom he pleases, and when he pleases, according to these words:

If

Apoc. 14. 13.

* Et ipse tanquam imbres mittet eloquia sapientie sue; & in oratione confitebitur Domino.
Ecccl. 39. 9.

† Occurrente nobis spiritu alio motu ad colloquia veniamus.
S. Ign. lib. exerc. spirit. in repet. 1. & 2.

Aug. lib. de verb. Dom. ser. 5. & 29.

If our Lord pleases, he will fill him with the Spirit of Knowledge and Understanding.

But if our Lord is not pleas'd to favor us with such a singular Grace as this is, we must not therefore, as Saint Bernard says, afflict our selves, and loose courage; but rest contented with the practice of Vertue, and believe our selves happy, as long as God is pleas'd to conserve us in his Grace, and preserve us from falling into Sin. * God grant, says this great Saint, that I may enjoy peace of Soul, the sweetness and repose of a good Conscience; the Spirit of Mercy; Simplicity and Charity towards my Neighbor; the gift of rejoicing with those that rejoyce; and of weeping with those that weep; and I desire nothing else. All the rest I leave to the Apostles and to Men truly Apostolical. † The tops of the Mountains serve for a retreat to Stag's, but the holes of the Rock's to Hedgehogs. Let therefore these Mountains of Contemplation, that are so high and elevated, serve for a fit refuge to such, who with an extraordinary facility run towards Perfection; as for me, who am a Sinner, and cover'd with the Thorn's of my Sins, I will retire my self into the Corner-stone of the Rock, which is JESUS CHRIST; I will hide my self in his Wounds; I will wash away my faults with his Precious Blood; and this shall be my Prayer. If then so great a Saint, as Saint Bernard, contented himself with the practice of Vertues, and a lively sorrow for his Sins; and leaves this other kind of more sublime Prayer, for Apostolical Men, to whom it shall please God to communicate so signal a favor: 'Tis very just that we also shou'd content our selves with the same, that we shou'd apply our selves in Prayer, only to bewail our Sins; to mortifie our Passions; to root out our ill habits; and overcome and surmount all those obstacles and impediments, that hinder us in the way of Vertue: And as to this other kind of Prayer, which is so much above our reach, we must leave it intirely to God, to call and elevate us to it, when ever he himself pleases. Moreover, 'twill be very advantageous diligently to stand upon our guard, when he seem's to call us to it; because there is often great abuses herein. We sometimes imagine that we are call'd to Contemplation, because we find a certain sweetness and facility therein; yet nevertheless we deceive our selves; for this is not a call from God, but an enterprise of Man; 'tis an illusion of the Devil, who carries you to a Contemplative Life, thereby to withdraw you from

* Utinam detur mihi pax, bonitas, gaudium in spiritu Sancto, misereri in hilaritate, tribuere in simplicitate, gaudere cum gaudentibus, flere cum flentibus, & his contentus ero. Cetera sanctis Apostolis, virisque Apostolicis detinquo.
Bern. serm. 48. sup. Cant.

† Montes excelsi cervis, petra refugium herinacis.
Psalm. 103. 18.

*Blas. in Spec.
Spir. c. 11.*

*Ben de processu.
Relig. c. 20.*

from the obligations of the Active, and to occasion hereby, that you fail in the performance both of the one and the other. A great Master of Spirit, says very well; As it wou'd be a great boldness and an extream imprudence, that a Man whom a King had Commanded to Serve at his Table, shou'd presume to Sit down, without his Invitation or Permission; so 'tis also a very great indiscretion, to abandon our selves intirely to the sweet repose of Contemplation, if we be not call'd thereunto by God himself. Saint *Bonaventure* hereupon gives most excellent Counsel, and says, that we must exercise our selves in that, which is for our assur'd profit; as 'tis to quit our Vicious habits and bad inclinations, and to gain solid Vertues; and in this, no abuse can be fear'd; because 'tis infallibly true, that the more we endeavour to Mortifie, and Humble our selves, or be Resign'd to the Will of God; the more pleasing we shall be to him, and we shall encrease our Merit in this World, and Glory in the next. But the other sublime exercises, and matters so elevated; says the Saint, may be deceits and illusions of the Devil; because we often think that to come from God, which do's not, and we count that a very great matter, which in effect is less than nothing. Wherefore in a Spiritual Life, we ought rather to choose and apply our selves to those exercises that are most profitable, and not be carry'd away with the sweetness we find in 'em; but esteem 'em for the profit and advancement we receive thereby; and this opinion is intirely conformable to the general Doctrin of Saints, as we shall see in the following Chapter.

C H A P.

C H A P. VI.

*In which this Doctrin is more particularly
Explicated and Confirm'd.*

FOR a more full and clear Confirmation of this Doctrin, the Saints and Masters of Spirit affirm, that to come to this kind of Prayer and high Contemplation we speak of, we must in the first place apply our selves to the Mortification of our Passions, to the laying a solid foundation of all Christian and Moral Vertues; and to the exercising our selves a long time in their practice. Without this, say they, 'tis to no purpose to pretend to apply our selves to Contemplation, and make a kind of particular Profession thereof. † *For we must Wrestle like Jacob, before we can see God like Israel; and be able to say, I have seen God Face to Face.* You must strive against your Passions, you must overcome 'em together with all your ill habits, before you can arrive to this intimate Union with God. *Blossius* says, that he who wou'd raise himself to a most eminent degree of the Love of God, and notwithstanding do's not carefully endeavour, to correct and amend himself, by suppressing his Vices, and freeing himself from the inordinate Love of Creatures; is like a Man who being loaden with Iron and Lead, and bound Hand and Foot, wou'd climb up a high Tree. Wherefore we ordinarily take notice, that such as are appointed for the Spiritual direction of others, before they speak to them of Contemplation, they first reach 'em how throuly to Mortifie their Passions, and accustom themselves to Patience, Humility, and Obedience; so that exercising 'em continually in all sorts of Vertues of the Active Life of a Christian, they make 'em get a good and perfect habit therein. Many by not having observ'd this method, and by being elevated upon a sudden to a Contemplative Life, without having pass'd throu' the Active, which ought to precede; find themselves after many Years of Prayer, as defective in Vertue, as im-

*Greg. lib. 7.
Mor. c. 27.*

*Rem. serm. 45.
sup. Cant.
Isidor. lib. 3.
c. 15.
J. Th. 2. 2. q.
92. art. 3.
Cajeta. ibid.*

† Oportet ut
Jacob prius sit
luctans quam
Israel, Deum
videns, ac di-
cens: Vidi
Deum facie
ad faciem.

*Blossius in ta-
bula spir.
addit. 1.*

patient,

patient, as cholerick, as proud as before; so that if they be the least touch'd, or admonish'd for any of their defects, they presently let us see their resentments, by impatient and angry words; whereby they discover their imperfection, and the little command they have over themselves. Father *Everard Mercurianus* General of the SOCIETY of JESUS; explicates this very well, in a Letter he Writ upon this Subject. Many, says he, hearing of another more sublime exercise of Prayer, and the Love of God, than that which is ordinarily practis'd, as of certain Anagogical Acts, and of I know what Silence of all the faculties of the Soul, wou'd more out of a want of insight and experience, than out of any true desire of their Spiritual advancement, raise themselves before their time to the exercise of the Unitive Life, as to the most Heroick and most Perfect exercise of all others; by means whereof they doubt not but to overcome their Vices with less labor and pains, and acquire Vertues with greater facility. But because they are rais'd to it, before their time, they loose a great deal of time therein, to no purpose, and are so little advanc'd, that at the end of many Years, they find themselves as unmortis'd in their Passions; as much ty'd to their own Will and Opinions; and so wedded to their own Commodities; as if they had never had any Conversation or Communication with God. In fine, when the Superior wou'd dispose of 'em, in any thing that do's not please 'em, or is not according to their Mind, they are as little complying and tractable, as they were the first Day they enter'd Religion; and have as great a repugnance as ever, to submit their Judgments to the Will of their Superiors. This happens, because they wou'd needs Fly before they had Wings; and because, instead of going in the High-way, they ought to have kept, they wou'd shorten it, by unadvisedly taking a cross Path: For they Build not upon the solid Foundation of Mortifying their Passions, and Practising of Vertues; so that they cou'd do nothing that was substantial; and having Built upon the Sand, the Building they rais'd with a great deal of pains, fall's down at the first blast of Wind.

But that which still more evidently proves the Truth of this Doctrin, and how generally 'tis receiv'd, is, that 'tis commonly follow'd by all Saints, when they Establish the three sorts of Prayer, according to the three sorts of ways that lead thereunto; which they call Purgative, Illuminative,
and

and Unitive. Saint Gregory Nazianzen; and all those who have Writ of Spirituality; have taken this Doctrin out of Saint Denis the Areopagite, and they all agree herein; that before we apply our selves to this kind of high Prayer, which corresponds to the Unitive, we ought to apply our selves to what concerns the Purgative and Illuminative ways. We must first exercise our selves a long time in gaining a lively sorrow for our Sins; in laboring to root out our Vices and bad Inclinations; and endeavour by imitating JESUS CHRIST, to acquire those true Vertues, that were most Eminent in his Life. But if we do otherwise, and without passing the sayd way, pretend to advance still farther, we shall but labor in vain, and be always deceiv'd. We know that to raise our selves to the knowledge of higher Studies, we must exercise our selves a long time in the lower; and to come to the top of the Ladder, we must ascend by the first steps.

CHAP. VII.

Of the Ordinary sort of Mental Prayer.

LAying aside this more sublime manner of Prayer; because 'tis not to be taught, or explicated in what manner 'tis to be made; nor infine is it in our power to arrive to the practice of that, which God neither commands, neither will he call us to an account if we do not practise it. We will at present therefore speak of ordinary Mental Prayer, which after some manner may be taught, and which every one may attain to; if they add, as they ought, their own care and endeavours to the Counsel of their Spiritual Director, and the Assistance of God's Grace.

Amongst divets other very considerable favors; that God has bestow'd upon the SOCIETY of JESUS, this is one; that he has giv'n us a Form and Manner of Prayer, Confirm'd by the Holy See, as may be seen by the Bull, in the beginning of the *Spiritual Exercises* of Saint Ignatius. In this

Bull of *Paul* the III. 'tis expressly set down; that the Pope, after having with great attention, very strictly examin'd these Exercises, he do's not only Approve and Confirm 'em, but Exhorts all the Faithful to make use of 'em as very profitable. This form of Prayer was Communicated to Saint *Ignatius* by our Saviour; and he afterwards Communicated the same to us, as he had receiv'd it; wherefore this being so, we have reason to hope by God's Mercy, that he will bestow many favors upon us, by means of this Prayer; because 'tis he himself who has prescrib'd to us the manner thereof. 'Twas by this that he drew to himself our Blessed Founder and his Companions; 'twas in the practice of this Holy Method, that he made him Conceive the Design, and Form the Model of the SOCIETY; and this is the *Medium* or means, whereby he has gain'd so many other Souls to Christ. Let us therefore endeavour to go no other way than this; let us not be carry'd to any other extraordinary manner of Prayer, but embrace this we have; let us endeavour to Conform our selves intirely thereunto, and like good Children imitate the example of our Father.

In the Exercise of the three Powers of the Soul, which is the first of the Exercises in the Book we speak of, Saint *Ignatius* teaches us, what Method we ought to keep in the rest. First, That having made choice of some Spiritual Point, we must exercise therein the three Powers of our Soul, which are the Memory, Understanding, and Will. The Memory, by setting before the Eyes of our Mind, the Point or Mystery which ought to be the subject of our Prayer. Secondly, The Understanding, must be employ'd to find out and consider the things, that may most of all serve to heat and inflame our Will. And lastly, the Will, must produce those Acts, that depend upon it. This is the last Point, and even the chiefest of all; and that, which we ought to be the most Zealous for; it being the end of Meditation, and the fruit of all the reflections and discourses of the Understanding; since they serve only to move the Will to a search after what is good, and to fly from what is evil. Moreover, this name of the *Exercise* of the three Powers of the Soul, is giv'n to the said *Exercise*, because 'tis the Method of reaching this manner of Prayer; for the three Powers of the Soul, ought no less to be employ'd in the following Exercises, than in this.

This

This form and manner of Prayer, which our Holy Founder has taught us, and is practis'd in the SOCIETY, is not singular, nor like others fill'd with such Inventions and Novelties as are subject to illusion, and savor something thereof: But on the contrary 'tis a very common Method, practis'd by the Ancient Fathers, and very conformable to Human Nature; which being reasonable, Governs it self by Reason, and permits it self to be persuaded and convinc'd; so that 'tis not to be doubted, but that this manner must consequently be more easie, more secure, and more profitable than any other. For in Prayer we must not be like Statues, or like Persons in an Exaltie; but by the help of thus exercising the Powers of our Soul, draw the Spirit of God upon us; and because he requires a co-operation of his Creatures, we must take care to co-operate with him. This is what Saint Ignatius teaches us in his Book of the *Spiritual Exercise*. All other kinds of Prayer, where the discourse of the Understanding has no place, where all the operations of the Soul remain suspended and in silence, which are taken out of Mystical Divinity, ought commonly speaking, neither to be taught, nor sought after; and those who embrace 'em, being in a manner still Novices, and little vers'd in Spirituality, not having yet obtain'd a perfect knowledge of themselves, nor a Victory over their Passions, nor made any great progress in the practice of Vertue, are subject to many deceits and illusions; for even when they think themselves much advanc'd, and to have gain'd the Victory over their Passions, they'll find that they were only lull'd asleep, by the attractive charm and sweetness of Prayers; so that afterwards these awake again with very great danger, and become as lively, strong, and violent as ever they were before. And the mischief also of these kinds of so recollected, and very particular Prayer, is, that ordinarily therein is contracted a certain obliquity of Mind and Opinion, and yet withal an easie disposition to receive all sorts of illusions and deceits, for Essential Truths; and this was the reason why Saint Ignatius so much suspected this kind of Prayer, and sayd, that those who apply'd themselves to it, were commonly subject to these inconveniencies.

Wherefore I say, that the first thing we must do in Prayer, is to represent to our selves, by the help of our Memory, the Point or Mystery, that we make the subject of our Prayer; which the Understanding must afterwards,

repeat, and well consider in all particulars; then in the last place, the Will must form such Acts, as the Understanding, digesting what was propos'd by the Memory as *before*, gives us an occasion to produce. But since this discourse of the Understanding, is the source from whence all our Acts in Prayer proceed, and that we can make none, which are not the necessary effect of our Meditation, we must consequently have a particular care to make it well. The truth of this proposition is clear of it self; for there is no one that has the least knowledge in Philosophy, who knows not that the Will is a blind Power, able to carry it self to nothing, unless the Understanding leads it; so that 'tis a Maxim, * *That there is nothing which we can Will or Desire, but what we first know.* The Will having of it self no light, must borrow it of the Understanding, which go's before to give it knowledge, and discover what it ought to love or hate. From hence proceeds, what Saint Austin sayd, that † *We may love the things we never saw, but never those we have not known.* * No one, says Saint Gregory also, can love what he intirely is ignorant of. And the reason of this is, that the object of the Will being a known good, we cannot love any thing, but because we perceive it to be good; and worthy to be belov'd; after the same manner on the other side, we do not hate or fly from any thing, but because we believe it bad, and that it deserves to be hated. Therefore, when we wou'd make any one change his Opinion; that is to say, to quit what he has taken up, and to embrace the side we desire he shou'd, we endeavour to persuade, and convince him by reason; that what he design'd to do, is not good; and that what we propose to him is better, and far more convenient. 'Tis clear therefore, that the operation of the Understanding, is the Foundation of all our Acts in Prayer; and consequently 'tis very truly sayd, that Meditation is extremely necessary; as we shall shew more particularly in the following Chapters.

* Nihil volumus, quin percognitum.

† Invisa diligere posse, incognita nequaquam.

Aug. lib. 10. de Trin. c. 1.

* Nemo potest diligere quod prorsus ignorat.

Greg. hom. 36. sup. Evang.

C H A P.

CHAP. VIII.

Of the Necessity of Meditation.

HUGO of Saint Victor says, that Prayer cannot be perfect, unless Meditation go's before, or accompanies it; and his Doctrin is taken out of Saint Austin, who says, that Prayer is tepid without Meditation. The proof of this proposition is easie, for if we do not exercise and employ our selves to know and examin our weakness and misery, we shall be deceiv'd, and be mis-inform'd of our wants; and thus it happens, that in Prayer, we know not how to demand what we ought, nor how to beg it with that instance and fervor we shoud do. Many are backward in reflecting upon themselves, and the knowledge of their defects, they presuming too much upon themselves; which they woud not do, if they had a right knowledge of themselves: And from thence it happens, that in Prayer, they insist not upon those things which are most necessary for 'em. If you desire then to learn how to Pray, and how to beg of God what you stand most in need of; employ your self in considering exactly your defects and weaknesses; and when you shall have a perfect knowledge of 'em, then you'll know what you ought to ask of God; and as a Man; who feels himself press'd with necessity or misery, you'll beg with all instance and fervor, what is most proper for you. Saint Bernard speaking of the manner how to arrive to Perfection, says; *No one becomes Perfect on a sudden; 'tis by mounting and not by flying that we come to the top of the Ladder: Let us therefore ascend, and let Meditation and Prayer be the two Feet we make use of to do so. For Meditation lets us see our wants; and Prayer obtains of God a supply of them. The one shows us the way, and the other leads us to him; and infine, Meditation makes us clearly discern the dangers that surround us, and Prayer, makes us happily avoid and escape 'em.* But Saint

Hugo de S.
Vici, tract. de
laude rationis.

Angeli.

† Nemo re-
gente in fun-
tibus, ascen-
dendo, non
volando, ap-
prehenditur
summitas fe-
lix. Ascen-
dus igitur ven-
tur duobus
quibudam pe-
dibus, Medita-
tione, & ora-
tione. Medita-
tione liquet
docet, quid
desit; ora-
tione quid
ne quid desit
obtinere, illa-
viam ostendit,
ista deducit.
Meditatione
docet, quid
desit; ora-
tione quid
ne quid desit
obtinere, illa-
viam ostendit,
ista deducit.
Bern. serm. 1.
de S. Andrea.

go's

* Intellectus
cogitabundus
est principium
omnis boni.
Aug.

go's yet farther, and says, that * *Meditation is the beginning and ground of all good.* In effect we cannot consider how good God is in himself, how good and merciful he is towards us, how much he loves us, and how much he has done and suffer'd for us; without feeling our selves inflam'd with the love of so good a Master. We cannot perceive our faults and infirmities, without humbling and conceiving a contempt of our selves; we cannot reflect upon our great neglect in the Service of God, and the offences we have committed against him, without acknowledging at the same time, that we deserve all kinds of Chastisements. So that 'tis by the means and help of Meditation, that the Soul comes to enrich it self with all sorts of Vertues, that can render it agreeable in God's sight.

'Tis for this reason that the Holy Scripture so particularly recommends Meditation unto us: † *Happy is the Man, says the Royal Prophet, who Meditates Day and Night upon the Law of our Lord. He shall be like a Tree that is planted by the River side, which brings forth it's Fruit in due season.* And in another place he says, * *Those who reflect upon his promises, shew that they seek him with all their Heart.* Or rather, 'tis that which makes 'em seek him after this manner. The same Prophet also speaking to God, says, † *Give me Understanding, and I will make profound reflections upon your Law; and I will observe it with all my Heart.* * *But if, says he, in another place, your Law had not been the subject of my Meditation, perhaps I had not remain'd in my Humility, and I shou'd have thereby perish'd; that is to say, as Saint Hierome interprets it, I shou'd have remain'd in those pains and miseries that surrounded me. But that which still ought to give us a high esteem of Meditation, is what they say of it, to wit, that 'tis a help to all Vertues and good Works.* † 'Tis, says Gerson, *the Sister of Spiritual Reading, the Nurse of Prayer, the Director of good Actions; and infine, the Perfection and Consummation of all Heroick Actions.*

But to the end that by opposing it's contrary, we may come to a better knowledge of it; we must know that the neglect of reflection, is one of the chief causes of all the Evils in the World, according to the words of the Prophet *Jeremy.* * *The whole Earth is desolate with an universal desolation, because there is no one that makes reflection upon his Heart.* Would you know why the Earth is desolate

as

† Et in lege
ejus Medita-
bitur die ac
nocte. Et erit
tanquam lig-
num quod
plantatum est
secus decursus
aquarum, quod
fructum suum
dabit in tem-
pore suo.

Psal. 1. 2. 3.
* Beati qui
scrutantur re-
simonia ejus,
in toto corde
exquirunt
eum.

Psal. 118. 2.
† Da mihi in-
tellectum, &
scrutabor le-
gem tuam, &
custodiam il-
lam in toto
corde meo.

Psal. 118. 34.
* Nisi quod
lex tua. Mc-
ditatio mea
est; tunc forte
perissem in
humilitate
mea.

Psal. 118. 92.
† Soror le-
ctionis, nutrix
orationis, di-
rectrix operis,
omniumque
passitur per-
fectio, & con-
summatio
existens.
Gerson.

* Desolatione
desolata est
omnis terra,
quia nullus est
qui recogitet
corde.
Jer. 12. 11.

as to Spiritual matters? 'Tis because there's scarce any one that enters into himself, and ruminates upon the ineffable Mysteries of Religion, and the infinite bounties of God. For who is there, that durst be so bold as to commit a Sin, if he consider'd that God Dy'd for Sin; and that Sin is so great an Evil, that it requir'd God shou'd become Man; to the end that by his Death he might intirely make satisfaction for Sin, even to the Rigorous Justice of his Eternal Father? And who wou'd Sin, if he consider'd that one Mortal Sin, is punish'd by the Eternal pains of Hell? Or if he made but a serious reflection upon these words. * *Go ye Cursed into Everlasting Fire?* If we consider'd seriously the Everlasting Duration of an Unhappy Eternity; and that as long as God is God, so long we are to Burn in Hell, wou'd there be any one so mad or foolish, think you, as for a moment of pleasure, to expose himself to such Eternal Torments? Saint *Thomas of Aquin* sayd, that he cou'd not comprehend how a Person in Mortal Sin cou'd have any Joy or Repose. And without doubt the Saint had a great deal of reason; because Man is not certain of the enjoyment of any one moment of his Life, and yet knows infallibly, that shou'd he Die in this State, he wou'd be for ever Damn'd. We Read that *Damocles*, during a splendid Feast, and several exquisite Consorts of Musick, cou'd not find the least Gust or Pleasure in any thing, when he perceiv'd a naked Sword hang over his Head only by one small single Hair; for he trembl'd every moment, lest the said Hair shou'd break, and the Sword fall, and cause his Death. What fear therefore ought that Man to have, who in the mid'st of the delights and filthy pleasures of this World, know's that at every instant he is threaten'd not only with a Temporal, but with an Eternal Death; which also depending upon the slender thread of his Life, he may suddenly be taken off even every moment; so that going overnight to Bed in perfect health, he may the next Morning find himself Bury'd in Hell. A great Servant of God sayd very well upon this subject, that he thought, in a Christian Common-wealth, there ought to be only two sorts of Persons; the one for Hereticks, and the other for Fool's; for either we do, or do not believe that there is a Hell, destin'd for the Eternal punishment of Sinners; if then we Err in our belief, we deserve to be cast into the Inquisition as Hereticks; and if we believe it, and still remain in Sin, we deserve to be rank'd amongst

* Discodite a
me maledicti
in ignem æter-
num.
Matth. 25. 41.

Hist. Ord. S.
Domin. p. 1.
lib. 3. c. 37.

Damocles apud
Cicer. Tusc. 5.

amongst Fools and Mad-men; as having our Understanding
 warped, and infected with the greatest folly that can be imagin'd.
 'Tis not to be doubted, but if we make such reflections as
 we might in reason do, this wou'd serve for a Bridle to restrain
 us from falling into Sin: Wherefore, 'tis for this reason
 that the Devil, who know's the profit we shou'd draw
 from Meditation, endeavours continually by all sorts of
 means to withdraw us from it. The first thing that the
Philistian's did to *Sampson*, after they had made him their
 Prisoner, was to put out his Eyes: 'Tis the first thing the
 Devil in like manner, do's to Sinners, if he cannot intirely
 deprive 'em of the Eyes of Faith, he endeavours at least,
 to deprive 'em of their use; and to make 'em believe
 in such a manner, as if they believ'd not at all. To the
 end † *That seeing they may not see, and hearing they may*
not hear, nor understand. He hinders 'em from reflecting
 upon what they believe; and endeavours that they shou'd
 no more think on't, than if they believ'd it not at all;
 which is all one for the compassing his ends; because
 since he cannot put out their Eyes, he at least shuts 'em.
 'Tis the same thing, whether we open our Eyes in the dark,
 or shut 'em in the light; because either way we see nothing.
 But Meditation is of so great and particular importance;
 that it not only opens the Eyes of our Understanding,
 but also clearly affords light, to discern the most obscure
 Mysteries of Faith.

Judicum 16. 21.

† Videntes
 non vident,
 & audientes
 non audiunt,
 neque intelli-
 gunt.
Matth. 13. 13.

CHAP.

C H A P. IX.

Of the great advantage we may draw from Meditation; and how we are to perform it, so as to reap profit thereby.

TIS very good to exercise our selves in Prayer, and therein to produce Acts of the Will; and 'tis of this we speak at present; because these Acts must be well founded upon reason. For Man being reasonable, ought to be guided by reason, and consequently 'tis necessary that his Understanding shou'd be persuaded and convinc'd, before his Will can be inflam'd. Wherefore one of the chief things we must take care of in Meditation, is to disabuse and convince our selves of the Errors of the World; to conform our selves in the belief of solid truths; and firmly to resolve upon what we design to do, and what we intend to avoid. When a Worldly Man begins to conform himself, to a more Christian and Regular Life than ordinary, we are us'd to say, that he is disabus'd, and this disabusement, if we may call it so, or conviction, is one of the chief advantages we ought to draw from Prayer. As this Point is of very great importance, so 'tis also very convenient we shou'd particularly reflect upon it, and above all, 'tis necessary in the beginning, that we apply our selves to it with great diligence; to the end, that by the help of an exact discussion of things, we may so much the more confirm our selves, in the belief of Essential truths.

Wherefore that we may be able to gather much fruit from Meditation, we must not make it superficially, in haste, or after a tepid and languishing manner; but with very great fervor, and with all possible Attention and quiet of Mind. Consider maturely the shorness of our Lives, the frailty and vanity of all things in this World, and how little or nothing of 'em, will remain with us after our Death; and thereby

Tom. I.

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we shall soon come to contemn and undervalue all things here below, and fix our Hearts upon those things that will last Eternally. Consider seriously, and frequently ponder how little solidity there is in the esteem and opinion of Men, and how ridiculous a thing it is, to torment our selves upon this account; because their esteem can neither give or take any thing from us, nor render us either better or worse than we are; and hereby we shall soon come to make no account at all of 'em. Infinite, ruminate in like manner upon all other truths; and by this means you will by little and little disabuse your self, of the Chymeras and Errors of the Age; you will confirm your self in true sentiments and principles of Piety; you will resolve upon, what will most conduce to your Salvation; and you will begin to become quite another Man, and to lead a Life altogether Spiritual.

* sedebit solitarius, & tacebit, quia levavit super se.
Thren. 3. 23.

† Propter quem omnia detrimentum feci, & arbitror ut sterora, ut Christum sacrificium.
Ad Philip. 3. 8.

The Solitary person will sit himself down, says Jeremy, and keep silence, because he is lifted above himself. He will find that his Heart is become greater and larger than ordinary; he will mount in his thoughts even to Heaven it self, contemning all Earthly objects; and will say with Saint Paul, † That for Love of JESUS CHRIST, he looks upon 'em all as hurtful and pernicious, and in comparison of gaining JESUS CHRIST, all other things are but as Dirt and Ordure.

There's a very great difference, between Meditating and Meditating; between knowing and knowing: For the Wise Man knows things after one manner, and the Ignorant knows 'em after another. Wise Men know what they are in effect, and Ignorant Persons know only what they are in appearance. If a simple Clown finds a Precious Stone of great value, he will esteem it for it's luster and exterior beauty; but for nothing else; because he knows not the value of it. But if the same Stone falls into the Hands of a Skillful Lapidary, he esteems it not only for it's exterior luster, but because he has a certain knowledge of it's value. The same difference is found between him who knows how to Meditate upon Spiritual things, and another that knows it not. He who looks not upon things but superficially, and regards only the outside, tho' their exterior beauty pleases him, yet he is carry'd or mov'd to no very great desire of 'em. But he who knows how to make so curious an inspection into them, as he should do, and knows how to ponder and consider 'em very well, will easily deceive himself and reject such as are of no value, and resolve to compass, what he perceives to be excellent, and

Knowing

knowing perfectly well, of how great a value the Precious Stone is, he has found, he makes no account of any thing else, * *But go's and Sells all he is worth, to purchase it.*

* Et vendidit
omnia quæ
habuit, & emit
eam.
Matth. 13. 45.

This difference is declar'd to us by JESUS CHRIST, in the Cure of the Woman of a Blood Flux. Our Saviour went to raise to Life, the Daughter of a Prince of the Synagogue, and being follow'd by a great throng of People, which incompass'd and press'd upon him on all sides; this Poor Woman, who for Twelve Years together had suffer'd this Bloody Flux, having spent all she was worth upon Doctors to obtain a Cure, and finding her self still in a worse condition than ever; seeing the Son of God pass by, the great desire she had to be Cur'd, made her break throu' the press with a wonderful Faith and Confidence: † *For she said within her self, if I can but come so near him, as to touch his Cloath's, I shall be Cur'd.* Infine, she approaches him, touches him, and the Flux of Blood, which she had suffer'd for so many Years, wonderfully stop'd upon a sudden. Whereupon our Saviour turn'd about, and ask'd, * *Who had touch'd him?* And Saint Peter raking hold of his Words, *Master, says he, the throng of People press upon you on all sides, and do you ask who touches you? 'Tis not that,* reply's our Saviour, *that I wou'd know, but some one has touch'd me in a far different manner from the rest, for I find that Vertue is gone out of me.* This is the Point of the affair, the touching JESUS CHRIST after this manner, is that which made him ask who touch'd him: For 'tis nothing to touch him in a throng, as the common People did, and as all the rest of the World do. The importance therefore in Meditation, is to touch JESUS CHRIST and his Mysteries, after such a manner, that we may feel the fruit and Vertue of 'em in our selves; and for this end we must examin things with attention, in particular, and not in gro'ss; and ruminate upon 'em with leasure. We neither find sweetness nor bitterness in things we give not our selves time to tast. So the Sinner feels not the bitterness of Sin, Death, Judgment, nor of Hell it self; because imitating Sick Persons, he swallows down the Pill's whole and intire, for fear he thou'd feel their bad tast; he look's upon things only in gro'ss, and never particularly ruminates upon 'em. Wherefore the reason why we relish not the Incarnation, Passion, Resurrection, and all other Mysteries, is, because we consider 'em very superficially,

Matth. 9. 20.

† Dicebat enim, intra se:
Si tetigero
tantum vesti-
mentum ejus,
salva ero.
Matth. 9. 21.

* Quis me tetigit? Præceptor, turbæ te comprimunt, & affligunt, & dicis, Quis me tetigit? Tetigit me aliquis, nam, & ego novi, virtutem de me exiisse.
Luc. 8. 45.

and descend not to particulars, and dive not into them as we shou'd do, by a long and solid Meditation. We tast not a Grain of Pepper or Mustard-seed, if we swallow it down whole; but if we break it in pieces with our Teeth, it bites and heats us, and even draws Tears from our Eyes.

C H A P. X.

Of other advantages we meet withal in Prayer.

*S. Tho. 2. 2.
q. 82. art. 3.*

THERE's another advantage in Meditation, says Saint *Thomas*, which is, that it causes true Devotion to spring up in our Hearts; which is of very great importance in a Spiritual Life; and is very much sought after by those who are in the way to Perfection. But this Devotion is nothing else, but an ardent inclination and disposition of the Will unto good; which has two causes, the one and the chief is from without us, and is God. The other is from within us, and is Meditation. For Meditation is that, which, next to the Grace of God, most of all warms the Heart and the Will; and is that which produces this so prompt disposition to all Vertuous Actions. So that true Devotion and Fervor of Spirit, consists not in a certain sensible sweetness, which some feel and experience in Prayer; but in having our Will always dispos'd, and ready to execute, what may any ways conduce to God's Glory and Service. This kind of Devotion is that which is lasting; but for the other it quickly vanishes; it being nothing else but an affectionate and sensible motion, that springs up upon a sudden, from a desire we have of what is amiable; tis only the effect of our Natural Complexion, it proceeds from a tenderness of Heart, which is easily rais'd in those, whose Thoughts and Affections are never so little mov'd, so that they express their tenderness by Tears: Which scarce have done running, but their Devotion dries up with their Tears, so that they seldom remember the good Resolutions they made. Infine, this Devotion is only

only a love of tenderness, which is founded upon sweetnesse and sensible consolations: Which so long as they last, Love and Devotion last also; and so long we remain careful, punctual, and lovers of silence and retirement: But when these sweetnesse fail us, all the rest also fail at the same time. 'Tis not the same with them whose Devotion is grounded upon more solid foundations, and who by the help of an exact Meditation, are disabus'd and convinc'd as they shou'd be: Such as these, always constantly persevere in Vertue, and tho' they feel no more the same sweetnesse nor consolations, yet they remain always the same; because that reason, which rais'd these, sentiments and dispositions in 'em, do's always subsist. A Love of this nature, is truly a Vigorous and Manly Love; 'tis the mark of the true Servants of God; and 'tis from this mark, not from sweetnesse or sensible consolations, that we must Judge, whether we have effectually profited in Vertue. The Passions of such as seek sensible comforts, are, as some say, like little Dogs, that never leave of barking, till you throw 'em a piece of Bread to appease 'em; they are quiet as long as the consolation lasts, and for a time desire nothing; but as soon as the Bread of consolation is gone, they begin to bark again; and 'tis then that we come to know what each one effectually is. They compare also these sweetnesse and consolations to Moveable Goods, which are soon worn out and dissipated; and liken solid Vertues to such as are immoveable, which last always, and of which consequently we ought to have a greater esteem.

There is hereupon another thing to be taken notice of, of which we have many great experiences; which is, that on the one side we see some Persons, who receive great consolations in Prayer, that afterwards are very weak in occasions, and let themselves be easily overcome by Temptations. And on the other side, we see others, which on the contrary, find nothing but aridities in Prayer, and know not what consolation or sweetnesse is, and yet notwithstanding courageously resist Temptations, and behave themselves gloriously in the Combat. The true cause of this, is what we have already touch'd, which is, that the fervor of the one proceeds only from a certain sensible sweetnesse, which soon passes away, and leaves 'em dry; and the other have a Devotion Establish'd upon solid Foundations; that is, they have employ'd, and made use of the light of true reason to undeceive and convince themselves; and thus they remain constant

constant and unshaken in the truths they have embrac'd, and the resolutions they have taken. One of the best means also with which we may help our selves, to remain constant in the practice of those good purposes we have made in Prayer, and to put 'em the better in execution, is, that we endeavour to remember what was the reason that mov'd us to conceive 'em; because that which occasion'd the first thought, will afterwards help us to conserve, and put it in practice. There is the same advantage by a full disabusing, and well convincing our selves by Reason in Prayer; so that altho afterwards we cannot call to mind those particular Motives that oblig'd us to make this resolution, nevertheless we are thereby sufficiently mov'd to remain more constant therein; because we know in general, that 'twas not made without reason; and this certainly gives us strength to resist Temptations, and to persever in the way of Vertue.

*Gerson. p. 2.
Alphab. 34.
list. M.*

'Twas for this reason that *Gerson* made so great an account of Meditation, that being ask'd, what Employment was most profitable for a Religious Person retir'd in his Cell; and which of these four, either Spiritual Reading, Vocal Prayer, Manuel Work's, or Meditation were more proper? He answer'd, that setting Obedience aside, they cou'd do nothing better, than apply themselves to Meditation. The reason he gave was this; that tho in time of Vocal Prayer, or Spiritual Reading, we find perhaps more fervor, and, as it seem's to us, greater profit than in Meditation; yet, as soon as we leave of Reading or Speaking, our Devotion in like manner ordinarily ceases. But Meditation go's farther, and therefore is more profitable, since it disposes the Mind for the future; and therefore he sayd we must accustom our selves to it, to the end that when our Voice or Books happen to be wanting, Meditation may serve us instead of Voice or Books, by which means true Devotion will never be wanting or extinguish'd in us.

C H A P. XI.

*Of the Method to be observ'd in Prayer, and
the fruit we are to draw thence.*

M^tY Heart is inflam'd within me, say's the Royal Prophet, and in my Meditation this Fire shall be kindl'd. The Method we must follow in Prayer, is prescrib'd us in these words, according to the interpretation of the

Holy Fathers, who explicate the Fire here mention'd to be the Fire of Charity, and the Love of God and our Neighbor; which was kindl'd in the Bowels of the Holy Prophet, by Meditation of Heavenly things. *My Heart*, says he, *is inflam'd within me*; behold the effect of Prayer. But how is it heated? By Meditation: *And in Meditation the Fire shall be kindl'd*; behold the means, and the instruments that serv'd to light this Fire. This manner of Meditating, says Saint Cyrill of Alexandria, is like the striking a piece of Steel upon a Flint, to draw Fire out of it. 'Tis therefore by Meditation and Reflections of the Understanding, that we must continually strike upon the Flints of our hard Heart, till we draw Fire from thence, and till we inflame our selves with the Love of God, and our Neighbor, and with an ardent desire of Humility, Mortification, and all other Christian Vertues.

Nevertheless, tho' Meditation be so profitable and necessary, yet we must not pass our Prayer only in reasoning and reflections; nor must we stay and repose upon these; because otherwise 'twould rather be a Study than Prayer: But all the Meditations we make, must serve as so many helps to excite the desire of Vertue in our Hearts. For the Perfection of a Christian and Religious Life, consists not either in good thoughts, or in the understanding of Holy things, but in solid and true Vertues; and particularly in those Acts of Vertue we produce, which are as Saint Thomas say's, the accomplishment of all Perfection. Wherefore 'tis this we must

† Concaluit
cor meum in-
tra me, & in
Meditatione
mea exarde-
cet ignis.
Psal. 38. 4.

Hierom. Ambr.
Greg. lib. 23.
Moral. c. 5.
Interlinealis,
& alij.

Cyrillus Alex.

S. Tho. 1. 2.
q. 3. art. 2.

must insist upon, 'tis upon this, we ought most to apply our selves unto in Prayer.

* Inquirimus
quid sit virtus,
non ut sciamus,
sed ut
boni efficiamur.
Gerson sup.
Magnificat.
Alphab. 86.
littera D.

This must be our first Principle and Rule in this matter; that * We apply not our selves to the search of any thing, but Vertue, and this also not only simply to know what Vertue is, but to become Vertuous. If we Sow, we must have a Needle; but 'tis not the Needle, but the Thread that Sow's; and 'twou'd be a ridiculous thing, and lost labor, for a Man to busie himself all Day long, in Sowing a Cloth with a Needle alone; without any Thread in it; yet they do much after this manner, who Meditate, and make many reflections in Prayer, without applying themselves to produce Acts of the Will, as Acts of Charity, Humility, &c. For Meditation must be like the Needle, it must pass first, but it must carry after it the Thread of Love, and such affectionate Acts, as Unite the Will unto God.

Bern. serm. 23.
sup. Cant.

Saint Ignatius particularly advertises us of this, and repeats the same very often, in his Book of the *Spiritual Exercise*; when after having Establi'd the Points, upon which we are to Meditate, and having made some observations of less importance; he presently adds, that we must apply all to our selves, to the end we may from thence draw some fruit. In effect, all the advantage of Prayer consists in knowing how to apply to our selves, and to our own profit, what we Meditate of; according to the necessity we have thereof. As the Sun, says Saint Bernard, heat's not all, that it enlightens; so Meditation, tho' it teaches us what we must do, do's not always excite every one to practice, what it teaches; nor do's it raise or stir up the affections of all the World. And as there is a great difference between knowing where great Treasures are, and the possessing 'em; and as 'tis the Possession only, and not the simple knowledge that makes a Man Rich; so there is a great difference between knowing God, and between fearing and loving him. 'Tis not the knowledge of what belongs to God, but 'tis his Love and his Fear that renders us truly Wise and Rich. They make also another very just comparison, upon the same subject. As it signifies nothing, say they, to a Man almost Dead with Hunger, to be present at a Table cover'd with all sorts of Meats, if he be not permitted to Eat thereof; so he that perform's Prayer, profits little by the Holy Thoughts he receives in it, if he nourishes not himself therewith, nor apply's 'em to himself, making firm and constant resolutions to put 'em in practice.

But

But still to examin things more particularly, I say, that the whole fruit we must draw from Meditation, consists in forming Pious desires in the bottom of our Hearts, that we may afterwards in due time practice 'em. And therefore Saint Ambrose says, that *† Action is the End of the Meditation of God's Commandments.* Amongst many other particulars, that the Scripture gives us notice of, concerning those Holy Creatures that *Ezechiel* saw in his Vision, it says; * *That they had Hands of Men, under their Wings;* to let us know, that in Meditation we must raise our selves by the help of our Understanding; that afterwards we may come to execute and practice, by means of our Will. Wherefore that which we must regard in Prayer, is to excite in our selves either Acts of Humility, by contemning our selves, and desiring to be contemn'd by others; or an ardent Will to suffer for the Love of God, proposing to our selves to suffer with joy, the present pains and afflictions we lie under; or sentiments of affection to Poverty of Spirit, desiring to be rejected and contemn'd by all; and even sometimes to want such things as are very necessary. In fine, we must endeavour to bring with us to Prayer, a lively sorrow for our Sins; a firm resolution rather to die than offend God; an extraordinary gratitude for his benefits; an intire resignation of our selves into his Hands; and an ardent desire to imitate our Divine Master, in the practice of those Vertues, of which he has giv'n us an example. Behold here what ought to be our aim, and the end of our Meditation, and what fruit we must draw from thence.

From what has been already sayd, it follow's; that because we make use of Meditation and Reflection, as means to excite our Will to Acts of Affection, and Holy Resolutions, and that this is our only aim, and end; consequently we must not entertain our selves in Meditation any longer time, than is necessary to move our Will. For the means must be proportionable to their end, so that when we find our Will is touch'd with any motion of Piety, as for example with a Regret for our Sins, Contempt of the World, Love of God, Desire to suffer for him, and such like other motions; we must imitate Skilful Architects, who, as soon as the Arch of a Vault is finish'd, takes away the Frame of Wood, upon which it was form'd; that is, we must presently interrupt our Meditation, and stay upon these Affectionate Acts, till our Soul is quite penetrated therewith. This advice is very im-

Tom. I.

Qq

portant,

† Meditatio-
nis præcepto-
rum cœlestium
intentio,
vel finis, ope-
ratio est.

Ambros. sup.
titul. 1. p. 118.
Et Meditabar
in præceptis
tuis.

* Et manus
hominis rub-
pennis eorum.
Ezechiel. 1. 8.

S. Igu. li.
Fixer. Spirit.
add. 4.

† Anima mea
sicut terra
sine aqua tibi.
Psal. 142. 6.

Chrysost. traſſ.
de Orat.

portant, and is giv'n us by Saint Ignatius, in his Book of the *Spiritual Exercise*, where he says, in the very moment, that we begin in our Meditation to feel in our selves these motions of Fervor and Devotion, we must stop and fix there, without being in pain to pass to other things, till we are thereby very well penetrated and replenish'd. As a Gardiner who Waters a Bed in his Garden, and perceiving the Water not presently to enter into it, stops a little to let the Earth Drink it in, and go's no farther till it has sunk to the very bottom, and that the Earth is well Water'd; in like manner, when the Water of these Holy affections and desires, begins to enter into our Soul, which is, to speak with the Psalmist, † *Like Earth without Water*; we must suspend the operation of our Understanding, and think of nothing else, but the receiving these Holy Waters, and so long enjoy the inclination of our Will, till our Heart being fill'd, we feel it wants no more. The Great Saint *Chrysostom* explicates the same thing, by another comparifon. Have you not taken notice, says he, of a Lamb, which wou'd Suck it's Dam? It first go's from the one side to the other, it takes, it leaves, and returns again divers times, sometimes to one, sometimes to the other Teat; but when he find's that the Milk begins to come, he presently stops, and do's nothing else but receive it, and takes it by larger draughts. 'Tis the same in Prayer, as long as the Dew of Heaven do's not fall, we turn from one side to another, by means of reasoning and reflections; but as soon as we begin to feel it, we must stop, and think of nothing else, but how to receive it into the bottom of our Heart, and quietly enjoy those sweet and delicious draughts, whereby we may replenish and nourish our Soul's.

C H A P.

C H A P. XII.

Of how great importance it is, to rest upon these Acts and Affectionate Motions of the Will.

TIS of so great importance, to stay a long upon these affectionate motions of the Will, that the Masters of Spirit say, that Prayer is than in it's Sovereign degree of Perfection, when we seek no more to excite the Love of God, by the help of Meditation; but that the Heart being penetrated with this Love it searches after, enjoys it, and reposes it self therein, as in the only end it seek's or desires. 'Tis this the Spouse teaches us, by her own example, in the *Canticles*, when she says, * *I have found him whom my Soul Loves; I will hold him fast, and will not let him go*: And what she also insinuates to us by these other words, † *I Sleep, but my Heart is awake*. For in Perfect Prayer, the Understanding is as 'twere asleep, because all it's functions are in a manner suspended. But the Will and Heart are awake, and melt with tenderness for her Heavenly Spouse. This sleep also of the Spouse is agreeable to her Beloved, * *Who conjures the Daughters of Jerusalem, not to disturb the repose of his Spouse, and not to awake her till she wakes of her self*. So that Meditation, and all those other functions of the Mind in Prayer, are all made use of, and directed in order to Contemplation; and are as so many steps, to help us to ascend to it. 'Tis after this manner that Saint *Austin* speaks of it, in his Book he call's the *Ladder of Paradise*, where he says, that † *We search by Reading, we find by Meditating, we ask by Prayer, and we obtain by Contemplation*. And afterwards making mention of that passage propos'd in the Gospel: * *Seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be open'd unto you; he apply's it to the same thought: † Seek, says he, in Reading, and you will find in Meditating; knock by the help of Prayer, and the Gate shall be open'd unto you by means of*

Q 9 2

Contemplation.

* Inveni quem diligit anima mea: Tenui eum, nec dimittam. Cant. 3. 4.
† Ego dormio, & cor meum vigilat. Ibid. 5. 2.

* Ne suscitetur, neque evigilare faciat dilectam, donec ipsa velit. Ibid. 5. 5.

† Lectio inquirat, Meditatio inveniat, oratio postulet, contemplatio deglutat.

Aug. lib. de Scala Parad. * Querite, & invenietis; pulsate, & aperietur vobis.

Matth. 7. 7. † Querite legendo, invenietis Meditando. Pulsate orando, & aperietur vobis contemplando.

Contemplation. There is also, says *Albertus Magnus*, and many other Saints, this difference between the Contemplation of the Faithful, and that of the Heathen Philosophers; that, that of the Philosophers, only perfected the Understanding, by the knowledge of truth; and stopt in that alone, as having no other end, but to know daily more and more; but the Contemplation of the Faithful go's farther, and tends to the moving of the Will, and to warm and inflame it with the Love of God; according to these words of the Spouse: * *My Heart melted with tenderness, at the moment my Beloved spoke.* Saint Thomas understood very well this difference, when speaking of Contemplation, he says, that thò it Essentially consists in the operations of the Understanding; yet it oftentimes receives not it's last Perfection, but from affectionate motions, and the Acts of the Love of God, produc'd by the Will: So that these Acts and motions must be the principal and chief end of Contemplation.

This Form of Prayer, as Saint *Austin* takes notice, is taught us in the Gospel by *JESUS CHRIST* himself, when he warn's us, † *Not to speak much in Prayer.* Whereupon the same Saint adds, * that 'Tis a quite different thing, to employ our selves in long Discourses, and to entertain our selves for a long time in affectionate thoughts; and that in Prayer we ought, as much as we can; to renrench the one, and let our Prayer be always accompany'd with the other: *Because*, says he, 'tis a business that is better treated by sighs than words. The delicacy of thoughts, the force of arguments, and the abundance of discourse, are all to little purpose, when we treat with God. There are only the desires of the Heart, Sigh's, Moan's and Tear's, that we must employ our selves in, when we treat with him, according to the Counsel of the Prophet *Jeremy*: † *Let not the Apple of your Eye be silent.* Saint *Hierome* hereupon proposes a Question to himself, and after having ask'd, how 'twas possible the Apples of our Eyes shou'd speak; because speaking is only the proper Office of the Tongue? When we pour out our Tear's, says he, before God, then 'tis that the Apples of our Eyes speak to him, and in that manner make themselves be understood by him; In like manner, thò our Mouth utter not a word, yet our Heart ceases not to make it's cry's be heard. 'Tis this which Saint *Paul* explicates to us, when Writing to the *Galatians*, he says, that

* God

* Anima mea liquefacta est, ut locutus est. Cant. 5. 6.

† Orantes autem nolite multum loqui. Matib. 6. 7.

* Aliud est sermo inultus, aliud diurnus affectus: absit ab oratione multa locutio, sed non desit multa precatio. Et negotium hoc plus gemitibus quam sermonibus agitur. Aug. lib. de orando Deum. c. 10. que est ep. 121. ad Prob.

† Neque taceat pupilla oculi tui. Thren. 2. 18. Hier. in Ps. 50.

* *God has sent the Spirit of his Son, which cry's out in our Hearts, Father, Father: And 'tis this that God himself gave us also to understand, when he ask'd Moses, † Wherefore do you Cry to Me? Tho' Moses had not so much as open'd his Mouth; but instead thereof, had made his Heart speak to him, Praying with so much fervor and efficacy, that God ask'd him, why he cry'd out after such a manner. 'Tis in this nature that we must raise our Voices to God in our Prayer, 'tis thus we must speak to him with our Eyes; 'tis thus, the *The Apple of our Eye must not be silent*. And 'tis thus we must cry out to him, with the Sighs, Tears, Sobs, and Groans of our Hearts.*

* *Miste Deus spiritum Filii sui in corda vestra clamantem, Abba Pater.*

Ad Gal. 4. 6.

† *Quid clamas ad me? Exod. 14. 15.*

CHAP. XIII.

In which, the complaints of such as say they are not capable of Meditating are satisf'd.

WHAT we have already sayd, may serve for a sufficient Answer to those, who complain they know not how to Meditate; because nothing ever presents it self to their Mind's, whereby they may be help'd to extend the Points they have taken; and therefore they presently want matter. There's nothing in this that shou'd afflict 'em; for as we have already sayd, Meditation is an exercise, that consists more in the Acts of the Will, than in the Discourses of the Understanding. And even the Masters of Spirit admonish us to take care, that the Meditation be not too long; because by this means, and particularly when we entertain our selves with curious and subtile reflections, we only hinder the motions and affections of the Will; which notwithstanding ought to be the chief end of Prayer. The reason of this, is most clear and natural: For 'tis certain, if the Fountain head gives but one inch of Water, and if it be divided into different Pipes, the more there runs in the one, the less there will, run in the other. But the Vertue of our Soul is finite, and limited; so that the more it effuses it self

self by the Channel of the Understanding, the less 'twill be able to transmit by that of the Will; and thus we see by experience, that at the same time our Heart is fill'd with Devotion, if the Understanding lets it self be carry'd away with speculations and curious reflections, the Devotion is presently spent, and our Heart becomes dry. The reason of this is, because the source is all run out by the Channel of the Understanding, and therefore that of the Will must necessarily be dry'd up. Hence it happens, says *Gerson*, that those who are not knowing and experienc'd, are sometimes more Devout, and make their Prayer far better than others; because a less dissipation of Mind happens in 'em, by means of the Understanding; and without running after far-fetch'd speculations, they presently endeavour to move their Will's, by simple and familiar reflections, which make a deeper impression upon 'em, than the most sublime and exquisite Meditations can make upon others. We have an example of this in that Cook I have already mention'd, who from the material Fire, he had continually before his Eyes, took occasion to call to mind the Eternal Fire of Hell; and to enter into so great sentiments of Devotion, that amidst his Occupations, he had continually the gift of Tear's.

That which is here still to be observ'd, is, that so long as the motions of the Will, and sentiments of the Heart are very sublime, 'tis no matter whether the thought or the reflection that cause 'em be never so mean and common. We have sufficient proofs and examples of this truth in Scripture; where the Holy Ghost by simple and easie comparisons, is oftentimes pleas'd to explicate the highest and most sublime Mysteries. Saint *Ambrose* speaking of this Verse of the Psalmist: * *Who will give me the Wings of a Dove, that I may fly and be at rest?* Ask's the Question, why the Prophet desirous to fly, and raise himself on high, shou'd desire rather the Wing's of a Dove, than of any other Fowl, since there are many more swift than a Dove? 'Tis, says he, because the Prophet knew very well, that to fly to the highest pitch or top of Perfection, and to raise our selves to what is most sublime in Prayer, the Wing's of a Dove are the best; whereby he wou'd insinuate, that simplicity of Heart, is more proper and fit for it, than the sublimity and delicacy of the Understanding, according to the words of the Wise Man. † *The Conversation of our Lord, is with the simple.*

Wherefore

*Gerson de monte
contempl.
Alpha. 73. c.
2. & seq.*

3. Treat. cb. 9.

* *Amb. ser. 70.
Quis dabit
mihi pennas
sicut colum-
bae, & volabo,
& requiescam?
Psalm. 54. 7.*

† *Cum simpli-
cibus fermoci-
natio ejus.
Perr. 3. 32.*

Wherefore we have no reason to be in pain, when in time of Prayer, we find difficulty to make any great or long discourses; or find not any reflections whereby to extend the Points of our Meditation. On the contrary, 'tis esteem'd, with a great deal of reason, that in a Spiritual Life, the better and most advantageous of all other conditions, is that, which God causes, by stopping the course of a wandering and diffuse speculation, and opening at the same time a source or Fountain, of affections and sentiments of the Heart; to the end that the Understanding remaining in a most profound tranquility, the Will may repose in God alone, and intirely employ it self in the Love and Enjoyment of the Sovereign good. If our Lord bestow's upon you this favor, that by the help of some simple reflection, or that by the single consideration of his being made Man, of his being Born for your sake in a Stable, and Dying for you upon a Cross, you find and feel your self inflam'd with his Love, and with a desire to Humble and Mortifie your self for his sake; and that you entertain your self for a long time herein; this kind of Prayer, is without doubt far better, and far more profitable, than if you had busy'd your self with long reflections, and sublime discourses: Because you stay'd upon that which is most exquisite and essential in Prayer, and upon that which ought to be the end and fruit thereof. This may let us see, how much they abuse and deceive themselves, who imagine they have not made a good Prayer, when they find no reflections whereupon they may stop and entertain themselves; and think they have succeeded well in their Prayer, when many such reflections have offer'd themselves to their thoughts.

We Read in the Chronicles of Saint *Francis*, that a Holy Religious Man, Nam'd Brother *Giles*, sayd one Day to Saint *Bonaventure*, who was General of their Order: God has giv'n great Talents to you and other Learned Men, whereby you may Serve and Praise him, but we simple and ignorant People, who have no light at all, what can we do to please God? If our Lord, answer'd Saint *Bonaventure*, thou'd have giv'n no other Grace to a Man but this, to be able to Love God, this alone were sufficient, to make him thereby more pleasing to his Divine self, and cause him to Merit more, than by all other helps together. How reply'd the good Religious, is it possible then, that an ignorant and simple Person, thou'd be able to Love JESUS CHRIST as much,

*Hist. Ord.
Min. 1 p.
lib. 7. c. 14.*

much, as a Wise and Learned Man? 'Tis possible, reply'd Saint *Bonaventure*, that a poor simple ignorant Woman, may have as great a Love and Charity, as a very Learned Divine. Hereupon the good Religious, transported with fervor, Ran about that side of the Garden next the Town, and fell a crying out with a lowd Voicé, *Poor Simple Women, Love but our Lord JESUS CHRIST, and you may obtain a great Merit, as Brother Bonaventure*; and he had scarce ended these words, but, as he frequently did, he fell into an Extasie, and remain'd in it, for three whole hour's together.

CHAP. XIV.

Two advertisements, which may considerably help us, to make our Prayer well, and to draw great Fruit from it.

TO make our Prayer well, and draw from thence such Fruit as we ought; 'twill be extreamly profitable to us, first to be assur'd, that Prayer is not the chief end, we propose to our selves in a Spiritual Life; but only a mean's and help we make use of, for our advancement in Perfection. So that we must not confine our selves to Prayer, as to the end, in which we are to repose and acquiesce: For our Perfection consists not in great consolations, and sweetnesses of Contemplation, but in acquiring a perfect Mortification of Sense; in obtaining a Victory over our selves; in surmounting our Passions and Appetites; and in re-establishing our selves, as much as 'tis possible, in the happy State of Original Justice, in the which we were all of us Created, in the Person of our first Father *Adam*. For then the Flesh and Concupiscence we subject to Reason; and Reason was intirely subject and conformable to God: And 'tis to arrive to so elevated an end as this, that we must help our selves by Prayer, as a mean's most proper and profitable. Notwithstanding

standing Iron is so hard, yet the Fire mollifies it, and renders it fit to be form'd to what use we please. Prayer works the same effect upon our Heart, which is naturally hard, has a repugnance to Mortification and Contempt, and find's it very difficult to submit it self, to the Will of another; wherefore we must have recourse to Prayer, to overcome this hardness; and by the Fire and Heat of Devotion, and the example of JESUS CHRIST, it will become so soft and pliable, that we may afterwards very easily manage it, and form it to whatsoever shall be necessary for God's Greater Glory and Service. Behold what Prayer ought to work in us; behold the fruit we must gather from thence: And as to those sweetneses and interior consolations we sometimes receive from God therein, 'tis not that we shou'd repose or rest in 'em, for which he send's 'em; but he gives 'em to the end, that we become more ready and fervorous to run on in the way of Vertue and Perfection.

'Tis this the Holy Ghost wou'd give us to understand, by what happen'd to *Moyse*, descending from the Mountain, where he Convers'd with God. The Holy Text says, that coming from thence, his Face was resplendent with Ray's of light; and this light was form'd into the shape of Horn's: For as in Scripture, Horn's are a Symbol of strength, so the Holy Ghost wou'd thereby insinuate to us, that we must arise from Prayer with new force, to be able to operate as we shou'd do. The Son of God has also taught us the same thing by his own example, in the Night of his Passion; he put himself three times in Prayer, to prepare himself for the sufferings he expected; and as soon as he had ended it, he sayd to his Disciples, * *Arise, let us go, he who betray's me is at hand.* He himself, offers and delivers up himself into the Hands of his Enemies. † *He was offer'd, because 'twas his pleasure.* Yet 'twas not, as Saint *Ambrose* well observes, because he wanted either preparation or succour that he Pray'd, but because he wou'd teach us by his own example, to help our selves by Prayer, as with a most proper means to surmount all difficulties that can occur in the way of Vertue. Saint *Chrysostom* compares our Heart to an Instrument of Musick, and says, that Prayer tun's all the Notes, to draw from thence such a Harmony as is very agreeable to God. In effect, that which we must propose to our selves in Prayer, is, so to regulate all the motions of our Heart, and all our Actions and Passions, that all of 'em may accord

Tom. I.

R r

very

Exod. 34. 29.

* Surgite, ex-
mus: Ecce ap-
propinquavit
qui me tradet.
Matth. 26. 46.
† Oblatus est,
quia ipse vo-
luit.
Isaïe 53. 7.
Ambros.

Chrysost. Tract.
de Orat.

very well with reason, and with God. Wherefore we are every Day admonish'd, in these Exhortations that are made to us, that our Prayer shou'd be Practical; that is to say, that it has regard to the regulating of our Life, the facilitating difficulties, and removing the obstacles we shall meet withal in a Spiritual Life. The Holy Ghost also gives the Name of * *Wisdom, to the Science of Saints*; which is nothing else but Prayer; because Prudence teaches us the regulating our Actions; as Human Science consists only in the simple knowledge of objects.

* Scientia
Sanctorum,
prudentia,
Prov. 9. 10.

Theodoret.

Theodoret, in his Religious History, reports of a Holy Anchorer, who was wont say, that Physicians ordinarily treat each Corporal Disease with a particular and proper remedy; and frequently apply many remedies to the Cure of one Disease; because all Medicines are weak, and have only a limited Vertue in 'em: But says, that Prayer is an universal remedy, and is very efficacious in all our necessities, to repel and resist the attack's of the Devil, and to gain all sorts of Vertues; so that to all the Evils of the Soul, it apply's an Infinite good, which is God himself; from whom it borrow's all it's force and power. They also call it Omnipotent; and 'tis a good Title; because 'tis in effect a Sovereign remedy, which the Saviour of the World has giv'n us, against all sorts of Temptations. † *Watch and Pray*, says he, *that ye enter not into Temptation*.

Omnipotens
oratio: cum
sit una, om-
nia potest.

† Vigilate, &
orato, ut non
intretis in ten-
tationem.
Matth. 26. 41.

The second advertisement, which will help us to reduce the other into practice, is, that as before we put our selves in Prayer, we shou'd know the Points upon which we are to Meditate; so we must also know the fruit, we are to gather from it. But some may say, how shall we know beforehand, what fruit to draw from the Prayer we are about to make? This proposition wants very much to be clear'd, which I shall endeavour to do, and render it as intelligible as I can. Have I not just now sayd, that when we have recourse to Prayer, 'tis to find out a remedy for our Spiritual Infirmities, and to gain the Victory over our selves, and over our Passions, and bad habits; and that Prayer is a means whereby we help our selves for the amendment and reformation of our Lives? This being so, we must consider for some time before we begin our Prayer; and ask our selves, what is the greatest Spiritual Infirmary I have? What is the obstacle, that most opposes it self to my progress in Vertue? And what Enemies make the most open War against my Soul?

Soul? Let every one set this well before his Eyes, let him before-hand call it to mind, that afterwards, he may insist with greater fervor in his Prayer, to procure some necessary remedy for this evil, wherewith he is molested; and let all the preparation he makes for the disposing the Points of his Meditation, tend to no other end. You are for example Tempted with an irregular desire of the esteem, and praises of Men; and this renders you so very sensible of the least appearance of any contempt, that sometimes you cannot forbear to let your resentment appear in your exterior. You perceive 'tis this which more violently wages War against you, and is the greatest obstacle and hindrance of your Spiritual advancement; that 'tis this which most of all hinders the peace and quiet of your mind; and infine this is that which occasions your falling into your most considerable faults and imperfections. Since you know that this is your greatest fault, 'tis to overcome and root out this, that you must chiefly apply your self; and consequently this is the fruit you must propose to your self, to gather out of your Prayer; this is that, you must always have before your Eyes, and which without any respite you must insist upon: Wherefore 'tis a great abuse that those suffer, who think not upon what most imports 'em, but, like a Hunter that Shoot's always at random, go to Prayer without any fix'd design to profit, by what the Holy Ghost shall put into their mind's. We go not to Prayer to take all that comes to hand, but we go to find what is most necessary for us; and to imitate a Sick Man, who go's not to an Apothecaries, to take what Drug's come next; but to seek those he stands most in need of. One is puffed up with Pride and Vanity, another boyl's with Anger and Impatience, a third abounds in his own sense, being ty'd to his own Will and Opinion; every Day we find our selves faulty; and yet in Prayer we entertain our selves with far-fetch'd speculations, and subtile reflections, taking hold of the first pleasant thing that represents it self; and without directly stopping or setting upon any thing, do nothing else but let our mind's wander to and fro about nothing to the purpose. This is not the way to profit. We must continually think upon that, which stands most in need, of being reform'd in us, and endeavour to remedy it by Prayer; since Prayer was Establish'd for this end. Saint Ephrem apply's very well to this subject, the example of the Blind Man in the Gospel, who had recourse to JESUS

Rr 2

CHRIST,

Eph. em. exhort. ad Relig. de armat. spirituali. tom. 2. p. 260.

* Domine, ut
videam.
Luc. 18. 41.

CHRIST, crying out, and begging that he wou'd take pitty on him. Consider, says he, that our Saviour having ask'd him what he wou'd have, the Man presently represents to him his greatest Misery, which was his blindness, and sayd, * *Lord grant me my Sight*. He ask'd him for nothing else that he wanted, he represented not his Poverty, his want of Cloathes or any thing else, but laying all other necessities aside, he thought only upon that which was most pressing. 'Tis after this manner, continues this great Saint, that we must behave our selves in Prayer, we must regard that which we stand most in need of, and insist and persever in our importunity, till we have obtain'd it.

But to forestall one difficulty that may be objected, 'tis good here to take notice, that tho' it be true, that to excite our selves to a love of those particular Vertues we stand most in need of, we must try whether the Matter, and Points we have chosen to Meditate upon, be such as they ought to be, to move our Will to produce fervorous Acts; nevertheless we may also affirm with truth, that some Mystery or Point we may take for our Meditation, may equally be apply'd to all sorts of necessities. For Prayer is like the Heavenly Manna, that has that tast, which each one desires: If you wou'd find sentiments of Humility, you will meet with 'em. in the considerations you shall make upon Sin, Death, Hell, the Passion of the Son of God, and upon the benefits you have thereby receiv'd. If you wou'd excite in your self a lively sorrow and an extream confusion for your faults, each one of these Points will also help to this effect. If you wou'd gain the Spirit of sweetness and patience, they will after the like manner, serve for the obtaining 'em. In fine, whatsoever you wou'd seek in Prayer, you will always infallibly therein find what you desire.

C H A P. XV.

How we are to understand, that in Prayer we must take to Heart, those things we stand most in need of; and insist thereupon till we have obtain'd 'em.

I Do not mean hereby, that in Prayer we must always apply our selves to one thing only; because, that tho' Humility, for example, or any other Vertue, be that which is most necessary for us, yet we may always in Prayer exercise our selves in other Vertues, and in forming or making Acts of 'em. You are mov'd to make an Act of Conformity with the Will of God, in whatsoever he shall please to ordain concerning you: Stop there, as long as you can; and all the time you shall employ in it, will be well spent; and your Prayer made after this manner will be very good, and be so far from diverting you from the sentiments of Humility, that 'twill even more and more excite you to them. You are mov'd to a grateful acknowledgement of all the benefits God has bestow'd upon you, as well in general, as in particular: Stop here, as long as you are able; since 'tis very just to thank God daily, for all the favors you have receiv'd from him, and principally for that, which he bestow'd upon you when he call'd you to Religion. You are mov'd to a horror of your Sins, and compunction for 'em, and to make a firm resolution rather to Die a thousand times than offend God: Sray a good while herein; you cannot produce an Act more profitable, and more conducing to your Salvation. You are mov'd to a great Love of God, to a fervent Zeal for the Salvation of Soul's, and an ardent desire for this end to expose your self, to all sorts of labors and sufferings: Repose and rest herein, and if you will, you may apply your self moreover to beg Grace of God, as well for your self, as for your Neighbor, and for the whole Church in general; for this is one
of

of the principal Points of Prayer, and by staying either in these, or those before mention'd, or in any others of the same nature, you may make a very good and profitable Prayer. Let us also take notice of the Psalm's, which are a most perfect Prayer, how they are replenish'd with an infinity of different affectionate Acts; and 'tis this that made *Cassian* say, that Prayer is like a Field enamel'd with a thousand different Odoriferous Flowers; a similitude *Isaac* made use of, when he sayd, * *The smell of my Sou is like the smell of a fertile Field, that our Lord has Bless'd.* But there is also an advantage in this variety; which is, that it ordinarily helps to make Prayer more easie and pleasant unto us; and consequently makes us persevere a longer time in it: For as a frequent repetition of the same thing, is wont to create tediousness; so variety on the other side, renders what we are about, more pleasant and delightful.

Wherefore what I wou'd say, is this, that 'tis of great importance for our Spiritual advancement, to take for some time, some one thing particularly to Heart; and it must be precisely that, which we find our selves stand most in need of: And in Prayer we must chiefly insist upon this, and beg it of God with fervor several times, several Days, nay even several Months; making this our chief business, having it continually before our Eyes, and lodging it in the very bottom of our Hearts; till we come at last to obtain it. Even Worldly affairs are perform'd after this manner; and therefore we ordinarily say, *God preserve us from the Man, that has but one Affair.* Saint *Thomas* speaking of Prayer says, that the more the desire unites it self to one thing in particular, the more perfect and efficacious it is; and upon this account, he recites those words of the Psalmist. † *I desir'd one thing of our Lord, and I will not cease earnestly to beg it of him, till I obtain it.* Whosoever pretends to render himself expert in any Art or Science, begins not one thing one Day, and another thing another; but he continues for some considerable time to make it his chief Study, till he throu'ly understands what he undertook to Learn. Whosoever therefore wou'd acquire any Vertue he stands in need of, must make it in like manner his chief business, and direct his Prayer and all his Spiritual Exercises to this end; and this, with so much the greater perseverance, by how much all Moral Vertues, according to the Doctrin of the same:

Cassian. collat.
9. cap. 7.

* Ecce odor
fili mei, sicut
odor agrippie-
ni, cui bene-
dixit Domi-
nus.
Gen. 27. 27.

S. Thom. 2. 2.
q. 83. art. 14.
arg. 2.

† Unam petii
à Domino,
hanc requiram.
Psal. 16. 4.

same Saint, are so inseparably united one with another, that whosoever perfectly possesses one of 'em, possesses all the rest. Root out of your Heart Pride, and Plant Humility in it's place: For as soon as you shall be truly Humble, you'll be Obedient, you'll be Patient, you'll complain of nothings, you'll think nothing hard; and tho' any thing shoud happen to you, very difficult to support, yet 'twill always seem to you very little, in comparison of what you deserve. As soon also as you shall be Humble, you'll be Charitable towards your Brothers, because you'll believe 'em all to be good, and that there is none bad but your self; you'll have a great simplicity of Heart, and you'll judge ill of no body, because you'll have so great sorrow and confusion for your own defects, that you'll not at all reflect upon those of your Neighbor: And what we say at present of these particular Vertues, may be in like manner extended to all others.

'Tis also very profitable to take for the subject of our particular Examin, the same matter that we also take for the subject of our Prayer; and to joyn Prayer and Examin together; because by this means all our exercises tending to the same end, we shall make a greater progress in Vertue. But *Cassian* goes farther yet, and would have us not only insist in our Prayer and Examin, upon what we find most necessary for us; but also would have us elevate our Minds to God several times in the Day, by short and lively Ejaculations, with Sigh's and Groan's of our Heart; and that to these we also add Pennances, Mortifications, and other particular Devotions for the obtaining what we desire. For since the greatest business we have, is to encrease in Vertue, and to root out that Vice which most of all predominates within us; and that bad inclination and propension also, which carry us on, and cause us to fall into most grievous faults; and since by the overcoming and rooting out this Vice, and the gaining this Vertue, we overcome and root out all Vices, and acquire all Vertues: Whatsoever care we employ in it, and what pains soever we can take upon this account, our care and pain's can never be better employ'd.

Saint *Chrysostom* says, that Prayer is like a Fountain in the middle of a Garden, without which all things would become dry and barren; and by the help of which, all things flourish and become fresh and pleasant: So 'tis by Prayer that we must

1. 2. 4. 61.
408. 1.

Collat. 9. c. 35.

Chrysost. tom. 3.
de Orat.

must always keep the Plants of Obedience, Humility, Patience, Mortification, Silence, Recollection, and all other Vertues in their continual Beauty and Perfection. But as in a Garden there's ordinarily one Plant or Flower, that is cultivated with more care than all the rest, and for which we always find time and Water sufficient, tho' we shou'd want for the others; so in the Spiritual Garden of our Soul's, where all things must be refresh'd, with the wholesom Water of Prayer, there must always be something upon which we more particularly cast our Eye, and for which we never want time to look after and Nurse it after a particular manner. I mean we must take notice which is the Vertue we most of all want, and apply our selves more to that, than all the rest. Moreover, since it commonly happens, that before we go out of a Garden we gather one of those Flowers that most of all pleases us; so in Prayer, we must apply our selves not only to what pleases us most, but what is most necessary for us; and endeavour to take it along with us, when we go from our Prayer.

What we have here sayd, may serve for a sufficient Answer, to those that demand, whether the fruit we gather from Prayer, must be conformable to the Matter upon which we Meditate? We have already taken notice, that tho' we ought always chiefly to apply our selves, to that which we find most necessary for us, yet we must exercise our selves also in producing Acts of other Vertues, according to the Point we have made choice of for our Meditation. But in this there's one thing very Essential, to be observ'd; which is, that those affections that shall arise in us, from the Matter we Meditate upon, must not be perform'd in hast and superficially; but, tho' we shou'd employ even the whole time of our Prayer in 'em, yet we must make 'em at leisure, entertaining our selves in 'em with peace and tranquility, till we feel our Hearts very well fill'd and penetrated therewith. For 'tis better without doubt to make and continue one sole Act after this manner, than to produce many Acts of different Vertues in hast, and only, as I may say, make an imperfect draught of 'em.

One of the things that most of all hinders some, from gathering that fruit out of Prayer they shou'd do, is, that they slightly pass over all the Acts they make: For they only touch the Matter, and leap from one thing to another: A thought comes into their mind to make an Act of Humility, they make it, and as soon as they have done, they

go to another: If it be to their purpose afterwards to make an Act of Obedience, they do the same, without staying any more upon it, than upon the first: Afterwards they make an Act of Patience, in which they employ no more time than in the former, and pass so quickly and lightly over all; that if they were running over burning Coals, they could not at all hurt themselves. Father *Avila* reprehends very severely, those that thus go from one thing to another, and says, that in effect, it proceeds from the deceit of the Devil; who thus lays different matters before 'em, to the end that, like Birds Flying from one Branch to another, they may not gather any considerable fruit out of their Prayer. 'Tis therefore of great importance to stay upon one thing, till the Soul is fill'd and well penetrated therewith. If you would, for example, make an Act of Contrition, and have a lively sorrow for your Offences; you must insist so long upon it, till finding your Soul seiz'd with a horror of Sin, you shall be able to say with the Prophet, † *I have hated Iniquity, and had it in Abomination*: For this will cause you to make a firm resolution, rather to Die a thousand Deaths, than Mortally offend God. Wherefore Saint *Austin* very judiciously takes notice, that the horror which Men have conceiv'd for some certain Sins, as of Parricide and such like, is the occasion that they very seldom fall into them. And on the contrary there are other Sins, that the frequent habit of committing 'em, has so taken away all apprehension or horror, and render'd 'em so small in appearance, that we permit our selves to fall into them very easily. If you desire also to exercise your self in Humility, and make Acts of this Vertue, you must so long entertain your self with thoughts of Self-contempt, till they have penetrated even to the bottom of your Soul; and dissipated in you all the Smoke of Vanity and Pride; and that you feel your self ready to suffer Contempt and Reproaches with joy. And that which we say here of Contrition and Humility, may in like manner be sayd of all sorts of Vertues, and all other Pious motions of the Soul.

By this we may see, how much the taking some one thing to Heart, and the persevering therein according to the manner before said, conduce to our Spiritual advancement; because if we entertain our selves an hour in the Morning, and another in the Evening with a desire of being Condemn'd, or in any other Pious sentiment of this

Tom. I.

S f

Nature,

Avila cap. 75.
Audi Glia.

† Iniquitatem
odio habui, &
abominatus
sum.
Psalm. 118. 163.

Consuetudine
ipsa viluerunt.
Aug. in Enchir.

Nature, and shou'd continue many Days together to do the same, 'tis certain, that this wou'd work quite different effects in our Hearts, and this Vertue wou'd be imprinted in it after a quite different manner, than by thinking upon it only now and then, as if it were by chance, or only by a slight and passing thought thereof. Saint

*Chrysost. trad.
de Orat.*

Chrysostom says, that tho' the Earth be never so good, yet to make it become Fertile, it must be well Water'd with Rain, and this not only once, but very often; our Soul's in like manner must be Water'd by Prayer, if we desire they shou'd bring forth the fruit of Justice and Sanctity: And he cites upon this Subject those Words of *David*: † *I have sung your Praises seven times a Day.* The Royal

† Septies in
die laudem
dixi tibi.
Psalm. 118. 164.

Prophet Water'd his Soul seven times a Day by means of Prayer; and the better to entertain himself in the same sentiments of Devotion, he renew'd it frequently in a short compass of time: We see this in the hundred and thirty fifth Psalm, how he repeat's twenty seven times together these words: * *Because his Mercy is for ever.* And in another Psalm, which contains only five Verses, he invites us to praise God, no less than eleven times: This manner of Prayer, in which the same words are repeated over and over again; and the persevering a good space in this practise; was also taught us by our Saviour himself, in the Garden of *Olives*; where he return'd to Prayer three several times; *Saying always the same Words*: Teaching us hereby, to insist often in Prayer upon the same thing, and always with a new fervor; for if we persevere a long while in this manner, we shall at last obtain the Vertue and Perfection we desire.

* Quoniam
in æternum
misericordia
ejus.
Psalm. 135. 1.
Psalm. 150.

† Eundem
sermonem di-
cens.
Matth. 26. 44.

C H A P.

C H A P. XVI.

Of the means how to Exercise our selves a long while in Prayer, upon the same Subject; and of a very profitable manner or form of Prayer, which is, the descending to particulars.

AFTER having shew'd that 'tis very profitable in Prayer, to stay a long while upon Interior Acts of the same Virtue, it remains that here we direct you to the means, how to effect this. The most common, and what is ordinarily assign'd, is to reproduce the same Act in our Heart, whether it be by helping our selves with the first consideration that mov'd us to form it (as a Man by repeated strokes upon a Wheel that hangs in the Air upon it's Axeltree, continues and augments it's circular motion) and exciting our selves by these words of the Prophet, † *My Soul return to thy repose, by remembering the benefits thou hast receiv'd of our Lord*; or by adding some other consideration to the first, when 'tis not sufficient to move us any longer; which is like the casting new fuel upon the Fire, when we wou'd preserve it from going out. But if after all this, we feel not our selves sufficiently excited, we must pass to another Point; for we must always have several Points in a readiness, to the end that when we have so exhausted one, that we find nothing more in it, whereby to inflame our Will; we may pass to another, that is better able to awake and stir up the motions of our Understanding; and carry our thoughts to what we chiefly desire and aim at. Moreover, when we wou'd avoid the disgust we find, in feeding constantly upon the same Meat, we are accusom'd to dress and order it after a different fashion, which renders it as it were new, and thereby incite in our selves a new appetite; so also to be able to persevere a long time upon the same subject in Prayer, which is the true Food and Nourishment of the Soul,

† Convertere
anima mea in
requiem tuam,
quia Dominus
benefecit tibi.
Psal. 114. 7.

there's no better way, than to season it after a different manner, by thinking of another consideration, or else upon some other Point, as we have sayd before. So that as often, as by any reflection different from the first, we produce the same Act; 'tis as 'twere a different kind of seasoning, that renders the thing in a manner new. We may also without making use of any new reflection, vary the interior Act of Vertue, after different ways; as, for example, if we wou'd exercise our selves upon Humility, we may sometimes rest upon the consideration and knowledge of our Misery and Weakness, and there find an ample subject of Confusion and Humiliation; sometimes we may employ our selves in desiring the Contempt of Men, considering that the esteem of the World, is only pure Vanity and Smoke; and consequently we must therefore make no account of it; sometimes we may conceive a wholesome shame and confusion, for the faults we daily find our selves guilty of, and ask God pardon, and beg a remedy for 'em; sometimes we may enter into an admiration of the Divine goodness, who tolerates us, notwithstanding all our Imperfections, when, frequently enough, we are scarce able to tolerate, or bear with our selves; and lastly, we may sometimes employ our selves in giving him thanks, that he has not permitted us to fall into greater faults. By this variety, we avoid that disgust, which the continuation of the same Act, ordinarily occasions; and the perseverance in the desire and exercise of the same Vertue, becoming hereby easie and pleasant; our Hearts by this means will be more deeply penetrated therewith, and this Vertue will take deeper Root. For as every time the File go's over the Iron, it rakes something with it, so also every time we make an Act of Humility, or of any other Vertue, we always diminish something of the contrary Vice.

There's besides this, another means to persevere many Days in Prayer, upon the same subject; which means also is both very easie, and profitable; and consists in descending to severall particulars of the things we Meditate. 'Tis not sufficient, as all Masters of Spirit tell us, to form in Prayer a weak and wandering desire, or a general resolution to serve God, to make progress in Vertue, and to render our selves Perfect; but we must moreover descend to the particulars of those things, we know are most pleasing to God: Nor is it sufficient to conceive a desire
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in general, of any Vertue in particular; as of Obedience, Humility, Patience or Mortification: For this sort of a general desire, or rather Velleity, is form'd in the Hearts even of the most vicious Persons: For Vertue being a thing both pleasant, honorable, and also most profitable, as well for this Life as for the other; 'tis an easie thing to love it, or thus to desire it in general; but this is not enough, besides this 'tis very necessary, that we shou'd desire upon this account, all those particular circumstances, that may have any coherence, or connexion thereunto. If for example we propose to our selves, the gaining a perfect Conformity to the Will of God; we must set before us the different conditions, in which we may happen to find our selves: And regard Sicknes, as well as Health; the time of Temptation, as well as of Comfort; and Life, as well as Death; with an intire Resignation to the Divine Will of God. If we design to be become Humble, we must in like manner descend to particulars; representing to our selves those things in which we may have any occasion of exercising Humility; and 'tis the same in all other Vertues. Because they are the particular Actions, that most of all touch and move us; and 'tis in the practise of these, that the difficulty of Vertue consists; and hereby also, we come to a trial and proof of our selves, and to a knowledge how 'tis to be gain'd. The method we are to observe herein, is in the beginning, to propose to our selves such examples and practises as are easie; and imagine afterward such as are more hard and difficult; and last of all, adding such as are hardest of all to be suffer'd; and when we think we have Master'd all these, we must endeavour after this manner still to raise our selves by little and little; never leaving off to make one Act after another, just as if the occasions were present; till there's nothing that opposes it self to our design; and till we have resisted and overcome all our difficulties with so much vigour, that at last we become Masters of the Field. But if afterward any new occasions are offer'd, we must also exercise our selves in these, and excite our selves to support 'em with Patience, and to make our profit of 'em. A certain Servant of God moreover adds, that we must daily in Prayer, purpose the practise of something in this kind each Day; so true it is, that we cannot descend too much to particulars, in what concern's our Perfection.

Without

Without doubt this is one of the most profitable things, in which we can exercise our selves in time of Prayer; for Prayer, as we have sayd, ought to be practical; that is to say, always tend to the practise of that Vertue, to which we aspire; to make plain and easie, the rub's and difficulties we meet withal in it's practice: And for this end 'tis good to make a trial, and experience upon our selves, by exercising our selves before-hand after such a manner, as Soldiers are Exercis'd in time of Peace; to the end they may be render'd more fit for those occasions, they will meet withal in time of War. *Cassian* also particularly recommends this Method; and 'tis the sentiment both of *Plutarch* and *Seneca*, that only weak Souls, do not conceive nor comprehend, how much the evils and dissatisfactions of this Life, are sweetned by often thinking upon 'em before-hand. 'Tis very profitable say they, often to fix our thoughts upon things that are hard and difficult; for as a Man who employs his thoughts only upon those things that are pleasant, hereby contracts a certain effeminacy, that makes him afraid of any pain or labor; and therefore he looses courage, at the least occasion that presents it self: So he who is accustom'd to propose to himself, the suffering of Sicknes, Exile, Prisons, and all other Adversities that can happen in this Life; will be the better prepar'd to receive 'em, when ever they shall happen; and will experience, that all these kinds of things, cause a great deal more fear and apprehension in the beginning, than they can do hurt in the end. * *The Darts we perceive a far off*, says Saint *Gregory*, hurt us far less than others; the Evil is in a manner half overcome, when we have foreseen it; the Enemies that surprise us, fright us far more, than those we couragiously expect shou'd set upon us.

Cassian coll. 19. cap. 16.

Plut. ad Apoll. Seneca lib. de conf. ad Helv. cap. 5.

* *Mindis enim jacula feruntur, quæ prævidentur.*
Greg. Hom. 35. sup. Evang.

In vita S. Igu. lib. 5. cap. 3.

We Read in the Life of Saint *Ignatius*, a thing very pertinent to this Subject; he chanc'd to be Sick; and the Physician, having ordain'd him to avoid all things that might give him any trouble of Mind; or to employ himself in any uneasie or disquieting thoughts; he took occasion hereby to think with himself, what accident cou'd happen, that was capable of afflicting him, or of disturbing the Peace of his Mind. After having cast his thoughts upon several, he found that that which wou'd come nearest his Heart, was the Conservation of the SOCIETY, which he had but newly Establish'd; and that the Dissolution thereof

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was the only thing that cou'd give him any pain or trouble. He afterwards went on, to examin himself how long this Affliction wou'd last, in case such a thing shou'd happen; and it seem'd to him, provided it was not his fault, he shou'd want only a quarter of an hour's Recollection and Prayer, to free himself from all the trouble that this wou'd give him, and to restore his mind to the same Peace, and tranquillity it before enjoy'd. He added moreover, that he shou'd conserve the same joy and quiet, even thò the SOCIETY shou'd come to be so intirely dissolv'd, as Salt is in Water. Behold here a most happy and most profitable matter of Prayer.

† *Is there any one of ye afflicted?* Says the Apostle Saint James, *let him have recourse to Prayer;* 'tis there we find a comfort, and a remedy for all our Evil's; and this was what the Royal Prophet practis'd, when he found himself oppress'd with any Interior Affliction or Desolation: * *My Soul, says he, refus'd to be Comforted, I thought upon God, and I was delighted in him.* This is God's Will, 'tis he that will have it thus, and this is enough for me; because I ought to have no other Will, nor desire any other satisfaction but his. Now if Prayer be so sovereign and efficacious a remedy, when Afflictions happen to us; to help us to support 'em as we shou'd do, and to make our profit of 'em; 'tis also an admirable preparative to render us more ready, and better dispos'd to receive 'em. Saint Chrysostom says, that one of the chief causes why Job remain'd so Constant, and Patient in all his Adversities and Sufferings, was, that he had prepar'd himself for 'em, after the foresaid manner; representing 'em often to his Mind, and making Acts of resignation thereupon, as upon things that might probably happen to him: According to what he himself tell's us in the following Words.

† *The fear I had, is truly fallen upon me, and that which I fear'd, has happen'd unto me.* But if you have not taken this good precaution, and if the sole imagination of bad and troublesome accidents thock you at present; what will the real things themselves do when they happen? If whilst you are in Prayer, and far from any occasion, you find not courage and vigour enough, to accept of any humble and painful Employment, or to suffer any contempt, what will you be able to do out of Prayer? When depriv'd of that help and succour, which those reflections upon the example of JESUS CHRIST occasion'd, and when

† Tristatur
aliquis ve-
strum? Oret.
Jac. 5. 13.

* Renuit con-
solari anima
mea: Memor
fui Dei, & de-
lectatus sum.
Psal. 76. 4.

Chryf. Hom. de
avaritia.

† Quia timor
quem timebam
evenit mihi:
Et quod vere-
bar, accidit.
Job. 3. 25.

*De Imit. Christi
lib. 1. c. 19.*

when you find your self amidst those obstacles and difficulties, that both the occasion and action will bring along with 'em. And if after having very great fervor in your Prayer, you shou'd afterward, when the occasion happens, fail to execute your good purposes, what wou'd you have done, had you not been at all prepar'd for 'em, and if in Prayer you had not had this fervor? If he who makes good purposes, says *Thomas à Kempis*, notwithstanding happens to fall, what will he do who makes none at all, or makes 'em very tepidly?

I have here furnish'd you with most ample and sufficient matter, to persever a long while together, upon the same subject in Prayer, and upon the same Act of Vertue. For the particular cases that may happen are numberless, and we must labor very hard, before we shall be able to resist all. But when you shall proceed so far, as to find in your self, as you imagine, sufficient strength to support with joy all that can happen to you, think not that you have gain'd the point, and that all is done; for there is still a great deal wanting: There's a great difference between Saying and Doing; and there are far more pains requir'd to execute, than to resolve; for in the Action, the object is present, and Acts by it self; when in the Design or Purpose, there are no other forces to hinder us, but what proceeds from our own Imagination. From whence it happens, that we very often find our selves so Zealous and Fervorous in Prayer, that we think nothing can be able to shake or move us; and yet when the first occasion presents it self, and when we come to execute our good purposes, we experience, to our shame and confusion, that we are far from being, what we presum'd and thought we had been. Wherefore 'tis not sufficient that you feel in your self these good desires, but you must endeavour that these desires become efficacious, and that they be put in execution. For Action is the true proof or trial of Vertue; and if you perceive your Actions, correspond not with the resolutions you have made, but that on the contrary, you find your self in the occasion, far from what you thought your self in Prayer; be truly confounded that you have nothing else, but weak and simple desires of what is good, or to say better, that they are no true desires at all, but only vain and flying Imaginations; because when the least occasion gives you any trouble, you loose courage and shamefully give way

way and run back. Imitate the Smith, who when the piece of Iron he forges, do's not the first time succeed, he puts it into the Fire the second time, to accommodate and give it a better form. Put therefore these Imperfect desires again into the Fire of Prayer, and there endeavour to render 'em efficacious, and do not give over till your Actions are conformable to your Purposes; and that there remains nothing that is able to render you wavering or inconstant in their Execution.

But even after you have gain'd thus much upon your self, and that you think you carry your self as you ought in all occasions, be not persuaded that there rests nothing else for you to do: For in the performance of the very Action, there are a great many degrees of Perfection, that you must endeavour to compass. First, you must support all things with Patience: *Suffer with Patience at least*, says a Holy Man, *if you cannot suffer with Joy*. Behold the first degree of Vertue; 'twill cost you some time and labor, before you come to this; and when you are arriv'd thus far, you have still a considerable progress to make, before you attain to Perfection: For as the Philosophers say very well, the true sign that we have gain'd any Vertue in it's Perfection, is readily, easily, and with pleasure to produce it's Acts. See therefore whether you practise Humility, Poverty of Spirit, Patience and other Vertues, with this readiness, facility, and pleasure; and thereby you will know, whether you truly possess any Vertue. See, according to the Rule, which the Gospel, as well as Saint Ignatius prescribes, for you to examin your self by. Whether Contempt and Reproaches bring you as much Joy and Satisfaction, as praises and honors give unto Worldly Persons? Whether in the want of all the commodities of this Life, you are as well pleas'd and contented, as the Covetous Man is amidst his Riches, and plenty of all things? Whether the Mortifications you suffer, be as pleasing to you, as ease and pleasures are to Worldlings? Now if in the practise of each Vertue, we must endeavour to raise our selves to this height of Perfection, we shall have matter enough to employ our selves in, all our Lives long; since in one Vertue alone, we find sufficient employment not only for many Days, but even for many Years.

C. 4. exam. 6.
44. & Reg. 11.
(summar)

C H A P. XVII.

That we must Meditate upon the Mysteries of the Gospel, with deliberation; and what means will most of all help us in this Exercise.

TIS also of very great importance to penetrate very well, and dive to the bottom of things, in the Meditations we make upon the Mysteries of the Gospel, and not pass 'em over without attention; for 'twill be of far greater profit to us, to Examine only one deliberately, than to consider many superficially. 'Tis for this reason that Saint Ignatius in his Book of the *Spiritual Exercises*, makes such an account of those repetitions he would have us make, at the end of each Exercise, by repeating it twice or thrice over. † *Because he who seek's, find's; and the Gate shall be open'd to him that knock's.* Perseverance overcomes all difficulties, and gains it's end. 'Twas necessary that *Moses* should strike twice upon the Rock, to make Water issue forth. And even *Jesus Christ* himself, did not immediately Cure the Blind Man in the Gospel. He first Annointed his Eyes with Spittle, and ask'd him whether he saw any thing; and the Man who as yet could not see any objects distinctly, answer'd him, † *I see Men walk, that seem to me like Trees.* Then our Saviour touch'd his Eyes the second time with his Hand, and perfected their Cure. Behold here what ordinarily happens in Prayer, for by means of going over the same matter several times, and persevering therein; we discover those things which at first we did not perceive. Much after the same manner, as when we enter into a dark Room, at first we see nothing at all; but if we remain for some time in it, we begin by little to distinguish the objects that are therein. We must therefore insist a good while in the consideration of the same matter, and not leave off, till we find

† Quia qui quærit, invenit, & pulsanti aperietur
Matth. 7. 8.
Numer. 20. 11.

* Video homines velut arbores ambulantes.
Marc. 8. 24.

find ourselves disabled of the Errors of the Age; till we clearly behold these important truths; and find our selves confirm'd in our good resolutions. For this, as I have said before, is one of the greatest fruits, we can gather out of Prayer, and to which we must chiefly apply our selves.

Now to come to the means, by which we may help our selves, to make long and wholesome affections upon these Mysteries. I say, when God is pleas'd to impart his Lights to a Soul, and open it's Eyes, 'twill find so many things to consider, and such a variety of things to insist upon, that it may say with the Psalmist. *† Uncover my Eyes, and I will consider the wonderful things of thy Law.* * *I will rejoice in the consideration of thy Promises;* as he, who has gain'd a Victory, find's a great quantity of rich Spoil. Saint Austin and Saint Francis, pass'd whole Days and Nights in repeating these Words, *† Who are, you O Lord, and who am I? O what I could know you, O what I could know my self! You are my God, and all things are me.* This manner of Prayer is very conformable to that, which the Prophet *Isay* says, the Blessed make in Heaven; when Ravish'd with the Contemplation of the Divine Majesty, they incessantly Sing, *Holy, Holy, Holy.* The *Apocalyps* recounts the self same, of those Holy and Mystrious Creatures, which were before God's Throne. * *They never cease'd,* says Saint John, *to repeat Day and Night, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Omnipotent, who hast been from all Eternity, and will Eternally continue to be.*

But to arrive to this, 'tis necessary, that we on our side perform our duty, by accustomed our selves to reflect at leisure upon these Mysteries, and exercise our selves in diving into their particular circumstances. *Gerson* says, there is no better means to succeed in this sort of Prayer, than the continual practise of it; and 'tis not a thing which is gain'd by the force or Elegancy of arguing, or is learn'd either by hearing it spoke of, or by Reading many Treatises of Prayer; but to instruct our selves well herein, we must set our Hand to work, and exercise our selves a long while in it. When a Mother wou'd teach her Child to go, she hold's not any long discourses with it, to make it understand what it must do, but puts it in the practise thereof, makes it form it's Steps, and by this means, in a very short time, she teaches it to go alone. 'Tis this means therefore we must make use of,

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† Revela oculos meos, & considerabo mirabilia de lege tua.

Psal. 118. 18.

* *Lætabor ego super eloquia tua, sicut qui invenit spolia multa.*

Ibid. 162.

† Noverim te, & noverim me: Deus meus, & omnia. *Aug. Isa. 6. 3.*

* *Et requiem non habebant die ac nocte dicentia Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus Dominus Deus omnipotens, qui erat, & qui est, & qui venturus est.*

Apoc. 4. 8.

Gers. 3. part. alph. 76. litt. D. & alph. 77. litt. 2.

to gain the Science of Prayer. For tho' it be true, that 'tis a Supernatural gift, and consequently not to be obtain'd by us, if it comes not from the liberal Hand of God; † *Because 'tis our Lord who gives Wisdom, and Prudence, and Knowledge proceeds from his Mouth:* Yet 'tis nevertheless very certain, that God would have us Exercise our selves after such a manner, as tho' it were to be obtain'd by our own Industry. He is this Eternal Wisdom, * *Who powerfully reaches from one end of the Earth to the other, and Sweetly Disposes all things.* Wherefore he Acts in the order of Grace, after the same manner he do's in that of Nature; and as he wou'd have all Human Arts and Sciences gain'd by practise; so he wou'd have us learn this Divine Science of Prayer after the same manner. 'Tis only for want of exercising it, says *Gerson*, that there are now a days, so few Contemplatives. Anciently, Monasteries were fill'd with 'em, and now 'tis very hard to find in any Convent, a Person that gives himself to Prayer; now a days we are so far from the practise of Contemplation, that even if we speak of it, we are look'd upon to speak of some Speculation, or such a Metaphysical abstraction, as is not to be understood. This difference, says he, proceeds, from our not following the Method of the Ancient Fathers, who exercis'd themselves continually in Prayer, and took care to exercise such as they receiv'd into Monasteries after the same manner; as we see in the Rule of Saint *Pacominus*, and other Primitive Founders of Orders. Wherefore *Gerson* gives this Counsel, that in all Religious Houses, there shou'd be Men of Learning and Piety, who are well Experienc'd in the exercise of Prayer; and that they shou'd take care, to form betimes the Novices therein, by an assiduous practise thereof. And Saint *Ignatius* has so punctually follow'd this Counsel, that in his Constitutions, he not only ordains that in every House where Novices are brought up; there shou'd be one put over 'em, to instruct 'em in the exercise of Prayer; but he wou'd moreover have a Prefect of Spirit, appointed in all Colledges, who shou'd have an Eye upon what regards the practise of Prayer, and examin how every one behaves himself therein.

There's still another thing which may help us to persevere a long time in the exercise of Prayer; and this is, to have an ardent Love for God, and a very great affection

† Quia Dominus dat sapientiam, & ex ore ejus prudentia, & scientia.
Prov. 2. 6.

* Attingit à fine usque ad finem fortiter, & disponit omnia suaviter. *Isa.* 48. 1.

3. part. Const.
c. 1. §. 12. &
4. part. c. 10.
§. 7.

affection for Spiritual things: † *Because I love your Law, O Lord, says the Prophet, 'tis the subject of my Meditation all the Day long.* * *And I Meditate,* says he in another place, *upon your Commandments which I Love.* In effect if we Lov'd God passionately, we shou'd willingly pass whole Days and Nights in thinking of him, and shou'd never want matter to work upon. A Mother that tenderly loves her Son, wants no one to put her in mind of him, nor to excite her to think upon him. She thinks enough of him, of her self; and if any one speaks never so little of him, her Heart is touch'd with a tender affection, and their words draw Tears from her Eyes. A Widdow also that passionately lov'd her Husband, cannot hear him spoken of, without falling into Sob's and Tears, at the renewing his memory. If Natural love therefore has so much power, what shall I say of supernatural? Nay, if the irregular love of a Dead Friend, has oftentimes so much power, that it do's as it were transport us out of our selves, and hinders us from thinking upon any thing else, but even upon a criminal object, what wonders wou'd not the supernatural love of the Goodness and Infinite Beauty of God effect? Since Grace is incomparably more powerful, than either Nature or Vice can be. If God were your only Good, and chief Treasure, your Heart wou'd continually be carry'd towards him; † *Because where your Treasure is, there is your Heart also* Every one think's very willingly upon what he loves, and of what is most to his Gust: And therefore the Holy Scripture gives us this invitation: * *Tast and see, how sweet our Lord is.* We must tast God, before we see him; that is to say, we must love him; to be able to think upon him, and the more we think upon him, the more we shall love him; for love according to the Opinion of Saint Thomas, augments it self by Contemplation; and as 'tis the beginning, so 'tis also the end. Hence it comes to pass, that when we love God, we are easily carry'd to think upon, and Contemplate him; and the more we Contemplate and think upon him, the more we love him: Because that which is good, excites us to love it, and the more we behold it, the more we love it; as also the more we love it, the more joy and satisfaction we receive in beholding and thinking of it.

† Quoniam dilexi legem tuam Domine? Tota die Meditatio mea est. *Psal.* 118. 97.
* Et Meditabar in mandatis tuis, quæ dilexi. *Psal.* 118. 47.

† Ubi enim est thesaurus tuus, ibi est & cor tuum. *Matth.* 6. 21.

* Gustate, & videte, quoniam suavis est Dominus. *Psal.* 33. 9.

S. Thom. 2. 2. q. 182. art. 7. ad 1.

CH A P. XVIII.

That 'tis always in our Power to make a Good Prayer, and to draw fruit from it.

HIGH and Extraordinary Prayer, which I have before spoken of, is in truth, a very particular gift of God, which he bestows only upon a few Persons; but as to ordinary Mental Prayer, of which I speak at present, he refuses it to no body. So that those who are not able to arrive to the other kind of Prayer, and high Contemplation, imagine also they cannot Pray at all; and therefore think they are unfit for this Exercise: But they deceive themselves extremely; for the ordinary Prayer I speak of, is very holy and profitable; because 'tis sufficient to render us perfect: And altho God do's not favor us at present with the other, yet this Prayer, is an excellent disposition to move him afterwards to bestow it. Wherefore I shall now make it clearly appear, that with the assistance of God's Grace, 'tis always in our power to perform well this last manner of Prayer, and to gather great fruit out of it for our Salvation, which without doubt cannot but be a great comfort unto us.

This proposition is a consequence, drawn from what I have already sayd in the foregoing Chapters, and may be two ways prov'd. First from the form of Prayer, which Saint *Ignatius* Teaches us, which do's not consist in the having certain sweetness and sensible comforts, but only in exercising the three Powers of our Souls. In which we first call to mind, by help of our Memory, the Point or Mystery we would Meditate of; afterwards we reflect and Meditate by the means of our Understanding, upon such things as may help us to raise our affections; and lastly, we produce Acts of our Will: This exercise is always in our power, whatsoever State of dryness and aridity we may find our selves in. For let the aridity be never so great,

great, yet 'tis always in our power to produce an Act of Detestation and Sorrow for our Sins; an Act of the Love of God, an Act of Patience, and an Act of Humility; that may even reach so far as to desire to be disesteem'd by the World, to the end we may the better Imitate JESUS CHRIST, who was so kind, as for Love of us, to become the Reproach and Scorn of Men.

We must moreover call to mind, and believe it for a certain truth, that neither the Merit nor Fruit of Prayer; nor the Merit or Fruit of these sorts of Acts; do consist in making of 'em with sweetness and sensible Comfort, nor in being very much mov'd or touch'd by them: For this is that, in which many are very much mistaken, and about which they afflict themselves without any cause at all, imagining they do nothing in Prayer, because they feel not in themselves, either so much sorrow for their Sins as they wou'd have, or so much love for Vertue as they desire to possess. These kind of sensible feelings, are produc'd by the sensible Appetite: But the Will being a Spiritual Power, depends not at all upon Sense, and therefore 'tis not in the least necessary, that we shou'd have these sensible feelings; 'tis enough that we produce the Acts with a firm and determinate Will. Wherefore Divines and Holy Persons, speaking of Contrition and Sorrow for Sins, comfort their Penitents; who when they reflect upon the Enormity of one Mortal Sin, afflict themselves because they cannot shed Tears, and because their Hearts do not, as they cou'd wish, even burst with Sorrow. True Contrition, say they, and true Sorrow for Sin, is not in the sensible Appetite, but is in the Will alone; wherefore be sorry that you have Sinn'd, because thereby you have offended God, who deserves to be lov'd above all things; and hereby it will become true Contrition. As for those other motions that proceed from the inferior or sensitive part, when God pleases to send 'em, receive 'em with due thanks, but afflict not your self at all, when you have 'em not; for God do's not require 'em, nor desires any thing of you, that is not in your Power to perform. These sorts of sensible affections you desire to have, are nothing, else but a certain kind of sweetness and sensible consolations, that has no dependance upon you at all, nor is in your power, and therefore God do's not require it of you, but what he exacts, is in your power to perform, without any dependance

pendance at all upon your sensitive Appetite, which is a grief that proceeds from a determinate Will, never more to offend him: 'Tis the same in Acts of the Love of God. Love God above all things, with a firm and constant Will, and this is that solid and true love of esteem, which he requires. The other kind of Love, is such a tenderness of affection, as is not in our power, the same may be sayd in regard of all other Acts of Vertue, and all those good resolutions we make.

The truth of what I have here sayd, may easily be known from such sinful Acts, as are contrary to the former; for if, for example, we consent to a Mortal Sin, 'tis certain that tho at the same time we feel no sensible motion in our selves, nor any pleasure at all therein, yet we cease not to offend Mortally, and to Merit Eternal Damnation. By consequence therefore, if we Will and Desire effectually what is good, tho on the other side, we feel not any sweetness, in conceiving this Will, yet nevertheless we fail not to please God, and Merit Heaven; chiefly because God is always more ready to reward, than he is to punish. I say yet more, that these sort's of Acts, which are made with an extream dryness, and without any pleasure or sensible comfort, are more Meritorious and pleasing to God, than the others are; because they are more pure, more strong, more lasting, and more our own; because we take more pain's in producing 'em, than when we are carry'd and mov'd to them by Fervor and Devotion. And they are moreover a sign of a more solid Vertue, and of a Will more firm and constant in God's Service; because if we produce 'em without the help of Spiritual Consolations, what thou'd we not do, had we them to help us? Such as produce no Acts without the help of these sensible sweetnesses and comforts, are as Father *Avila* says, like Infants, that must be carry'd in Peoples Arm's; but the others are like such as are able to go alone. And *Blosius* says, this last sort resembles those, that serve their Prince at their own expences. But 'tis of very great importance to accustom our selves to these sorts of aridities in Prayer; because these aridities are very frequent; but sensible comforts are very seldom found therein: And as Gallies make use of their Oar's when they want Wind; so when the favorable Wind of Divine Consolation, is wanting to us in Prayer, we must help our selves by the Powers of our Soul, assisted by the succour of the Holy Ghost; and always continue on our Navigation,

In Monit. Spir.
c. 3.

Navigation, tho' the succours be less abundant, or less sensible than they were wont to be.

We may in the second place still prove after another manner, what we advanc'd in the beginning of this Chapter; see therefore after what manner I establish this proof. Prayer as we have sayd in another place, is not the end we propose to our selves in a Spiritual Life; 'tis but only a means, by which we help our selves to make progress in Vertue, and to obtain a Victory over our Passions and bad Inclinations; to the end, that after we have surmounted all the obstacles that hinder us from approaching to God; and after we have smooth'd the way that lead's to him, we may unite our selves inseparably with him. When Saint *Paul* had the Eyes of his Soul intirely open'd by God, by that Light that struck him from Heaven, and by that Divine Voice that sayd to him. † *I am Jesus whom you Persecute*; what change was then made upon a sudden in him? With what a Promptitude, with what a Submission, did he then abandon himself to the Will of God, as his one Words testifie? * *Lord what would you have me do?* Behold here the fruit of a good Prayer; see what effect it ought to produce in us. I have also sayd, that we must not content our selves in barely forming general Resolutions, but we must descend to such particular ones, as are more necessary for us; and carefully prepare our selves for those occasions, that may be offer'd us during that Day, so that in all things we may Act with Edification. Now to apply this to our Subject, I say, 'tis always in our power to apply our selves to that which is more necessary for us. One for example apply's himself to Humility, another to Patience, another to Obedience, another to the Spirit of Mortification and Resignation; so that we must endeavour to rise from Prayer more Humble, more Patient, more Obedient, and with a greater desire of Mortification, and intire Conformity with the Will of God, than we came to it. Above all, we must endeavour to prevail with our selves, to live the following Day in very great Innocency, and with Edification to our Neighbor, each one according to his employment; and by this means we shall have made a better Prayer, than if we had shed many Tears, and receiv'd very great Lights and Consolations.

This being so, we must not torment our selves, because we abound not with variety of Reflections, nor that we have not great Effusions of Tenderness, nor any Elevations

Tom. I.

U n

or

† Ego sum
Jesu, quem
tu persequeris.
Act. 9. 5.

* Domine,
quid me vis
facere? Ibid. 6.

or Raptures of Devotion; for Prayer consists not in these, but only in the fruit we draw from it: Nor must we be in pain about our Distractions, or disturb'd at the thoughts that are wont to disquiet us in Prayer, of which all the World do commonly complain. All you are to do, is when you are aware of 'em, and when you come to your self, to endeavour to employ your thoughts about what is most necessary; that is to say, endeavour then, to gather the fruit you pretended out of your Prayer, and thereby you will repair the time you have lost, and revenge your self upon the Devil, who try'd to distract you by extravagant thoughts, which were either out of season, or which render'd your Meditation unprofitable: And as a Traveller, who falling asleep upon the way, is left behind by his Companions; as soon as he wakes presses himself to over-take 'em, and rid's more way in a quarter of an hour, than otherwise, had he not slept, he wou'd have done in an hour. So when you come to your self after your Distraction, you must employ the quarter of an hour that remains, in such a manner, so that in that little time you may perform, what you might and shou'd have done in the whole hour, had you been attentive. Wherefore call your self to an account; ask your self what the fruit was you design'd to draw out of your Prayer, see whether it be either a profound Humility, an extream indifferency to all things of this World, or an intire Resignation to the Will of God; and use your utmost endeavour to get this fruit out of your Prayer, notwithstanding all the Distractions the Devil cou'd bring upon you. But if indeed you shou'd find that your whole time of Prayer were spent, without having gather'd the fruit you desir'd; you must then in the examin of your Prayer, of which I shall afterwards treat, do that which I just now sayd; and thus you will supply the neglects you were guilty of in Prayer, and will always gather fruit out of it.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIX.

Of some other helps, to make our Mental Prayer well.

THERE are still other helps, to apply our selves well to Prayer, which may very easily be put in practise; whereby we may clearly see, that 'tis always in our power to perform it well; that all the World is fit for this Exercise, and that there is no one but may perform it with profit.

In the first place 'tis very good Counsel, that several Masters of Spirit give us, touching this point: They say we must not amuse our selves with too many Speculations in or about Prayer, but we must imitate good Marchants, who think of nothing else but the State of their Affairs, and of the means how they may daily improve their Stock: 'Tis after the same manner that a true Servant of God, ought sincerely to apply himself to examine how the affairs of his advancement in Vertue, and of his Salvation succeeds; for that is properly the chief and sole business we have, and we came into this World for no other end, than to labor to do it well. Let a Religious Person then call himself to an account, and ask himself; how do's the affair of my Advancement, and Salvation succeed? What Vertue have I gain'd during the space of ten, twenty, thirty, or forty Years, that I have been in Religion? What progress have I made in Humility, in Obedience, and the Mortification of my Senses? I would very fain see, what account I shall be able to render to God, for so many helps he has given me in Religion, to encrease the Stock or Talent he has trusted me withal. How ill have I hitherto employ'd my time, and how ignorant have I been how to make that profit of it, as I might have done? I will repair my past faults and negligences, by a greater exactness for the time to come, and live after another manner, than I have hitherto done.

U u 2

Each

Each one may also sincerely and candidly apply himself to consider, whether he has perform'd the obligations of his Profession, and what he must do to manage his affairs so, as to appear a Vertuous Man in God's Sight, and that he may govern his House in such a manner, that all may serve God faithfully in it; and that he himself may support like a Christian, all those troubles that his condition and employment are subject unto. If we never so little apply our selves to reflect upon these things, we shall find sufficient matter to Meditate upon, and faults enough both to be sorry for, and to reform; and this will be a very profitable, and a very excellent manner of Prayer.

Gerson makes mention of a Servant of God, who was accusom'd to say, that for forty Years he had very diligently apply'd himself to Prayer, but had not found a shorter or more easie method to make a good one, than to present himself before God as an Infant, or as a Man over-whelm'd with Miseries, Blind, Naked, Unprovided of all things, and Abandon'd by all the World. The Royal Prophet frequently makes use of this kind of Prayer, which the Psalm's are full of in many places, wherein he styles himself, sometimes a Sick Person, sometimes an Orphan, sometimes a Blind Man, and a Poor Beggar: And many practising this method, have arriv'd to a great Perfection in Prayer. Do you therefore practise it, and God will give you the Grace thereby to obtain what you desire.

*Gerson de mont.
Contempl.*

'Tis an excellent kind of Prayer, says *Gerson*, which the Poor Man uses: See with what Humility, with what Patience, he ask's and expects an Alm's at the Rich Man's Gate: And what care he takes to go to those places where he knows Alm's are more frequently bestow'd. We ought to do the very same, we must go to God, after the same manner as the Poor Man do's, when he casts himself at the Rich Man's Feet; he makes known his Miseries with Submission, he expects Assistance with Patience, and a Respectful Countenance; so when we present our selves before God in Prayer, we must discover and lay open our Wants, Necessities and Miseries, and attend with Respect and Patience, the Assistance of his Liberality and Goodness. † *As the Eyes of the Servant, are continually upon the Hands of her Mistress, when she expects a recompence from her, so our Eyes must be continually fix'd upon our Lord, our God, and our Master, till he has Compassion upon us.*

† Sicut oculi ancille in manibus Domini: lux: Ita oculi nostri ad Deum nostrum, donec misereatur nostri.
Psal. 121. 2.

'Tis

'Tis a Story very well known, which the Abbot *Paphnucius* relates, who living in the farther part of the Desert, and hearing of a famous Courtesan, call'd *Thais*, that had occasion'd the deplorable loss of many Souls, and the unhappy cause of many Quarrels and Murders; conceiv'd within himself a design of Converting her to God, and of bringing her back again into the way of Salvation. For this end, he put himself into Secular Cloaths, took store of Mony with him, and went to find her out; coming to her House, he ask'd her to carry him into a more retir'd and secret place, than that she receiv'd him in; she told him, he was very private and secure in the place he was in, where none but God cou'd see him. He presently took this occasion to make known to her the sad and most unhappy State and Condition she was in, and so touch'd her Heart, that he intirely Converted her. The Story is very long, but to come to that part which makes for my present purpose, this Woman being Converted, he led her into the Desert, shut her up in a Cell, and Seal'd up the Door, with a Seat of Lead; leaving only a little hole open, throu' which they daily gave her a little allowance of Bread and Water. After this he resolv'd to leave her, and at his departure she asking him what kind of Prayer she shou'd make to God; you deserve not, says the Holy Abbot, to pronounce the Holy Name of God, out of a Mouth so Impure as yours is. Wherefore you shall make your Prayer after this manner, you shall put your self upon your Knees, and looking towards the East you shall often repeat these Words, *† Thou who hast Form'd me, have Mercy upon me.* She liv'd three Years after this manner, without ever daring to pronounce the Sacred Name of God, and did nothing else, but continually set before her Eyes the Multitude and Heinousness of her Sins, and beg Pardon of God for 'em, in the Words the Saint had taught her. At the end of three Years the Abbot *Paphnucius* went to see Saint *Anthony*, to know of him, whether he believ'd that God had pardon'd the Sins of this Woman: And the Saint having commanded his Religious to put themselves in Prayer all the Night following thereby to beg of God, that he wou'd please to reveal to some one of 'em, what *Paphnucius* had so earnest a desire to know; there was one of these Holy Religious, Nam'd *Paul*, to whom this favor was

*villegas in ex-
travag.*

† Qui plas-
masti me, mi-
serere mei.

was granted. He thought he saw in Heaven a Bed very Richly adorn'd, and guarded by four Virgins: When being surpris'd at the sight of a thing so Rich and wonderful, he thought with himself, that this could not be prepar'd for any one else, but his Spiritual Father Saint *Anthony*; and whilst he entertain'd himself with this thought, he heard a Voite that sayd to him, *This Bed is not for your Father Anthony, but is destin'd for the Sinner Thais.* And within the space of fifteen Days after, it pleas'd Almighty God to call her to himself, to make her enjoy the Glory that expected her, and that Heavenly Bed he had prepar'd for her. Wherefore content your self with this Prayer, believe you deserve not to make any other, and believe that perhaps you will render your self hereby more pleasing to God, than by any other kind.

In a Written Treatise of Spiritual Communion, Compos'd by a *Carthusian* Monk, the Author recounts a Story of Saint *Ignatius* and his Companions, which he assures us he receiv'd from a Person most worthy of Credit. He says, that Saint *Ignatius* and his Companions going one Day to *Barcelona*, on Foot, as ordinarily they were wont to do, each one carrying his Sack upon his Back, they met upon the way a Clown, who being mov'd with Compassion, to see them Travel in this condition, press'd 'em extremely to give him their Bag's to carry, alledging that he was stronger and better able to carry 'em than they: After having a long time refus'd what he desir'd, at last they granted his request: Continuing on their Journey after this manner; the good Man perceiving that as soon as the Fathers came into their Inn, each one sought out a corner, or some secret place, where upon his Knees he might recollect himself in Prayer; he did so too, and put himself upon his Knees as they did. They ask'd him one Day what he did, when after this manner he retir'd himself. I do nothing else, says he, but this I now tell you, *I say Lord these Persons here are Saints, and I am their Sumpter Beast to carry their Baggage; what they do, I desire to do also; behold, this is that which then I offer to God.* And the Author takes notice, that this Man profited so much by means of this constant practise, that afterwards he very much excell'd in the gift of Prayer, and Spirituality. Now who is there, that cannot if he will, make every Day a Prayer of this Nature?

I knew

I knew an Ancient Religious Man of the SOCIETY, a very great Preacher, whose Prayer for a long time was no other than this. *Lord I am a Beast, I know not how to make my Prayer, teach me your self so make it.* And by this means he made great progress, and render'd himself perfect in this Holy exercise; fulfilling in himself, what the Royal Prophet sayd, † *I am become as a Beast before thee, and I am always with thee.* Humble your self after the like manner, make your self as a Beast before God; and you will always be with him, and he will always be with you. Humility is very powerful before God, 'tis a most proper means to obtain all things of his Divine Majesty; wherefore the Saints make an excellent remark upon this subject; saying, that as Humility is a means to obtain the gift of Prayer, so Prayer is a means to obtain and conserve Humility; and that we must never quit a good Prayer without a profound Act of Humility, and very great confusion for our Sins and Ingratitude. From whence it follows, that when we go from Prayer with a great content and satisfaction in our selves, and with I know not what complaisance, or secret esteem of our selves, imagining that we have already made great progress in Spirit, and are become very knowing therein; we must then, when we find our selves thus dispos'd, always suspect our Prayer was not as it shou'd have been. If you complain therefore, that you are not capable of making many and great reflections, nor to elevate your self to high Contemplation; humble your self, and gather at least this fruit from your Prayer; 'tis a thing that absolutely is in your power to do, for which you can alledge no excuse, and is sufficient to render your Prayer perfect.

That also is a very good help for Prayer, which Father *Avila* withes us to make use of, when we meet with distractions and desolations in Prayer. Cast your self, says he, at the Feet of your Crucifix, as at the Feet of JESUS CHRIST, and say to him, soasmuch as these O Lord happen to me, and throu' my fault, I am truly sorry, and have an extream regret, and trouble for the cause I have giv'n; but soasmuch as 'tis your Divine Will, and a just punishment for my past Sins, and present negligences, I accept 'em with all my Heart; and 'tis with joy that I receive this Dryness, this Distraction, this Mortification, and Spiritual Dereliction from your Hand. The Acts of Patience and Humility, that you shall form after this manner, in this occasion, are a sort of perfect

† Ut iumentum factus sum apud te, & ego semper tecum.
Psal. 72. 23.

Greg. lib. 2. in Ezech. hom. 17.
Chrys. hom. 4. de Parris. tom. 5.

M. Avila.
lib. 1. epist.

perfect Prayer, and pleases God more than any you could have design'd to make.

'Tis recounted of Saint *Francis Borgia*, that when he thought he had not perform'd his duty well in Prayer, he endeavour'd that Day to Mortifie himself more than ordinary, and to attend more particularly to all that he did, thereby to make a satisfaction for the faults he had committed in it. He Counsel'd moreover, all the Religious of the *SOCIETY* to do the same. And without doubt this is a very proper means and help, not only to repair our neglects, but also to arrive to a most perfect Prayer. The Abbot *Nilus* says, that as it happens, when upon any Day we have committed a fault, it seems as if God presently punish'd us for it in Prayer; because he then retires from us, and leaves us in great dryness: So when we have Mortifi'd our Senses, when in any thing we have overcome our selves, he presently recompences us for it in our Prayer, communicating his favors unto us in greater abundance than he was us'd to do. † *When you shall*, says he, *patiently support some hard or bad usage, or any other afflictions, you shall afterwards receive the fruit of it in your Prayer.*

† Quidquid durum & asperum patienter tolerabis, fructum laboris, tempore orationis reperies.

The same Saint teaches us in the same place, another very proper means, to dispose our selves well for Prayer, very like that which I last of all propos'd: * *If you would make your Prayer well, do nothing*, says he, *that is contrary to Prayer, and by this means, God will Communicate himself unto you, and will go along with you.*

* Si orare desideras, nihil facias eorum, quæ orationi adversantur, ut tibi appropinquet Deus, & tecum ambulet. Nil. de orat. c. 27. 62.

Moreover, let all the World convince themselves, that the chief care of a true Servant of God, ought to be to Mortifie his Senses, to Purifie his Heart, to preserve himself from Sin, to have always a firm resolution never to consent to offend God Mortally in any thing. This ought to be the Foundation of Prayer; and 'tis upon this we must particularly insist, confirming our selves herein by many Acts of our Will; for there's nothing we have a greater need of, than continually to precaution and fortifie our selves against the weakness and inconstancy of our Nature. But this Foundation being once lay'd, each one must afterwards endeavour, to gain that sort of Virtue and Perfection he desires: And if God be not pleas'd to raise him to a more sublime kind of Prayer, instead of complaining or afflicting himself for it, he must daily return equal thanks to the Divine Goodness, because Sanctity is not precisely connex'd

connex'd to the gift of Prayer, but only consists in performing God's Will. † *Fear God, says the Wise Man, and observe his Commandments, for in this, the whole Man do's consist.* That is to say, all the Duty, all the Obligations, all the Perfection, and all the Happiness of Man.

† Deum time, & mandata ejus observa: hoc est enim omnis homo.
Ecc. 12. 13.

I shall now finish this Chapter with the proposal of a help or means that ought to comfort the whole World: When you feel not in Prayer that Fervor you desire, and you labor in vain, to arrive to an intimate Union of your Soul with God, exercise your Will, in conceiving an ardent desire thereof, and hereby you will supply and gain what you think you want. * For, as Saint *Bartholomew of the Martyr's* says, *God contents himself no less with this Will and Holy Desire, than if the Soul, all languishing with Devotion, shou'd intirely Unite it self unto him.* This means, as *Blossus* reports, was taught to Saint *Gertrude* by God himself, when once she complain'd, that she cou'd not always keep her Heart so elevated towards God as she desir'd, and as she thought her self oblig'd to perform. She being assur'd from Heaven, that when we feel not in our selves any desire of Heavenly things, or at least feel but a very weak one, it suffices that we truly desire to have a very ardent one; because before God; the desire is always as great, as we wou'd have it to be. *Blossus* moreover add's, that God more willingly and with greater pleasure reposes in a Heart that is touch'd with such a desire (that is to say, that truly wishes to have it) than any Man can have to dwell in the most delightful place, or Palace in the World. In effect God do's not want the Sublimity of your Prayer; he seeks only your Heart, and will effect, that all the good desires and sentiments thereof, shall be accounted and rewarded as Effects or good Works. Offer your self therefore intirely to him in Prayer; give him your whole Heart, and desire to have as much Fervor, as even the Angels of the highest Quire can have; he will receive that good Will; and make the same account of it, as of the Action it self. This being so, 'twill be a most Pious and profitable Reflection, when we find our selves tepid in Prayer, to consider how many Servants of God, are then at their Prayers, perhaps not only shedding Tears by Devotion, but even their Blood by Martyrdom; and in Spirit we may joyn our selves to them, and not only joyn our selves to these, but even to the Angels also, with design of praising and loving God; supplying

* Deus non minus voluntate sanctoque desiderio lætatur, quam si tota anima a more liquefacta plenè sibi jungeretur.
In Comp. Spirit. cap. 19.

Bloss cap. 9.
mon. i. Spirit.

† Cum quibus & nostras voces, Ut admitti jubeas, deprecamur, supplicii confessione dicentes, Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus.

after this manner by others, what you are not able to perform by your self; and often repeating both with Mouth and Heart, those words of the Canon of the Mass: † *With whom, we beseech you to command, that our Voices may be United and Receiv'd; because we confess your Holy Name, and say with 'em, Holy, Holy, Holy.* We say O Lord what they say; and we wou'd willingly, also do what they do; and we earnestly desire we cou'd Love and Glorifie you with the like Perfection. It will also then be very good to call to mind those times, in which we were most Fervent, and say, Lord that which I then so earnestly desir'd, I desire at present: As then I made an intire Oblation of my self unto you, so I now offer my self after the same manner; I have at present the same Regret for my Sins, I then had; and after the same manner that I then desir'd Humility, Patience, and Obedience, I now desire the same, and earnestly beg 'em of you.

But above all, 'tis a most holy and profitable Exercise, to Unite our Works with those of JESUS CHRIST, thereby to supply our defects and imperfections by his Merits. Thus we may offer our Prayer to the Eternal Father, to be United to the Prayer of JESUS CHRIST upon Earth; and offer our Sufferings also to be joyn'd with his; begging of him that he wou'd supply our Impatience, by his Patience; our Pride by his Humility, and our Malice by his Innocency. *Blosim* says that this Exercise was reveal'd by God himself, to a great Servant of his, to the end that hereby we might render our Actions more Meritorious, and repair the Miseries of our extream Poverty, by the Infinite Treasures of the Merits of JESUS CHRIST.

C H A P.

C H A P. XX.

That we must content our selves with the manner of Prayer I have now spoken of, and neither be afflicted, nor complain, when we are not rais'd by God, to a more Sublime kind of Prayer,

A *Lbertus Magnus* says, that he who is truly Humble, dares not raise his desires to obtain a more Sublime Prayer, and those extraordinary Favors, that God sometimes communicates to his Elect; because he has such a contempt of himself, that he thinks he is unworthy of 'em. But if it should happen, that without his having contributed any thing to it by his desires, that God should pour out upon him particular Comfort and Consolation, yet he cannot receive it but with fear and trembling; by reason he thinks that he has not at all deserv'd it; and because he knows not how to make that profit by it, which he ought to do. If therefore we have true Humility, we shall content our selves with the common manner of Prayer, and shall even impute it to a special Grace of God, that he is pleas'd to conduct us, rather by this secure Path of Humility, than by any other way; whereby we might perhaps go astray, and loose our selves. *Saint Bernard* says, that God carries himself towards us, as Fathers do towards their Children, whilst they are Young. For if a Child ask's his Father Bread, he most willingly giv's it him, but if he ask's a Knife to cut it withal, the Father refuses it, because the Child may therewith do himself a mischief. For this reason also, he cut's the Bread himself for his Child, whereby he both saves him a labor; and preserves him also from danger. God deals with you after the same manner, he gives you Bread ready cut, and will not raise you to that more Sublime kind of Prayer, for

Lib. de adhaerendo Deo.

Bernard. in Cont. ferm. 54.

fear lest thereby, you might do your self hurt, that is, lest that other sort of Prayer, might perhaps do you a prejudice, by giving you an occasion of entertaining thoughts of Vain-glory; making you believe your self advanc'd in Spirituality, and prefer your self before others: So that God do's you a greater Favor by cutting your Bread himself, than by giving you a Knife to cut it: And if in your ordinary Prayer he bestow's upon you so firm a resolution, as rather to Die than offend him; and in effect preserves you all your Life-time from Mortal Sin; what better Prayer can you desire, or what greater fruit can you wish to gather from it?

When the Elder Brother of the Prodigal Son, understood the good reception his Father had giv'n him, he took it so very ill, and with so high an Indignation, that he wou'd not so much as enter into his Fathers House: † *Behold*, says he, *how many Years I have serv'd you, and have never disobey'd you in any thing, nevertheless you have never yet, so much as giv'n me a Kid to Eat with my Friends; but as soon as your Son return'd, who has spent all the Estate you gave him with ill Women, you cause a fat Calf to be kill'd for him.* Son, reply'd the good Father, *you are always with me*: As if he wou'd have sayd, that which I have done to your Brother, is not because I love him better than you; for you are always in my House: And this particular favor, deserves that you shou'd well reflect upon it, and make great account of it. Let us now apply this to our present Subject. Is it a small matter, think you, that you shou'd be always with God? He do's more for you by giving you the Grace of Perseverance, by hindring you from separating your self from him, in preserving you from falling into Mortal Sin, than if after you had fallen, he shou'd reach out his hand to help you up: For 'tis far more, to hinder a Man from being hurt, than to cure him after he is so. If therefore you gather from your ordinary Prayer, so considerable an advantage as this, what reason have you to complain? If by the help of this Prayer, God bestows upon you an ardent Zeal for whatsoever belongs to his service; a general indifference to all other things in the World; and an absolute Resignation and Compliance with all that Obedience shall Command; what can you desire more? Infinite, if by the help of this Prayer, he preserves you in Humility, preserves you

† Ecce tot annis servio tibi, & nunquam mandatum tuum præcevi, & nunquam dedisti mihi hoc, ut cum amicis epulaber; sed postquam filius tuus hic, qui dissipavit omnem substantiam suam cum meretricibus, venit, occidisti illi vitulum saginatum, Fili, tu semper mecum es.
Luc. 15. 29. & seq.

you in his Fear, gives you a continual custody, and watch over your self, and defends you from all occasions of Sin; what is there you can wish for more? Because this is all the Fruit that can possible be gather'd from the most sublime and highest manner of Prayer; for to what other end than this do all those sweetneses, and particular consolations serve, that accompany the other Prayer? And without this what do they signifie? But behold what God do's to those, who persevere in the common way of Prayer; if he do's not lead 'em as he do's the others, by the way of a sublime Contemplation, he at least conduct's 'em to the same end; and in this he bestow's upon 'em a double favor; in that he mak's 'em gather out of ordinary Prayer, all the Fruit and Advantage that can be gather'd out of the other. *Joseph* spoke very roughly to his Brethren, when they appear'd before him to buy Bread; yet he omitted not to have their Sack's fill'd, with Corn, and the Mony they pay'd for it put into them, and commanded his Steward to treat 'em with all possible kindness. 'Tis after this manner that God oftentimes deals with us.

*Genes. 42. 7.
& 25.*

We do not sufficiently comprehend in what Prayer consists; or to say better, we do not understand wherein consists our Advancement and Perfection, which is the end of Prayer: From whence it comes to pass, that oftentimes we think we have done wonders, even when we have perform'd it ill. And on the contrary, when we have diligently comply'd with our duties therein, we also believe that we have not made it well. Do but carry that Fruit with you from Prayer, I have taught you to gather out of it; and chiefly gain so much over your self, as to pass that Day in extream Innocency, and with very great Edification of your Neighbor; and you will have made a very good Prayer, whatsoever dryness or hardness of Heart you felt in time of it. As on the other side, if you do not profit after this manner by your Prayer, assure your self that 'twas not good, tho' you shou'd have done nothing else but shed flood's of Tears the whole time of it; and tho' you even thought your self, like Saint *Paul*, ravish'd to the third Heaven. Wherefore for the future, complain not at all of your Prayer, but turn your complaints against your self; and say, I do not fortifie my self enough, I am not so Humble as I shou'd be, nor have that Patience I ought, I do not so exactly observe Silence as the Rule requires,

requires, nor do not sufficiently recollect my self. This complaint is very just; because 'tis to complain that you do not the things you shou'd do, and which are in your power to perform: But to complain of your Prayer, and of the aridity you feel in it; to complain of your want of a facility in making it; and that you find not that quiet and repose in it, nor those consolations you desire, is in a manner to complain of God himself: And is, as *Judas* layd to the Inhabitants of *Bethulia*, † *A discourse that is more proper to excite him to anger, and enkindle his Fury, than procure his Mercy.* 'Tis moreover very surprizing, to see how differently we Act in this, from what we shou'd do. For we never complain, that we take no care to Mortifie, to Humble, and to Amend our selves, which is what is in our power to perform; but we complain of that, which God has not left in our power to do, and which he has intirely reserv'd to himself: Wherefore apply your self seriously to Mortifie and overcome your Passions; use your utmost endeavours in this, and leave the care of the rest unto God. He has a greater desire of our good, than we our selves can have; and if we do but perform what is requir'd of our side, we may assure our selves he will not be wanting on his, to give us what is most convenient for us. But I shall hereafter treat this matter more at large, in the Treatise of *Conformity with the Will of God*, where we shall more exprefly and fully satisfie our selves of the great injustice of this sort of complaint.

† Non est iste sermo qui misericordiam provocet, sed potius qui iram excitet, & furorem accendat. *Judas* b. 8. 12.

Treatise 8. 6. 24. 25. &c.

C H A P.

CHAP. XXI.

Of the cause of Distractions in Prayer, and the remedies we may apply to hinder 'em.

Because distractions are a common subject of complaint, therefore several Saints, have taken occasion to treat of 'em; and *Cassian* in particular has Written of 'em at large. Distractions, say they, may proceed from three causes; in the first place, from our own negligence; by reason that the whole Day, we employ and dissipate our selves in a great many unprofitable things; and because we don't place a guard over our Heart by a sufficient attention; or keep a sufficient custody over our Senses. He who lives after this manner, needs not ask the Question, how he comes to be distracted in Prayer? Nor why 'tis so much pain to him to apply himself thereunto? For 'tis certain, that the Species or Ideas, of those different Objects, which made an impression upon our Mind's at other times, will not fail afterwards to disquiet, and represent themselves also in time of Prayer. The Abbot *Moyse* sayd, that tho' 'tis not in our power, to hinder our selves from being perplex'd by divers thoughts; yet 'tis in our power to put 'em away when they come; and add's moreover, that 'tis partly in our power to reform the evil, that our thoughts have in themselves, by procuring good ones; and that only such as these, shou'd present themselves to our Mind. For if we apply our selves to Spiritual Exercises, and Works of Piety, we shall have Holy and Pious thoughts; but if all the Day long, we employ our selves in vain and extravagant things, the thoughts we shall have, will be of the same Nature. *Cassian* makes the same comparison, that Saint *Bernard* and Saint *Anselme* also make upon this subject. He says, that tho' we cannot hinder a Millstone in a Mill from going always about, whilst the Wheel or Sails move, yet 'tis in the Miller's power, to make it go upon good or bad Corn, and that it shou'd go only upon that which

*Cass. coll. 1.
& 7.*

Collas. 1.

Collas. 1. c. 18.

which he puts under it; so the Heart of Man must always have something to think on; 'tis like a Millstone, that whilst we live is always in motion, but you may employ it, upon what sort of Grain you please; and infine, 'twill only work upon what you cast into it. Wherefore according to this, if you will be recollected in Prayer, you must endeavour to be so all Day long, and must keep a strict guard over your Senses; for God loves to converse with Soul's, that are like a Garden that is enclos'd. * It was, says, *Cassian*, a Maxim amongst the Ancient Fathers of the Desert, that such as we would be in Prayer, such ought our disposition to be when we are out of it, to prepare our selves for it; because the situation and motion of the Mind in Prayer, depends upon the precedent situation and disposition 'twas in before, and upon that impression it had before receiv'd. † Such as the Liqueur is, says Saint Bonaventure, that we pour into a Vessel, such will be the Scent that 'twill give; and such as the Seed is that you have receiv'd into your Heart, such will be the Fruit that 'twill bring forth. There's nothing more common or natural, than to make a frequent reflection upon what we love; if therefore you would have your Mind at repose in time of Prayer, and not be distracted by vain thoughts, you must before-hand cast off all those ties you have to Earthly things; and must fill your Heart with nothing else but the love of Heavenly; and the greater progress you make in this, the greater will your application and attention be to Prayer, which thereby will also become more easie.

The second cause of distractions, proceeds from the malice of the Devil; who perceiving, as Saint *Basil* says, that Prayer is the means whereby God replenishes us with all sorts of Blessings, endeavours by all ways imaginable, to withdraw us from it, and to raise a thousand obstacles and impediments; to the end that depriving us of those succours that accompany Prayer, he may afterwards find a more easie passage and entrance into our Soul's. He do's the same against us, that *Holefernes* did against the City of *Bethulia*; when to facilitate the taking it, he broke the Aqueducts or Conduits, that carry'd Water into the City. Prayer is the Conduit or Channel, throu' which our Soul receives the Water of Grace; and therefore the Devil uses his utmost endeavours to break it, and render it useles. Wherefore Saint *John Climacus* says, that when at the sound of the Bell the

* Quales orantes volumus inveniri, tales nos ante orationis tempus preparare debemus; ex precedenti enim statu mens atque animus in supplicatione formantur. *Cass. coll. 9. Abb. 156.*

† Qualis liquor vasi infunditur, taliter redolebit; & quales herbas in horto cordis tui plantaveris, talia semina germinabunt. *Bonav. de prof. Relig. l. 2. c. 58.*

Basil. de renunt. fac. Cass. lib. 10. c. 10 & Nil. c. 44. & 47. de Grad.

Judith. 7. 6.

etim. grad. 19.

the Faithful, and Religious, visibly assemble themselves to Pray, and Praise God; our invisible Enemies, invisibly also assemble themselves, to Tempt and Avert us from this Pious occupation.

We Read in that Holy Book call'd the *Spiritual Meadow*, that an Ancient Father of the Desert, call'd *Marcellus*, being got up at Mid-night to make his Prayer, and to Sing Psalm's as his custom was, he heard a noise like that of a Trumpet, when it sound's to a Charge, and being astonish'd how this noise shou'd happen in so Solitary a place, no Soldiers being near it, the Devil hereupon appear'd unto him; and told him, that this Trumpet was the Signal, that gave notice to the Devils to prepare themselves for Combat against the Servants of God, and that if he wou'd put himself out of danger, he shou'd go back again to rest; if not, that he must expect a very great onser. But the Holy Old Man confiding in our Saviours help, put himself in Prayer, and persever'd in it, in spite of the Devils attempt's.

One of the things that giv's us a great insight into the Merit and Importance of this Vertue (which the Abbot *Nilus* very well takes notice of) is, that particular hatred the Devil conceives, against those who apply themselves to Prayer, and the continual War he makes against 'em. He suffers very patiently many other good Works, as to Fast, to take Disciplines, and to wear Hair-cloaths; but is not able to endure, that we shou'd apply our selves for the least moment to Prayer, without using his utmoſt endeavours, to hinder and molest us in it. Whence it happens, that when we are in Prayer, we are far more Tempted, than at other times. For then wicked thoughts pour in upon us, as if we put our selves to Prayer to be the Mark or Butt for the Devil to shoot at, by all sorts of Temptations; for in it he represents such filthy and strange imaginations, that it seems as if he had on purpose rak'd 'em together, only to throw at us at this time: He knows very well, that Prayer is a Sovereign remedy against all Evil, the infinite Source or Fountain of all Spiritual good, and the most efficacious means to attain to all sorts of Vertues; and therefore makes use of all the power he has, to deter us from it. Prayer also according to the Language of the Saints, is the † *Scourge and Torment of the Devils*; which consideration ought to give us a greater esteem of it, and move us to apply our selves

Tom. I.

Y y

to

*Nil. c. 44. &
47. de Orat. &
c. 100. & seq.
refert aliqua
exempla vera
circa hoc in
Bibl. SS. Patr.*

* Tormentum, & flagellum Dæmonum.

S. Thom. Abulensis.

† Deus in adiutorium meum intende: Domine ad adjuvandum me festina.
Psal. 69. 1.

to it with so much the greater care and diligence; because we see the Devil takes so much pains to withdraw us from it. Saint Thomas and many other grave Doctors say, that 'tis by reason of the War that the Devil is accusom'd to make, against those that are in Prayer, that the Church directed by the Holy Ghost, ordains that we shou'd begin all the Canonical Hours with this Verse. † O God intend unto my help, O Lord make hast to assist me. Whereby we implore God's assistance in Prayer, against the Snares and Temptations of the Enemy.

In the third place, distractions sometimes proceed from Man's Natural weakness, without his being any way's in fault; for Sin has render'd him so weak and miserable, and our Imagination chiefly, partakes so much of the Corruption of our Nature, that we cannot be a Moment in Prayer, without having our Mind distracted with a thousand Thoughts. The remedy of this Evil, is to make 'em the Subject of our Prayer, and to Humble our selves upon the Consideration and Knowledge of our Weakness; for this Knowledge and Humility, is a very Holy and profitable Prayer. I shall moreover in the following Chapters speak of some other remedies, which the Saints, and Masters of Spirit prescribe us, upon this Subject.

CHAP. XXII.

Of some other helps to persevere with Attention and respect in Prayer.

In Reg. brevior.
201. & 306. &
in Conf. ad
Monac. solitari-
os.

SAIN'T Basil asks what we shou'd do to have our Mind's so recollected in Prayer, as not to be molested with distractions? And he makes this Answer, that the best and most proper means, is to consider that we are in God's Presence; and that God beholds after what manner we pray unto him: For if before an Earthly Prince, we take care to keep our selves always in a profound respect, and compose our Words and Actions in the most respectful manner possible; and shou'd think

think it a gross incivility, to turn our back, whilst we are speaking to him, or to amuse or busie our selves with any thing else; how is it possible we shou'd not be so much Master of our selves as to carry our selves with the like respect, when we reflect attentively, that we are in God's Presence? Who do's not only take notice of our exterior behaviour, but penetrates even to the bottom of our Heart? And who is there, that is fully posselt of this truth, that dares withdraw his Eyes or Heart, even for one moment, from what he is about; or as I may say, turn his Back upon God, amusing himself not only with vain, but even sinful thoughts? *Theoderet* reports, that the Abbot *Jacob*, was wont to make use of a means not much unlike to the precedent, thereby to declare how much asham'd and confounded he was to give way to distractions; and Saint *Austin* also had the very same reflection. If I were in any Masters Service, says he, and instead of waiting upon him as I ought to do, I shou'd busie my self in something else, he wou'd have reason to Cudgel me, and punish me as I truly deserv'd. Moreover, shou'd I come to make my complaint to a Judge of some injury done me, and shou'd quit him upon a sudden, turning my Back upon him, to treat with some other Person; wou'd not the Judge have reason to believe me very extravagant, and cause me to be kick'd out of his presence? Yet see how far greater irreverence they daily fall into, who putting themselves in Prayer to God, permit their thoughts to be carry'd away with all sorts of distractions imaginable. Saint *Ignatius* also, in one of his Additions for Prayer, teaches us the same remedy: Where he says, that a little before we go to Prayer, we must raise our Minds to Heaven, by considering that God is present, and that he beholds us; and excite our selves by this consideration, to remain with a most profound respect, and keep our selves in a diligent attention. Moreover, he wou'd not have us loose the reflection upon God's Presence all the time of our Prayer, to the end we may say with the Psalmist: * *The Meditation of my Heart, is always in your Presence.*

Saint *Chrysostom* says, That when we go to Prayer, we must imagine that we enter into the Court of Heaven, where the King of Glory Sits upon his Throne, shining with bright Stars, and surrounded by an infinite number of Angels and Saints, who all cast their Eyes upon us; according to the words of Saint Paul, † *We are become a Spectacle to*

Theod. in Hist.
55. Petr. c. 21.

August. sup.
Psal. 85.

Lib. exerc. spir.

* Et Meditatio cordis mei in conspectu tuo semper.

Psal. 18. 15.

Chrysost. sup.

illud. Psal. 4.

Miserere mei,

& exaudi orationem meam.

Tom. 1.

† Spectaculum facti sumus mundo,

& angelis, &

hominibus.

1 Cor. 4. 9.

the World, to Angels and to Men. Saint Bernard also gives us the same Counsel in this point, which he himself follow'd;

* Veniens ad Ecclesiam, pone manum super os tuum, & dic: Expectate hic, cogitationes malæ, intentiones, & affectus cordis, & appetitus carnis: Tu autem anima mea intra in gaudium Domini tui, ut videas voluntatem Domini, & visites Templum ejus.
Bernard.
Clim. in Scala Spir. grad. 4.
c. 18.

† Venite, adoremus, & proclamemus, & ploremus ante Dominum, qui fecit nos, quia ipse est Dominus Deus noster, & nos populus pacis ejus, & oves manus ejus.
Psal. 94. 6.
c. 7.

* Domine, vim patior, responde pro me.
Isa. 38. 14.

* When you go to the Church, says he, lay your Hand upon your Mouth, and say, stay here at the Door ye bad thoughts, ye criminal desires, ye irregular affections, and carnal concupiscences; but you my Soul enter into the joy of your Master, and of your God, that you may know the Will of your Lord, and visit his Holy Temple. Saint John Climacus says, that when we are in Prayer, and make a serious reflection upon the Presence of God, we are then like a firm and solid Pillar, that nothing can shake: And he also relates, that once taking notice that a certain Religious was more attentive than the rest, whilst they were Singing the Psalm's, and chiefly when they began the Divine Office; seeming by his Countenance, and the motion of his Lips, as if he had spoken to some-body; he desir'd of him afterwards to tell him whence that happen'd; 'tis says he, because in the beginning of the Divine Office I am wont to recollect and gather together all my thoughts, and all the powers of my Soul, and speak to them in this manner. † Come, let us Adore our Lord who has Made us, let us prostrate our selves and Weep before him; because he is our Master and our God; because we are the People of his Pasture, and Sheep of his own making. All these methods and considerations are very good, and may very much help us to awake and stir up our attention to Prayer, and cause us to remain in it, with that respect we ought to have.

Others are accusom'd for the same end, to make their Prayer, when they can, before the Blessed Sacrament. Or at least turn themselves towards the nearest place where 'tis kept: And to fix and unite their Heart and Thoughts to it. Others help themselves by looking upon Pictures or Images, whereby they find themselves excited to affection, and respect: Others by lifting up their Eyes to Heaven, find that this helps 'em to elevate and fix their Minds. 'Tis also a very good remedy against distractions and aridities, to represent our weakness to God, by short and lively ejaculations, imploring his help and assistance, saying, * Lord I suffer Violence, answer for me. The Blind Man in the Gospel, thò Jesus CHRIST, as he thought, went on his way, and minded him not; and thò all others endeavour'd to make him hold his peace, yet left not off crying

crying out still louder and louder, with all the force he was able, † *Jesus Son of David take compassion of me*: You must do the same. Tho' God seems not to mind you, or not to think upon you, but rather retires from you, not vouchsafing you a visit. And tho' the multitude of thoughts and temptations that surround you, would stop your Mouth, yet you must not hold your Peace; but on the contrary, must raise your Voice so much the higher, and cry out without ceasing. *Jesus Son of David have compassion of me*, * *Fortifie me O Lord at this present time*, to the end that I may think only upon your Divine self, and constantly persevere in Prayer. This was the Maxim of a very great Saint, that when her Heart was silent, she neglected not to speak with her Lips, because thereby she renew'd and enliven'd the fervor of her Heart; and she also confess'd, that sometimes for want of making Vocal Prayer, when she found her self sleepy, she also omitted her Mental Prayer. This is but too often experienc'd; tepidity and drowsiness to which we give way in time of Prayer, are the occasion that our Lips are silent; but if we forc'd our selves to speak, we shou'd overcome these impediments, and thou'd animate our selves with a new fervor.

Gerson says, that 'tis also a very good remedy against distractions, to prepare our selves well for Prayer, and to choose several Points to Meditate upon. Because doing thus when we come to be distracted in any Point we have chosen, we no sooner perceive this distraction, but we have recourse to another Point; and if we find not a facility in applying our selves to that, we still go on to another; and thus we persevere with a great deal more ease in Prayer.

If we wou'd but examin our selves well, we shou'd find that oftentimes those dissipations of Mind, which we have in Prayer, proceed from our not having well resolv'd upon, nor prepar'd those Points we shou'd Meditate of; having determin'd upon nothing for certain, whereupon we may fix our thoughts.

But to prepare our Prayer well, there are also two things necessary; and the first is; what Saint *Ignatius* recommends to us in these words: † *'Twill be very profitable before we begin our Prayer, to call to mind the Points we are to Meditate upon, and determine the number of 'em*. And to the end we shou'd not imagine that 'tis only for Novices to do this, we Read, that 'twas his own practice, not only

† *Jesus, fili David, misere mei.*
Marc. 10. 47.

* *Confirma me, Domine Deus, in hac hora.*
Judith. 13. 9.

S. Angel. de Fuligno. c. 58.
¶ 62.

† *Magnopere juvabit ante ingressum exercitii tractanda puncta comminisci, & numero certo præfixitare.*
S. Ign. lib. Exerc. Spir. nota 3. 4. Hebd.

in

in the beginning, but even when he was well advanc'd in Years, and in Perfection also, to prepare himself with care, and Read attentively over-night the Subject of his Meditation, for the next Day, just before he betook himself to rest. Moreover, tho' we have heretofore Meditated of any Matter, and we believe it still remains very fresh in our Memory; yet 'twill be nevertheless very much to the purpose, especially when ordinarily we take any Matter out of the words of Holy Scripture (which are dictated by the Holy Ghost) to Read 'em with attention, which will give us fervor, and a new disposition for our Meditation, and Spiritual advancement.

Another means that may in like manner be a very great help to us, is, that as soon as we awake, we presently without giving time to our thoughts to fix any where else, carry them to the Subject we had prepar'd over-night, and dispose our selves for it by some strong reflection, *Cassian*, *Saint Bonaventura*, and *Saint Climacus* look upon it to be of very great importance, and say, that the good conduct and advantage of our Prayer depend's upon this. And by consequence, the good conduct and success of all our other Actions of the whole Day: And *Saint John Climacus* moreover observes, that as the Devil knows very well, of how great consequence the good employment of those first Moments are, so he always watches with great impatience for our first Waking; to the end he may presently seize upon our imagination, and thus gather for himself the first fruits of the Day. He says also, that amongst the Wicked Spirits, there is one they call the *Procurson*, whose charge it is all Night long to watch over us, to the end that at the first Moment of our waking, or even before we are quite awake, or come perfectly to our selves, he may seize upon the avenues of our Heart with impure fancies, and thereby take a kind of possession of us for the whole Day. Figuring to himself, that the Imagination and Heart which he first seiz'd upon, ought to belong to him as his right. Wherefore we must be so cautious in standing upon our guard, that as soon as ever our Eyes are open our imaginations may be fill'd with the thought of God, and our Memory and Heart take the like Impression, before any other strange thought is able to make it's entrance. *Saint Ignatius* gives the same advice in his *Book of Spiritual Exercises*, and adds that when our Prayer is made at any other hour than the ordinary one in the Morning, we must

Bonav. in in-
form. novit.
P. 1. c. 14.
Clim. grad. 19.
art. 19. & grad.
26. art. 153.

Lib. exercit.
spir. add. 2. 1.
hebd. & add. 5.
2. hebd. & in
1. modo orandi.

must in proportion make use of the same help: By retiring and recollecting our selves some time before, by calling to mind what we are going to do. And before whom we are to appear. And afterwards like a Man who tun's a Musical Instrument, we must repeat and run over very briefly the matter we resolve to Meditate. In fine, 'twas his Opinion that upon the observation of these, and such other like advertisements, which he call's *Additions*, the perfection and fruit of our Prayer did in great part depend. Moreover do we not daily experience that our Prayer succeed well or ill, according as we are well or ill prepar'd for it, or according as we practise or neglect these *Additions*?

* Before Prayer prepare your Soul, says the Holy Ghost, by the Mouth of the Wise Man, *and be not like a Man who Tempts God.* Saint Thomas, and Saint Bonaventura from these Words draw this consequence, that to go to Prayer without preparation is in a manner to Tempt God: for to Tempt God, say they, is to desire to obtain something, without those means he has establish'd for this end and effect. For example if any one shou'd say, I will not Eat, because God who is all powerful, can keep me alive without Eating. This wou'd be to Tempt God, requiring he shou'd work a Miracle, without any necessity for it. Wherefore when the Devil had transported our Saviour CHRIST to the top of the Temple, and wou'd have persuaded him to cast himself down, saying, *That God wou'd send his Angels to receive him in their Armies*, our Saviour answer'd him, † *It is Writ you shall not Tempt the Lord your God.* Preparation therefore to Prayer is so necessary a means to make it well, that the Wise Man says, to Pray without any preparation is to Tempt God, and to desire he shou'd work a Miracle upon our account. Our Lord wou'd have us make a good Prayer, and that we shou'd apply our selves to it with great attention and respect, but he wou'd have us do this, by help of the ordinary means, which consists in preparing our selves before hand, after the manner I have here set down.

* Ante orationem prepara animam tuam, & noli esse quasi homo qui tentat Deum.
Eccles. 18. 23.
S. Tho. 2. 2.
q. 97. art. 3.
ad 2.
Bonav. in regul. novit.

† Non tentabis Dominum Deum tuum.
Matth. 4. 7.

CHAP.

C H A P. XXIII.

*Of the great comfort and consolation, that those who
are tormented with Distractions in Prayer
ought to have.*

TIS a great comfort for those who are subject to distractions in Prayer, what Saint Basil says, that they are never imputed to us as faults, but when they are Voluntary, and when, after we have perceiv'd 'em, we continue in 'em without any respect to God in whose presence we are. He who in time of Prayer freely and on set purpose, entertains himself with thoughts of his Studies or business, deserves that God shou'd chastise him, instead of doing him any favors; and we may very justly apply to such a one, what Saint Chrysostom says: * *You attend not to what you say your self, and yet you wou'd have God attend to you.* But on the other side, when with all sincerity we do all we can to recollect our selves, and yet the Natural weakness of our minds carries us notwithstanding to other things, and even our Heart fails us, and forces us to cry out in the Words of the Psalmist: † *My Heart has forsaken me;* then God is not at all displeas'd, but on the contrary has compassion of us, * *And as a Father pitties his Children, so our Lord has compassion of those that fear him, because he knows of what Matter we are made.* He knows our Infirmities and weakness, and as a Father who's Son is turn'd a Natural and Distracted, is touch'd with Compassion, when after he had begun to speak to him after a peaceful and respectful manner, he perceives him to fall upon a sudden into extravagant discourse; so our Heavenly Father pitties and compassionates us, when he perceives that after we have begun to treat with him after a rational and prudent manner, the weakness of our Nature makes us fall into a thousand idle, vain, and ridiculous thoughts. Wherefore tho' sometimes we feel no fervor at all in Prayer, and pass

Basil. in Const.
Monast. c. 2.

* Tu non
audis orationem
tuam &
Dominum vis
audire precem
tuam.
Chrys. hom. 17.
in varia loca.
Matth. tom. 2.

† Cor meum
dereliquit me.
Psalm. 39. 13.

* Quomodo
miseretur
pater filiorum,
miseretur est
Dominus ti-
mentibus se,
quoniam ipse
cognovit fig-
mentum no-
strum.
Psalm. 102. 13.

pass the whole time of it in great aridities, amidst the difficulties of innumerable fantastical imaginations; yet we may not only assure our selves that this is a very Meritorious condition in God's sight; but that what we suffer herein, out of Love of him, renders us far more pleasing, and of greater Merit in his sight, than if we abounded with a great deal of fervor and consolation. And as strong Gelly-broth, that is taken by a Sick Person, fail's not to nourish and strengthen him, tho' he tak's it with disgust, nor perceives at present the good it do's him; so Prayer fail's not to nourish the Soul, and to give it new strength to serve God, tho' we find no sweetness at all whilst we take it, nor feel any benefit we receive by it.

Wherefore by this we may perceive, how great a deceit it is to leave our Prayer; by reason that we are molested with importune thoughts and temptations. All we are to do, is to take care that Tepidity and Laziness do not introduce themselves, under the Cloke of Natural Weakness (of which I shall afterwards speak at large) whereby we come to yield too easily, to let our mind take too much liberty, and permit our imagination to wander from one thing to another. For we must take care, as *Abraham* did, to drive away the Birds of Prey, that descend upon the Sacrifice; that is to say, apply our selves to the banishing all thoughts that hinder our Prayer; and if we do but our endeavour, there will be no reason at all to disquiet our selves: We Read of Saint *Brigit*, that once having a great many Temptations to suffer in time of Prayer, the Blessed Virgin *Mary* appear'd to her and sayd: The Devil envying Man's good, do's all he can to trouble him in Prayer, and to withdraw him from it; but dear Child, what Temptation soever troubles you, and what pain soever you feel in resisting it, take care always to strengthen your good resolutions as much as you are able, and by this means your Prayer will be of great Merit in God's sight. I have in another place spoken of a very proper means, to repair and redeem the time, we may fear to have lost in distractions, wherefore I shall here say nothing more concerning that Subject.

Genes. 15. 11.

Blos. c. 3. monit. spir.

C H A P. XXIV.

Of the Temptation of Sleep, from whence it comes, and the remedies we may use to overcome it.

AN inclination to Sleep, which is another kind of distraction, may sometimes proceed from a Natural cause; as from our not having slept enough, from weariness and labor, from the heaviness and dulness of the Air or Weather, from the infirmity of Old Age, from excess in Eating or Drinking, tho' only of Bread and Water. At other times it may proceed from the Malice of the Devil, according to what some Ancient Fathers of the Desert relate. Whom God has permitted to see in Spirit, some sitting upon the Heads of the Religious, to oblige 'em to Sleep; others to put their Fingers in their Mouths, to make 'em Yawn: And sometimes it proceeds from our own negligence, by putting our selves, or continuing in such a posture whilst we are at Prayer, as easily provok's Sleep. The chief remedy for this, is what I have already spoken of; which is to remember that we are in the Presence of God: For as we shou'd not dare to Sleep when we are in the presence of some great Prince, so if we consider well, that in Prayer we are before the Infinite Majesty of God, who behold's us, we shall be asham'd to Sleep. We may help our selves also with many other remedies, as by standing upright without leaning against any thing, to have a wet Handkerchief to wipe our Eyes withal, when we find our selves most oppress'd with Drowsiness; to look now and then towards Heaven; to hold a lighted Candle in our Hand; to make our Prayer amongst others before the Blessed Sacrament; and lastly, to take a Discipline before we go to Prayer; or to do some other thing that is painful, during Prayer it self; as to hold our Armes a-cro'ss when we are alone: We shall also find great helps against Sleep,
by

by reciting Vocal Prayers, as I have sayd elsewhere: Yet in helping our selves by these or other such like remedies, we must not neglect to beg God's assistance also, and that he wou'd Cure us of this Infirmary.

Casarius in his Dialogues, says, that a *Cistercian* Monk being very subject to Sleep in his Prayer, our Saviour one time appear'd to him, Nail'd to his Cross, with his Back towards him, and sayd thus. *Because you are Tepid and Drowsie you deserve not to see my Face.* He makes mention in the same place of another Religious that was treated more severely; for falling asleep in the Quire as he was wont to do, the Crucifix upon the Altar, unfasten'd if self from the Cross, and flying to him, gave him such a Box on the Ear, that the third Day after he Dy'd of it: All which gives us sufficiently to understand, how much this Laziness and Tepidity displeases God. The Lazy and Tepid Religious, says the same Author, provok's God to Vomit, according to the Words of the *Apocalyps.* † *Because you are Tepid, I begin to Vomit you out.*

*Casarius. lib. 4.
Dialog. c. 29.*

Id. ibid. c. 38.

† Quia tepidus es, incipiam te vomere ex ore meo.
Apoc. 3. 16.

Peter Damian speaking of that practise, which *Saint Romuald*, Founder of the *Camalduli*, caus'd his Religious to observe in Prayer; says, that 'twas a great fault in the Opinion of this Saint, to Sleep during that time, and he permitted no one who had fallen asleep in time of it, to say Mass that Day. Because of the little respect he had kept in his Masters Presence, whom he was to Receive.

Z z 2

C H A P.

C H A P. XXV.

*That besides the ordinary times allotted for Prayer,
'tis very convenient to take some other time
to apply our selves thereunto.*

AS Secular Persons, besides the ordinary Meal's they take every Day for the Refection of their Body, sometimes Solace themselves also by particular Feasts, wherein they have better cheer than ordinary; so 'tis very just that besides the ordinary time we daily imploy in Prayer, which is the food and nourishment of our Souls, we shou'd sometimes make Spiritual Feasts and Banquets, in which our Souls taking more than it's wonted allowance upon ordinary Days, may fully satisfie it self, with the abundant sweetness of God's Graces and Favors. Nature also teaches us this practice; for we see, that besides the Dew that falls every Night, it sometimes Rains whole Weeks together without intermission; that the Earth being well Water'd to the very bottom, neither the greatest Heats, nor the most violent Wind's, might be able to dry it up. We must therefore according to this example, make choice of some particular times, in which besides the Dew which we procure for our Souls by our ordinary Prayer, we may also procure for it, such large showers and effusions of many Graces, that neither our Exterior Occupations, nor the Wind's of Temptations, may ever be able to dry it up. This has been the practice of many Saints, and Holy Prelat's of the Church; who laying aside their Affairs and Occupations for a time; give themselves more freely to Prayer and Contemplation. And we Read that Saint *Arsenius* was wont every *Saturday*, to remain in Prayer from the Evening, till the next Morning.

But this practice is not only of great Importance for our Advancement in Vertue, but also hinders us from going backwards therein. Because the Frailty of Man is so very great,

*P. Franc. Arias
p. 2. del ap-
rovecchiamiento
spiritual.
Tract. 5. de la
Oracion, c. 7.*

great, and the inclinations we have to Evil so powerful, that tho' we sometimes begin our Spiritual Exercises with a great deal of Zeal and Fervor, yet we soon by little and little come to relent therein, and to loose our first Fervor. For we return to our first Tepidity, and Natural Remifness, as easily, as warm Water returns to it's first condition of coldness, after we have taken it off the Fire. † *For the mind of Man,* as the Scripture says, *is inclin'd to Evil from it's Youth.* * *And is like a perverse Nation, to which Malice is become Natural.* Let us add to this, that being employ'd as we are, some in Studies, others in Domestique Employments, and others in Exercises and Functions abroad; we have need to Recollect our selves sometimes by Retirement; it being an Axiom amongst Philosophers, † *that every agent suffers by it's Action*; so that tho' our Employments are good and holy, yet as a Knife grow's dull and flat by daily use, and requires that it shou'd be sharpen'd from time to time, so we grow dull by our continual Action, and relent in the care of our own advancement, by laboring to procure that of our Neighbor. Wherefore 'tis of very great importance to make now and then a retreat; whereby, disingaging our selves from all sorts of Employments, we give our selves leisure to repair the dissipation of it's forces, and regain new strength, to be able to continue in Action. For we are more oblig'd to our selves, than to our Neighbor, and well order'd Charity begins at home.

But 'tis also for our Neighbors advantage, that we do thus; since their progress, depends upon the progress of those, who are employ'd in the Salvation of Souls; and therefore 'tis so far from being a loss to our Neighbor to take time for our selves, that even he receives profit thereby. 'Tis like the letting Land lie Fallow for a Year, that afterwards it may become more fertile; or to use Father *Avila's* comparison, 'tis like the taking off the Millstone to pick it anew, thereby to make it grind the better. Wherefore our occupations are so far from being a legitimate excuse, to dispence with our selves sometimes from these retreats; that on the contrary, the more we are employ'd and busi'd in affairs, the more we stand in need of having recourse to the ordinary remedy and help of Prayer and Recollection. Those who Travel by Sea, must from time to time go ashore to lay in fresh Provisions; and in the same manner, those who are Embark'd in exterior employments, for the Salvation of their

† Sensus enim & cogitatio humani cordis in malum prona sunt ab adolescentia sua.
Gen. 8. 21.

* Quoniam nequam est natio eorum & naturalis malitia ipsorum.

† Sap. 12. 10.
† Omne agens agendo reparatur.

their Neighbor, and who are continually encompass'd with so many dangers, as the Sea of this World is full of, have reason oftentimes to go ashore, and enter the Harbor of Solitude and Recollection, to furnish themselves with fresh Spiritual supplies, and thereby make Provision of what is necessary for the continuation of their Voyage. The Gospel affords us an excellent example of this: JESUS CHRIST had sent his Apostles to several places to Preach; and when they return'd from Missions, and had giv'n account of 'em to the Son of God: He bid's 'em, *† Come aside to a place of Solitude, and there repose and rest yourselves for a while.* If the Saviour of the World gave this Counsel to his Apostles; and if such Persons as they wanted repose and retirement, with how far greater reason ought we to believe, that we stand in need thereof.

Those who have Writ of Prayer, say very well, that 'tis the same to the Soul, that Sleep is to the Body; and even in the Scripture it self, 'tis stil'd a Sleep. * *I Sleep but my Heart Watches, † Ye Daughters of Jerusalem I Conjure you not to awake my Beloved, till she pleases to Wake of her self.* And the better to explicate this Comparison, he says, as the Body refreshes and gathers new strength by Sleep, so the Soul repotes in Prayer, and gathers thereby new vigor to serve God; and as without Sleep, tho' we shou'd take the most exquisite Food in the World, we shou'd notwithstanding grow weaker, and be in danger of losing our Senses; so without this Spiritual Sleep of Prayer, how Holy soever our exterior employments are, the Soul wou'd become Weak and Sickly, and wou'd even be in danger to Perish. 'Tis for this reason that the Spouse wou'd not have his Beloved be waken'd out of her Sleep till she pleas'd; for 'tis very troublesome to be waken'd by any noise; but very pleasant to wake of our selves, after our Bodies have taken all the repose they stood in need of, and that all the Vapors that mounted to the Head are quite dissipated and spent. God therefore wou'd have no exterior thing disturb or waken our Soul, when the repotes in Prayer, but that the shou'd wake of her self, when she has sufficiently repos'd; and the shou'd exercise her self also in Charitable employments; because she is then far fitter for 'em than she was before.

Tho' generally speaking, 'tis at any time whatsoever of very great importance, to apply our selves to Prayer, which we cannot do too often, yet there are some occasions and

† Venite desertum in desertum locum, & requiescite pusillum.
Mat. 6. 31.

* Ego dormio, & cor meum vigilat.
Cant. 5. 2.
† Adjuro vos, filiz Jerusalem, ne suscitetis, neque evigilate facietis dilectam, donec ipsa velit.
Cant. 3. 4.

and conjunctures, in which 'tis particularly necessary, that we shou'd imploy our selves in it. When for example, we perceive that we begin to relent in our Spiritual duties, and draw not such fruit from 'em as we ought to do; when we perceive that we practise not the same exact observance of our Rules, as we were wont to do; and have little or no regard for small things; when we find we have not sufficient interior Recollection; and we are too much dissipated in the exterior, and too much taken up with Affairs, into which we have thrust our selves. 'Tis good also to make a Retreat or Recollection for some Days, when we perceive we cannot intirely overcome our selves, in some certain thing; thereby to endeavour to compass by Prayer, what otherwise we cou'd not effect. Because then it may happen, that in a prosperous Moment, we shall obtain more Grace of God, and more Strength to Mortifie and overcome our selves, than we shou'd have been able to do in many Days, by the practise of our ordinary Exercises. For then we shou'd have imploy'd a long time only in falling and getting up again; but by the help of a few Days Retreat, it will happen upon a sudden, that we shall find our selves disabus'd of our Errors, confirm'd in our good Purposes, and become absolutly resolv'd to change our Lives. For after all, 'tis not to be doubted, but that to be sometimes alone, and to confer with God and our selves, is a very good disposition, to obtain of him to speak to our Hearts; and move him to bestow plentiful Graces upon us. † *The Solitary Person shall sit and keep Silence*, says the Prophet, *because he is rais'd above himself*. Wherefore by the help of a Retreat, we elevate our selves above our selves, and become quite other Men than we were before. And hereby very extraordinary changes have often happen'd: * *The Hand of God is not Shorten'd*, his Power is not at all diminish'd; wherefore we must never loose courage, nor neglect any thing we are able to do. How do you know but that God may Work great things, in you in time of this Retreat; perhaps 'tis to some one of those Exercises during that time, to which he has united your progress in Perfection. Moreover, 'tis not less necessary for the happy State of your Soul; thus to retire your self after a long Journey, or some great and distractive Imployment; as 'tis necessary for our Corporal health, and for the regaining strength, to treat our selves with greater care and better than ordinary, after we have

† Sedit solitarius, & tacebit, quia levavit super se. Thren. 3. 28.

* Ecce non est abbreviata manus Domini. Isa. 59. 1.

have been exhausted by a long Sickness: 'Tis good also for the same reason, when we are about to engage our selves in any great Employments, to prepare, and precaution our selves before-hand after this manner, that we may afterwards perform our Actions with more Purity and Cleanness of Mind, and hurt or defile our selves less with the Commerce and Traffick of the World. The Medicin's that prevent Diseases, are better than those that cure 'em; and 'twas upon this account that Saint *Ignatius* recommended to all Superiors, that before they took their charge upon 'em, they shoud make eight Days Retreat; to Exercise themselves for that time in Spiritual things. 'Tis also very much to the purpose to do the same, when we are upon the point to be employ'd in any long Mission; of which JESUS CHRIST himself has given us an example; who before he began to Preach, retir'd himself forty Days together in the Desert. The time of affliction also is very proper for a Retreat; as well when the Affliction regard's our selves in particular, as when they regard the SOCIETY, or the whole Church in general: For 'tis an ordinary practise in the Church, to have recourse to Prayer, Pennance, and Mortification, for the appeasing God's Wrath; and the obtaining his Mercy and particular Favors.

All these occurrences may give us occasion to recollect our selves by some Days Retreat: But is it not necessary to seek occasions? No, our own necessities, and our own interest also furnish us with sufficient. Wherefore we ought not to pass a Year without making such a Spiritual Retreat; and when we undertake it, we must perform it to the purpose, that is, with a firm purpose to profit by it. For a matter of so great importance, ought never to be made superficially, out of Custom, or Condescendency.

Infine, God has giv'n this means particularly to the SOCIETY, not only as a thing very proper for our own Advancement in Vertue, but also for the Advancement of our Neighbor. 'Tis after this manner that the Bull's of our Institute speak, and Saint *Ignatius* very particularly recommend's it to Priests: † *To the end, says he, that thereby they make themselves well vers'd in the management of these sorts of Spiritual Arm's, which by the special Grace of God, are extraordinary fit and proper to gain abundance of Souls to his Service.* 'Twas by this means that God drew to himself our Blessed Founder, and his Companions; and 'tis by this means also that he will draw many others after the same

† Ut in hoc armorum spiritualium genere tractando, quod Dei gratia, ad ipsum obsequium tantopere conferre cernitur, dexteritatem habere possint.
4. p. Const. c. 8.
5. 5. Regul. 7. Sacramentum.

same Example: and we have seen most wonderful effects of his Holy Grace, in those he has conducted by these means; and we must hope that by making use of the same, he will give us the like Assistance, and pour down the same Blessings upon us.

I add to what I have already sayd, another thing still very considerable, which ought to excite us extreamly to make use of these *Exercises*. 'Tis the favor which *Paul* the V. has granted to all Religious in general, in his Bull, Publish'd in the Year 1606. the twenty-third of *May*. In which he grants a Plenary Indulgence, and Remission of all Sins, to those of any Order whatsoever, who shall retire for eight or ten Days, to make the *Spiritual Exercise*. This evidences to us the esteem this great Pope had of 'em, which is no other than what we ought also to have. And to the end that the whole World may be the better inform'd, by the very Words of the sayd Bull, I shall here insert 'em. † *As to those who by the permission of their Superiors, quitting their present Affairs, and retiring themselves for ten Days in their Cell's, or in any other Place, free from the Commerce and Conversation of Men, shall employ themselves during this time, in the Reading of Holy Book's, and in other Spiritual Exercises, to excite their Hearts to Piety and Devotion; adding at the same time Meditations upon the Mysteries of our Holy Faith, upon the Benefits receiv'd from God, upon the four Ends of Man, upon the Passion of our Saviour, or any other Prayers, either Jaculatory or Vocal, and applying themselves at least two Hours a Day in Mental Prayer; and after having at the same time made a General Confession of their whole Life, or of the Year past, or only an ordinary Confession, shall Receive the Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist, or shall Celebrate Mass; every time that they shall make these Exercises, we Mercifully in our Lord grant 'em a Plenary Indulgence or a Remission of all their Sins.*

exercitiorum, orationum jaculatoriarum, aut vocalium, saltem per duas horas, in diem & noctem orationibus mentalibus sese exercendo, faciendo eodem tempore confessionem generalem, aut annualem, vel ordinariam, sanctissimum Eucharistiae Sacramentum sumperint, aut Missam celebraverint, quoties pro quolibet praedictorum exercitiorum plenariam similiter omnium peccatorum suorum indulgentiam & remissionem misericorditer concedimus.

† *Is vero qui de suorum superiorum licentia a negotiis per decem dies alieni, in Cella commorabuntur, aut ab aliorum conversatione separati, in piorum Librorum, & aliorum rerum spiritualium, animos ad devotionem, & spiritum incendunt, lectionibus operam suam dederint, addendo saepe considerationes, & meditationes Mysteriorum Fidei Catholicae, divinarum beneficiorum, quatuor novissimorum, Passionis Domini Jesu Christi, & aliorum ex-*

CHAP. XXVI.

*The fruit we ought to gather out of the
Spiritual Exercise.*

IN the *Spiritual Exercise*, we must chiefly propose to our selves three things: The first is, carefully to perform what we are Daily to do; since all our Advancement and Perfection as I have already signifi'd, depend's upon this. For we must not imagine, that these Exercises were Instituted, only that we shou'd remain eight or ten Days in Retirement, to apply our selves continually to Prayer; but the time is allotted us, to accustom our selves to make our Prayer, and Examins well, to hear or say Mass with Fervor, to recite the Divine Office with Devotion, to profit by our Spiritual Reading, and so of the rest. 'Tis to excite our selves by many Acts, and thereby contract a habit to perform 'em as we shou'd do, that we lay aside for some time all other employments; and 'tis for the same end that Saint *Ignatius* wou'd have us, during the time of these Exercises (which he in the beginning order'd shou'd last for a Month, and wou'd have all made in the same order he there appoints) wherein all the Particular Examins are to be made upon the observance of those Rules or Additions we are then to observe, and upon the faults we also commit therein: And this is frequently recommended to us, as a thing he knew to be of very great Importance and Profit. But 'tis not only in our Spiritual Exercises, which gives the Soul strength to perform all other things, that we ought to make our profit of, in this Retreat; but the fruit thereof, must extend it self to our exterior Offices and Employments; whereby we may procure help and succour to perform 'em better, and to observe all our Rules for the future more punctually. This is the advantage we must draw from these Exercises, in our Retreat, and regards not only the present time we apply our selves to them,

*Lib. exerc. spir.
in add. 1. hebdom.
mor. 4. & in 2.
hebdom. die. 5. &
hebdom. 3. nota.
4. post. 2.
contemp.*

them, but chiefly what is to insue hereafter; and 'tis by our conduct after we have finish'd 'em, that we are to discern and judge of the profit we have made by them.

The second thing we must propose to our selves in the Spiritual Exercise or Retreat is the overcoming and Mortifying our selves against those defects and Imperfections, we are most of all subject unto. So that every one ought to Examin himself, in what it is that he do's oftner fail of his duty; in what he gives most frequent occasions of Scandal and difficulty to his Brethren; and must imploy himself chiefly in correcting of these: Whereby he will have perform'd the Spiritual Exercise with profit; because this is the chiefest end thereof. The Title that Saint Ignatius gives 'em, mark's this very expressly, because he calls 'em, *Spiritual Meditations, to overcome our selves, and to direct our Thoughts, and all the Actions of our Life to the Service of God.* Wherefore we must make it our business during this Retirement, so to Reform our selves, that at the end of it, each one may find himself, † *Quite chang'd into another Man*, as Samuel sayd to Saul, or as Saint Paul says, * *Into a Perfect Man*: And we must evidence a proof of this by the change of our practises: And all must see, that as before you lov'd to dissipate and divert your selves, by loosing your time in frivolous Conversations, that now you love Silence and Retirement; if before you lov'd and follow'd your Ease, and Commodities, that now you seek nothing else but your greater Mortification and Penance; if before you spoke harshly to your Brethren that now you speak to them with all imaginable sweetness; if before you relented in the observance of your Rules, and neglected little things, that now you are become faithful in the very least observances, and most Submissive and Exact, in following punctually whatsoever is prescrib'd, and in applying your selves so to your duty; and that by God's Assistance, you happen not to fall into any deliberate Imperfection. See here what Victory we ought to have gain'd over our selves in this Retreat; for if we come out of it, no better than we enter'd into it, and bring out with us all the Imperfections and Defects we carry'd in, to what purpose have we made it.

Saint Ambrose mentions, what we may very well here take notice of, he says, that a Young Man who was very much Debauch'd, had an occasion of making a long Voyage,

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† Et miraberis in virum alium.
* Reg. 10. 6.
* In virum perfectum.
Ad Epp. 4. 13.

S. Amb. lib. 2.
de penitent.

in which he quite chang'd his Life. At his return to the City where the liv'd, he met in the Street a Person of his Acquaintance of ill Reputation, with whom heretofore he had kept dishonest conversation; and having past by her without so much as taking notice, or moving his Hat to her, she was hereat very much surpris'd, and thinking he did not know her; went to him and told him, she was such a one. I see very well, says he, who you are; but I am no longer the same you knew me heretofore. For he was so chang'd that he was become quite another Man. We ought to change our selves after this manner, to the end we may be able to say with the Apostle: † *I live, but after such a manner, that 'tis no more I that live, but CHRIST that lives in me.* And this says Saint Ambrose, is that happy change of which the Saviour of the World speaks, when he says, * *Whosoever will follow me, let him deny himself.* For the renouncing on's self, says this Holy Father, is to be thus chang'd into another Man, and to endeavour to be no more the same we were wont to be. When Saint Francis Borgia accompany'd the Corp's of the Empress Isabella to Granada, God did him the favor so to convince him of the Vanities of this World, by that constant Spectacle of Death he had always before his Eyes, that at his return he affirm'd, that the Court appear'd to him quite chang'd. Which was in effect, that he was quite chang'd in himself, after that God had enlighten'd him; 'tis after this manner we shou'd be chang'd: And this is the end of the Spiritual Exercise, if we make a good use of those Lights and Graces, which God is accusom'd to Communicate to Souls in time thereof.

The third thing we must take notice of, and is only a consequence of the second, is the gaining of that Vertue which is most necessary for us. Because we Root out Vices, only to Plant Vertues in their place: † *And there are two means*, says, Thomas à Kempis, *that chiefly help to our Spiritual advancement; violently to withdraw our selves from what Nature do's Viciously incline us unto, and fervently set upon the gaining that Vertue, we most of all stand in need of; which is the thing in question.* The Directory also of the Exercise speaking of the conduct we ought to hold, during the time of Retreat, says, that we must not spend all the time of the first Week in the practise of the first means; but 'tis sufficient to employ only two or three Days,

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† Viro autem, jam non ego; vivit vero in me Christus.
Ad Gal. 2. 20.

* Si quis vult post me venire, abneget semetipsum.
Matth. 16. 24.

Lib. 1. c. 8.
Vita P. Franc. de Borgia.

† Duo specialiter ad magnam emendationem juvant videlicet subtrahere se violententer ab eo ad quod natura viciosè inclinatur, & ferventer instare pro bono quo amplius quis indiget.
Tho. à Kemp. lib. 1. ca. 25. §. 4.

Direct. Ex. Spir. cap. 6.

to the end that there may be sufficient space left, wherein we may proceed to some other means, that may elevate us to a higher degree of Perfection. Amongst others that are mark'd out, as the most proper for this effect, the chiefest is, to single out one of our Rules, in which we think, all Perfection we can desire is contain'd; as for example, the Rule that says, *As those that are of the World, Love and earnestly seek after Honors, Esteem and Reputation of Men, so we must Love and earnestly seek after the contrary:* Take to Heart, during the time of your Retirement, the gaining such a degree of Humility; that all Contempts, Affronts, Injuries, and false Accusations, may give you as much Joy, as Honor and Praise, give to those of the World: And hereby, you raising your self above the Temptations we ordinarily have, of desiring to be Esteem'd; one for his Learning, and another for the Dignity of his Employment; you will surmount what is a very great obstacle to your Spiritual Advancement. Another time make that Rule your practise, that would have us be always *Advancing our selves in the Service of God, purely to please him, out of Love of him; and rather out of a grateful acknowledgment for his Benefits, whereby he has prevented us, than out of Fear of Punishment or hope of Reward.* Endeavour so to purifie your Intention, that you seek your own interest in nothing, either little or great, in things Temporal or Eternal; but that in the one and the other, you seek nothing, but only the Will and Glory of God, so that you come at last even to forget your self. At another time apply your self to obtain a perfect Conformity to the Will of God in all things, that whatsoever may happen to you, or from whatsoever Persons; you must still receive all, as coming from his Divine Hand. Lastly, whatsoever Vertue or Perfection you shall propose to your self to get in this Recollection (for we may equally cast our Eyes upon all, and see which we most of all stand in need of) you must never leave off; till you have compass'd your design.

Reg. 11. summ.

17. summ.

C H A P. XXVII.

*Of some advertisments, which will still help us to
reap greater profit by the Spiritual Exercise.*

THAT we may still reap greater profit from the *Spiritual Exercise*; and as we have sayd, draw more fruit from it; we must know, that before we set our selves to Prayer, we must not only prepare, and resolve upon the Points we are to Meditate; but upon the Fruit also we ought to draw from thence: After the same manner before we begin the Exercise, we must before-hand foresee and determine the profit we ought to draw from it: For this end 'tis necessary before we enter into any Retreat, that we take an exact review of our selves; and consider at leisure, and ask our selves; What is my greatest Spiritual necessity? To what is my corrupt Nature most of all carry'd? What is my most irregular Passion, and the worst of those ill habits I have contracted? Wherein have I most of all injur'd and endanger'd my Soul? Which of my imperfections do's most of all offend or scandalize my Brethren? Behold here an excellent manner, how we are to prepare our selves for the Spiritual Exercise: And when after an exact discussion, and examination, we have found out what we sought for, we must always set it before our Eyes, either to procure it in Perfection if it be a Vertue; or intirely to correct it, if it be a Vice. So that in these Retreats, we must propose either the raising our selves to a sublime Contemplation, or imagine that therein our chief aim must be the enjoying a strict Communication with God; for it may so happen, that even during this time, we may have more distractions, more disquiet and more frequent and greater Temptations, than we had amidst the impediments of Worldly Employments. We must therefore chiefly have regard to the fruit we are to gather, as I before signify'd, and take all pains possible, to procure these advantages; and if we do this, we shall have made a profitable
and

and Pious Retreat, tho' perhaps we have not felt therein, all the Fervor and Devotion we desir'd or expected. But if we do not compass this, tho' we shou'd be elevated to such a pitch of Devotion, as to be continually dissolv'd in Tears, yet we shall find we have lost our time; because 'tis not this motion of tenderness only, but the care of our amendment, and progress in Vertue, which shou'd have been our chief end and aim.

'Twill also conduce extremely to our advancement, if we help our selves by the Method which Saint Ignatius wou'd have us always make use of in Prayer; which is, that having made our Prayer for an Hour; we afterwards spend one Quarter, or thereabouts, Standing or Sitting, in making our Reflection upon it, and take account how we have behav'd our selves the foregoing Hour. When we find we have perform'd it ill, we must seek out the cause, and examin, whether it proceeds not from our not having prepar'd the Points well? Whether we have not entertain'd our selves in vain and extravagant thoughts? Whether we have not permitted our selves to be overcome by Sleep; or fallen into a kind of drowsiness or languishing of Heart? Whether we have not rested too long in Speculations of the Understanding, and neglected to excite fervent affections of the Will? Whether we perform'd it with all that Purity of Intention as we ought; but rather sought the sweetness of Consolations, than the accomplishment of the Divine Will? After we have thus made an exact discussion or examin, and thereby perceive in what we have fail'd; we must presently ask Pardon for our defects, and make a firm resolution to correct 'em for the future; and on the contrary, if we find that our Conscience do's not reproach us of any neglect, we must give due thanks to God; and purpose hereafter to carry our selves in Prayer after the same manner. This Instruction is of very great importance, because by the help of this Examin, we shall come to know by experience in what we are defective and correct it; and see what conduces to it's well performance, that we may persevere therein; whereby we shall gain that Spirit of discretion and instruction, which experience will teach us. Wherefore Saint Ignatius esteems this Examin very proper, to form and make Masters of Spirit; not only in the Science of Prayer, but also in all other Sciences which regard or relate to the direction of Soul's. For in the fourth Part of his Constitutions he says, that when a Confessor has heard any

Lib. exerc. spir.
in add. t. b. d.
add. 5.

4. p. Conf. cap.
8. Lit. D.

ones

ones Confession, 'will be a very great help to him, especially in the beginning, to reflect presently upon it, to the end that he may see in what he has been defective; the better to correct it another time, and to reap profit by his own defects. The Examin of Prayer was appointed for the same end, and 'tis also the first thing we must do, after we have ended it. The second thing, which is also as important as this, is to take notice what the fruit is that we gather from our Meditation; and thereupon produce new Acts of the Will, by abridging in a few words the substance of what we have sayd in many; from whence we draw consequences and deductions, and make a kind of an Epilogue. Moreover, we cannot better know what Opinion our Holy Founder had of Prayer; and of how great importance he thought it was to make it well, and carefully to correct the faults we commit in it, than by seeing that he was not contented for this end, that we shou'd not content our selves only with the ordinary help of our Examins at Noon and at Night, but wou'd have us also, immediately after Prayer, to make a Particular Examin thereof. And this Examin is of so great importance, that if we foresee we shall not have time to make it after our Prayer, we must take part of the time of our Prayer to make it in.

We may add here another very profitable advice, which is, to Write down very briefly the Fruit we have gather'd out of Prayer, the Good Thoughts we had, the Pious Resolutions we made, and the Lights we receiv'd from God in it, as well concerning those Vertues we propos'd to our selves the gaining of, as about the Mysteries upon which we Meditated. This was the Practice of Saint *Ignatius*, and Father *Fabri*, and we have even some of those things they Writ upon this Subject. Saint *Francis Xavierius* advis'd us also to Practice the same Method; the Directory of the Spiritual Exercises Counsels it, and Father *Aquaviva* our General, in his Writings has very particularly recommended the same. Besides, by this means the good desires and resolutions we make are more perfected, and take deeper root, and make greater impression in our Heart; and experience also will teach us, that when at another time we come to Read 'em over again, they will be of great profit to us; for being the very same sentiments we had before, and which then touch'd and mov'd us; they will move us with a far greater facility afterwards, than others; and we shall find our selves

Lib. 6. c. 13.
rit. P. Xavier.
C. 2. & 4. Di-
rect. exerc. spi-
rit. Claudius
Aquav. in in-
structionis ad cu-
randos anima
morbos, cap. 3.

selves excited to produce the same Acts again, with a greater promptness than before. But if we go not so far as heretofore we did, we shall have at least a great confusion, to find we are not the same now we were then, and that we go back instead of advancing; and by this means we either do our endeavours to come to the same Point, or we supply our defects by that holy shame and confusion we suffer, for coming so much short of our former Perfection. Thus either by the one way or the other, it must needs be very profitable, but above all in time of the Spiritual Exercise or Retirement.

In the last place, I say, if it be at any time good, as I shall have occasion to prove in another place, to render an account of Conscience and Prayer, to some Spiritual Director, 'tis more particularly to be render'd in time of our Retirement; and some Persons, because they will not subject themselves hereunto, often reap not that Fruit from the Spiritual Exercise, which otherwise they wou'd do.

Part. 2. Treat.
12.

CHAP. XXVIII.

Of Spiritual Reading: Of how great importance it is, and of the means to make it with Fruit.

Spiritual Reading is a very great help for Prayer, and 'tis upon this account that Saint Paul Writing to *Timothy*, recommended to him, * *To apply himself to Reading*. Saint *Athanasius* esteems it so necessary, for one who wou'd walk in the Path of God, that in an Exhortation he made to Religious, he says, † *You will see no one truly intent to God's Service, who is not also addicted to Reading*. We can neither practise nor leave it off, without receiving profit or prejudice. Saint *Chrysostom* also testifies the esteem he had of it. When Writing to *Eustochium*, * *Let Sleep*, says he, *surprise you, with a Book in your hand, and let the Holy Scripture receive your declining Head*. Infine, all Saints in general recommend unto us Spiritual Reading, and experience moreover lets us clearly see, the

Tom. I. B b b profit

* Attende
lectioni.
1. ad Tim. 4. 13.

† Sine legendi
studio neminem ad Deum
intentum
videas.
Athanasius. ex-
hort. ad Relig.

* Tenenti co-
dicem somnus
obrepit, & ca-
dentem faciem
pagina sancta
suscipiat.
*Hier. ep. ad
Eust.*

profit thereof; because Histories are replinish'd with wonderful Conversions that God has wrought by this means.

The Founders of Religious Orders relying upon the Doctrine of Saint Paul, and upon the Authority and Experience of Saints, have been so convinc'd of the importance and profit of this Exercise, that all of 'em have prescrib'd the practise of it to their Religious. *Humbertus* says, that Saint Bennet was not contented only, to prescribe a time for the daily practise of it; but order'd moreover that at the time allotted for it, two of the Ancient Religious shou'd make their Visit round the Monastery, to see if there were any that omitted this duty; or that withdrew or hinder'd others from it. By this we may see the esteem that this great Saint had of it. And by the by, we may take notice, that the Visits that are daily accusom'd to be made amongst us, whilst we are imploy'd in our Spiritual Exercises, had their beginning and foundation from the Direction and Experience of the most Ancient Saints. He order'd moreover, that such as shou'd be found faulty, shou'd for the first and second time be gently corrected; but that afterwards, if they were found guilty, they shou'd be severly Punish'd, and be made Examples to others. We have also in our SOCIETY a Rule for Spiritual Reading that says, *That the Religious shou'd twice a Day imploy the time allotted for Examin of Conscience, for Meditation and Spiritual Reading; and with all possible care and diligence, apply themselves therunto in our Lord; and the Superior and Prefect of Spirit is to take care, that each one Daily imploy's the time allotted for these Exercises.* Lastly, Spiritual Reading is practis'd by all, that make profession of Piety; wherefore, without extending my Discourse any farther hereupon, I shall content my self to set down such things, as may render the practise of it more profitable.

Saint Ambrose exhorting us to apply our selves as much as we can to Spiritual Reading, says thus, † Wherefore do you not imploy all the time you have free out of the Church in Spiritual Reading? Wherefore do you not return to take a View of JESUS CHRIST? Why do you not speak to him? And why do you not hearken to what he says to you? For we speak to him, whilst we are in Prayer; and we hear him speak, whilst we Read the Holy Scripture. Let this therefore be the first means whereby we may help our selves to profit by Spiritual Reading; let us believe that

*Humbertus in
Prologo.*

*Regul. I.
Comm.*

† Cur non
illa tempora,
quibus ab Ec-
clesiâ vacas, le-
ctioni impen-
das? Cur non
Christum re-
visas, Christum
alloquaris,
Christum au-
dias? Illum
alloquimur,
eum oramus;
illum audi-
mus, eum di-
vina legimus
oracula.
*Amb. l. 1.
offic. c. 20.*

that 'tis God Speaks to us, and that 'tis he, who dictates to us what we there Read. * *Read the Holy Scripture after such a manner as always to bear in mind, that all the Words that are therein, are the Words of God, who would not only have us know his Law, but also fulfill it.*

That which the same Saint add's in another place, furnishes us with another very profitable means, and many most Pious Reflections. † *The Holy Scripture, says he, is like so many Letters sent us from our own Country; let us therefore Read 'em with the same eagerness, that a Man would Read the Letters he receives from his Country, from whence he has been a very long time absent, and from whence he is a great way distant. Let us Read 'em to see what news we receive from Heaven, which is our true Country; to see what they tell us of our Fathers, Brethren, and Friends that are there; to see what they say of that place, to which we so earnestly desire to go.*

Saint Gregory Writing upon the same subject, says, that the Holy Scripture is like a Looking-glass; which we ought to set before the Eyes of our Soul, to behold our interior; and in which 'tis very easie to perceive, what good or bad there is within us; and how near, and how far off we are from Perfection: For sometimes it set's before us the admirable exploits of the Saints, to excite us to imitate 'em, to the end that the sight of their Victories and Triumphs, thou'd augment our courage in Temptations and Sufferings; sometimes it speaks also of their Falls, to the end that we may know, wherein we are to imitate 'em, and what we ought also to take care to avoid. Sometimes it sets before us the Example of Job, whose Vertue increas'd amidst Temptations, as Froth do's amidst the Waves and Billow's of the Sea; sometimes also it represents David to us, who fell at the first attack. The Constancy of one, helps to strengthen us in the greatest trials; and the Frailty of the other, teaches us always to have an Humble fear, even in Prosperity, and amidst those Consolations that Grace brings along with it; and never to presume upon our selves, or our own strength, but carry our selves always with the greatest precaution imaginable. Saint Austin speaks after the same manner as Saint Gregory do's. * *You will make a good use, says he, of Holy Scripture, if you use it as a Looking-glass, to the end that your Soul be- holding it self therein, may correct what is ill, and perfect*

Bbb 2

* Ita Scripturas Sanctas lege, ut semper memineris Dei illa verba esse, qui legem suam non solum fecit; sed etiam impleri jubet.

Aug. ep. 143. ad Virg. Demet.

† Divinae scripturae quasi litterae de patria nostra sunt.

Id. serm. 56. ad fratres in Ex.

Greg. l. 2. Mor. ca. 1.

* Optime uteris lectione divina, tibi eam adhibeas speculi vice, ut ibi velut imaginem suam anima respiciat, & vel fœda quæque corrigat, vel pulchra plus ornet.

Aug. ep. 143. ad Virg. Demet.

What is good in her. What the one or the other says of Holy Scripture, may also be apply'd to all kind of Spiritual Reading.

But to descend more to particulars, and to declare what method we are to observe herein, we must take notice, that to profit by this sort of Reading, we ought not to perform it in haste, as when we Read something for the divertisement of our Minds; but at leisure, and with very great application. For as Violent and Tempestuous Rain's do not penetrate the Earth, or render it Fruitful; but only Sweet and continual Showers do work this effect; so to make our Spiritual Reading to enter into our Heart, and that it may be receiv'd therein, we must make it with Tranquility and Attention. 'Tis also very good when we meet with any passage that strikes or moves us, to stay a little longer upon it, than upon others; and to pause a little, and think upon what we have Read, hereby to move the Will; after the same manner as we are wont to do in time of Meditation. Yet we ought not in our Reading, to spend so much time in our Thoughts and Considerations, as we do in Meditation; where things shou'd be ruminated and digested at greater leisure; but at least, we must give 'em some proportionable space: And this is what the Saints Counsel us to perform, when they say, we must in Reading, do the same that Birds do whilst they Drink; they take different Draughts, and every time they Drink, they lift up their Eyes to Heaven.

We see by this, what connexion and resemblance there is, between Spiritual Reading and Prayer; which in effect is so great, that when we wou'd train up any one to Prayer, and wou'd by little and little prepare him for it, by complying with his Genius and Disposition; the first thing we Counsel him, is to Read good and Pious Books, and to stop now and then whilst he is Reading: And it often happens by this means, that God raises him to the Exercise of Mental Prayer. We also direct such as have not a facility in Prayer, and despair ever to compass it, by reason of their continual distractions, to joyn Spiritual Reading with Prayer: Reading a little at a time, and each time Meditating upon what they have Read. For the Mind being hereby recollected, and fix'd upon the things we have Read, has not so much occasion of dissipating it self upon one side or other, as when 'tis
alto-

*Bern. ep. ad
frat. de mont.
Dei & in
specul. Mon.*

altogether free, or when the Senses are not employ'd about some Object or other.

This facility of Reading and Praying together, is that which without doubt mov'd the Saints to have so great an esteem of Spiritual Reading, that they in a manner praise it as much as they do Prayer. For they say that Reading is the Spiritual Food of the Soul, which fortifies, and renders it constant against all Temptations; which inspires it with Holy thoughts and desires of Heaven; which inlightens the Understanding, heats and inflames the Will; comforts it in that sickness, occasion'd by all the Afflictions it meets with in this World; and produces that true and Spiritual joy, that is found only in God.

Saint Bernard gives us another instruction, how we may profit by Spiritual Reading; † *He who sets himself to Read, says he, do's not so much seek to Learn, as to Taste the things of God.* For the single or simple Knowledge of the Understanding, is Dry and Barren, if it Warm's not the Will, and excites not that fervor, which renders the Reading profitable and fruitful, and which is truly the end thereof. This advertisement is moreover of very great importance; for there is a great difference in Reading to Learn, and in Reading to profit in Vertue; in Reading for others, and in Reading for our selves; the one sort of Reading is a pure Study; and the other is Spiritual Food. So that in Reading, if you apply your self only to the Knowledge of things; or to gain something, whereby to be better able to Instruct others; this is not such a Spiritual Reading, as is to be made for your own advancement; but 'tis a Study you undertake to advance another. There are other times for this; * *All things have their times*: That of Spiritual Reading must not be employ'd in Study, but in that which I have here set down.

'Tis for this reason that the Saints recommend to us that we Read not much at a time; for fear that a long Lecture, shou'd weary and tire out our Mind, instead of fortifying it: And this Counsel, which is very good for all sorts of Persons, is most particularly necessary for those, who imagine that all consists in Reading, or rather devouring, as I may say, a great many Books. For as the Nourishment of the Body, depends not upon the quantity of Food, but upon the good Digestion thereof; so also the Nourishment of the Soul, consists not in Reading much, but in ruminating and well

S. Ephr. serm.
7. Christ. hom.
23. sup. Genes.
Aug. ser. 38.
ad Frat. in
Brem.

† Si ad legendum accedat, non tam quærat scientiam quam sapientiam.
Bern. in Spec. Monach.

* Omnia tempus habent.
Eccl. 3. 1.

S. Ephr. serm.
7. Bern. ep.
ad Frat. de mont. Dei.

well digesting what we have Read. And as hard matters rather tire us out, than Edifie us; and rather dry up Devotion, than increase it; therefore they Counsel us, to make our Spiritual Reading upon simple and easie matters, in which more and greater sentiments of Piety, rather than profoundness of Learning are contain'd. *Hugo* of Saint *Victor*, says upon this Subject, that a Servant of God was Counsell'd by a Revelation, to quit the Reading of all sorts of intricate and hard matters, and to apply himself to Read the Lives of Saints, and other Books of the like Nature; and that by this means, he made very great progress in Piety.

Saint *Bernard* more particularly Teaches us, what we ought to observe herein, † *We must*, says he, *take care to keep in our Minds all Day long, some passage we have that Day Read; to the end we may afterwards digest it the better; by calling to mind, and often ruminating upon it: And this must be something also that agrees with the good Purposes and Resolutions you have made before, and that may be proper to strengthen 'em, and hinder your mind from distracting or dissipating it self upon other thoughts.* For as we do not Eat, only to spend the time that is taken up therein, but to the end, that the Food we take, may sustain and nourish us all the Day after; so we must not apply our selves to Spiritual Reading, which is the Spiritual Food of our Soul's, only to imploy the time allotted for it; but we must perform it so, as to make our profit by it the whole Day after. For this end 'twill be very advantageous to us, if we elevate our Minds to God before we begin to Read, and Beg his Grace that our Reading may become fruitful, that it may penetrate our Heart, and take such Root in it, and so fortifie it, that it may render us more Ardent and Fervorous in Vertue, let us see the abuses of the World, and make us also more firm and constant, in what regard's our Spiritual Advancement and Perfection. Saint *Gregory* was wont to make his Spiritual Reading after this manner, to which he never apply'd himself, without being first prepar'd for it by Prayer, and without having recited this Verse of the Psalmist,

* *Retire from me, ye Wicked Spirits, and I will Dive into, and Penetrate the Commandments of my God.*

But that we may still conceive, a greater esteem of Spiritual Reading, and have a greater desire, to apply our selves

*Hug. de S. Viñ.
lib. 5. ernd.
Did. c. 7.*

† Sed & de
quotidiana
lectione ali-
quid quotidie
in ventrem
memorie di-
mittendum est,
quod fidelius
digeratur, &
rursus revoca-
tum, crebrius
ruminetur,
quod propo-
situm conveniat,
quod intenti-
oni proficiat,
quod detineat
animum, ut
aliena cogi-
tare non li-
beat.
*Bern. ep. ad
frat. de mont.
Dei.*

* Declinate à
me maligni,
& scrutabor
mandata Dei
mei.
Psal. 118, 114.

selves thereunto, the Saints compare it to the Preaching of the Word of God; and affirm, that it has all the force and Energy, that the Voice of a Preacher can have; and has moreover a great many other conveniencies, that Preaching has not. First, 'tis not so easie to have a Preacher at hand at all times, as to have a Spiritual Book. Secondly, the best instructions of a Preacher soon pass; and therefore cannot work all those good effects which this may; for in this we may often turn to any place we have Read, that mov'd us; we may examin and ponder it again and again, and insist and stay so long upon it, as we shall find necessary, to have it make a deep impression in our Soul's. Thirdly, in a Spiritual Book we have a good Counsellor; for as a Great Philosopher sayd very well, *A Book says boldly, and without any fear, that which no Person dares tell us*; it tells the whole World of their faults; it exhorts and reprehends all with the same liberty. Moreover, by means of Reading, we converse with the greatest Saints, and the most famous Doctors of the Church; and may entertain our selves sometimes with one, sometimes with another; and hear 'em speak as if they were present with us, and as if we heard 'em pronounce the same words we Read. Wherefore, they had great reason who sayd, that Spiritual and Holy Book's were a publick and inexhaustable Treasure: For in effect there's no one, who every moment may not draw immense benefits, and infinite riches out of 'em. In fine, the advantages that we may gather from Spiritual Reading are so great, that Saint Hieron speaking of the interior fervor of the Soul, says, that 'tis not to be doubted, but that it proceeds from Holy and Spiritual Book's; by the Reading of which, the Soul inflam'd with a Divine Fire, remains intirely purifi'd from all it's defects. To prove this, he alledges those words of the Disciples, going to *Emaus*: *† Was not our Heart inflam'd within us, whilst he spoke unto us, as we walk'd with him, and when he explicated the Scripture unto us?* And that passage of the Psalmist: ** The Words of the Lord are Chaste, they are like Silver that has been try'd in the Fire.* Saint Ambrose also says, that *† The Reading the Holy Scripture, is the Life of the Soul; and this was what our Lord himself testifi'd in Saint John, when he sayd: The Words which I have sayd are Spirit and Life.* If then we wou'd live a Spiritual Life, if we wou'd walk in the Spirit of God, and be inflam'd with his

Demet. Phil.

Hier. ep. ad
Damasc. Pap.† Nonne cor
nostrum ar-
dens erat in
nobis, cum
loqueretur in
via, & aper-
ret scripturas?
Luc. 24. 32.* Eloquentia
Domini casta,
argentum igne
examinatum.
Psal. 11. 7.† Quod au-
tem sacrarum
litterarum
lectio vita sit,
Dominus te-
statur, dicens:
Verba quæ ego
locutus sum
vobis, spiriti-
bus, & vita
sunt.Ambros. serm. 35.
Joan. 6. 63.

his Love, let us apply our selves to Spiritual Reading, and endeavour to make that good use of it, which I have here noted.

What I have here sayd, may let us clearly see, that those are very much deceiv'd, who when they have made an end of Reading a Book, never Read it the second time, how good soever they find it to be. A good Book ought not to be Read over only once; wherefore take it again into your Hands, the second Reading will touch and move you more than the first, and the third time more than the second, and you will always find a new gust and satisfaction in it; as they experience, who Read with a true design to profit thereby. And on the contrary, 'tis a very laudable and profitable custom that those practise, who meet with nothing in any Pious Book that touches 'em, or makes any impression upon 'em, which they take not very great care to note down; that they may have always something by them, wherewith to nourish their Soul's, when they stand in need thereof; and wherewith to excite themselves to fervor; and that may be a comfort to them in time of aridity and affliction.

I might by an infinity of Examples, confirm what I have sayd, of the many advantages that Spiritual Reading brings along with it, but I shall content my self by recounting only one out of Saint *Austin*, which is of very great Edification. He says, that a Gentleman of *Africk*, call'd *Positannus*, came to Visit him; who beginning to speak of the Wonders of Saint *Anthony*, which all the World talk'd of, sayd, that one Day the Emperor being at *Trevers*, busie in beholding the Publick Divertisments, he himself and three more of his Friends, took a little Walk out of the City, and that two of 'em entering into an Hermitage, took up a Book, in which the Life of Saint *Anthony* was Writ, one of which had scarce began to Read, but he found his Heart inflam'd with a Divine Fire, and becoming incens'd with a Pious Anger against himself, cry'd out to his Friend, what do we pretend to, for all the Services we have so many Years render'd the Emperor? The most we can hope for, is to obtain his favor, and in that what can be more frail or dangerous? For throu' how many encounters must we still pass, before we can arrive to any great Fortune; which of it self is also very dangerous, and therefore is so much the more to be fear'd? But shou'd I endeavour to gain the Love of God, I

can

Aug. l. 8. Com-
Fell. c. 6.

can do it with ease, I may obtain it in a Moment; and it suffices that I only earnestly desire it. In saying this, the approaching pangs for his Birth to a new Life caus'd such interior commotions in his Soul, that he took up the Book again, and the more he Read the more he dislike'd, and was more disgusted with the things of the World; and the Work of God was the more perfected in his Heart, as the effect immediately after testifi'd. For as soon as he had made an end of Reading, and that the Storm which was rais'd in his Heart, became a little Calm'd and appeas'd. Now, says he to his Friend with a great Sigh, I am at quiet, and my Mind is in repose; I renounce to all hopes upon Earth, to fix my thoughts only upon those of Heaven; in short, I am resolv'd to serve God; and I declare that from this very Moment I will never quit this Habitation: For your part, if you desire not to make the same resolution I have done, at least, loose not your time, by going about to persuade me to no purpose, to change the determination I have now made. The other answer'd that he was resolv'd never to leave or forsake him, especially in an enterprise, where there were so great recompences to be hop'd for: And thus they both of 'em began together, to raise a Spiritual Edifice of Perfection, by abandoning all things, to follow JESUS CHRIST: And that which is still no less wonderful and surprising, is, that two Young Ladies to whom they were Contracted, or had promis'd Marriage, understanding the choice their Lovers had made, Consecrated also their Virginity to God. Behold here the example Saint *Austin* recounts, which as he says, had so great an Influence upon him, that turning to one of his Friends; he, cry'd out with a Disgustful and agitated Mind, * *What will become of us, the Ignorant rise, and take the Kingdom of Heaven from us by Violence, and we with all our Learning, let our selves be plung'd into an Abyse of Misery.* Being thus disquieted in Mind, he retir'd himself into a Garden hard by, where Sitting himself down under a Fig-tree, and Melting into Tears, in a Transport of Mind, he cry'd out, *How long O Lord, how long will your Anger against me continue? Will your Wrath O Lord never have an end? Remember not O Lord my past Iniquities.* And as he repeated these Words, *How long O Lord how long? To Morrow to Morrow; and why not as well to Day? Why may not my Miseries find this*

* Surgunt indocti, & rapiunt regnum Dei, & nos cum nostris literis demergimur in profundum.

Day a happy End? He heard a Voice that sayd, *Take up and Read, take up and Read*: Whereupon he rise and took up the Epistles of Saint Paul, to Read the first place he shou'd light upon: For he had heard that the first thing that mov'd Saint Anthony, to leave all he had to follow CHRIST, 'twas this Passage of the Gospel which he once heard by chance. † *Go and Sell all you have, and give it to the Poor, and you shall have a Treasure in Heaven; and come and follow me.* Excited therefore by this Example, and far more by the Voice he heard, he open'd the Book and by the first Words he Read, he found himself struck with such a Light from Above, and so chang'd, that from thence forward he absolutely renounc'd all things of this World, and intirely gave himself to God.

† Vade, vende
quæ habes, &
da pauperibus,
& habebis the-
saurum in
Cælo; &
veni, sequere
me.
Matth. 19. 21.



T H E

THE SIXTH TREATISE OF The Presence of God.

CHAP. I.

*Of the Exercise of the Presence of God, and
the great advantages included therein.*

★ **S**EEK our Lord, and be confirm'd, seek
his Face continually. Saint Austin says,
that the Face and Presence of God,
are one and the same thing. So that
to seek continually God's Face, is to
walk always in his Presence; turning
all the desires and motions of our
Heart towards him. Hesychius and
Saint Bonaventure affirm, that To employ our selves con-
tinually in the exercise of the Presence of God, is to
begin in this Life, to enjoy the felicity of the Blessed in
the next: For tho' here we cannot clearly see him as he is
in himself, as they do there; yet we may at least imitate
'em, as much as our frailty will permit, in putting our
selves continually in his Presence, by Acts of Love and
Adoration. For his goodness was not satisfi'd to have

* Querite
Dominum, &
confirmamini;
querite faciem
eius semper.
Psal. 104. 4.
Aug. sup. hunc
Psal.

Hesich. in cent.
ult. & Bonav.
s. 2. opus lib.
2. de profess.
Relig. s. 20.

Created us only to enjoy him Eternally in Heaven, but would have us enjoy a part of this Beatitude even upon Earth, by always walking in his Presence, and continually Adoreing, and beholding him throu' the Cloud's and Obscurity of Faith: Which is the occasion that at present we behold him only in a Glasse, and in a Obscure manner, † *Instead of Seeing him as we shall hereafter, Face to Face.* * *The sight we have of God at present, says Hesickins, is that which causes our Merit, but that which we shall then have, will become our Recompence.*

That we may therefore Merit so great a reward, let us continually perform what will make us obtain it; let us behold God in all our Actions, and as much as we can, let us always have him Present before our Eyes. The Angels who take care to guard and defend us, acquit themselves in such a manner of their Charge, that they never loose the sight of God. † *I seem'd,* says the Angel Raphael to Toby, *as tho' I had Eaten and Drunk with you; but I make use of an Invisible Food; and of Drink which Men cannot perceive.* The Angels Nourish themselves with God; and the Son of God himself tell's us, * *That they behold the Face of his Father that is in Heaven.* Let us endeavour to imitate 'em in this, that whether we Eat, Drink, or Converse with Men, it may appear that we have no other Conversation or Nourishment but God; let us continually endeavour to partake of this Invisible Food, and entertain our selves with what we cannot see; which Nourishment and Entertainment do's consist, in always beholding God, in always Loving him, and in always performing his Divine Will.

The Saints and Patriarchs of the Old Testament, took a very particular care to Walk always in God's Presence, and the Royal Prophet was not contented with Praising him only Seven times a Day, but as he says. † *I had always our Lord Present before my Eyes; because I know that he is always at my Right Hand, to hinder any thing from troubling me.* It was infine so familiar and customary a practise with 'em, to put themselves in God's Presence, that they commonly had no other way of expressing themselves, than to say. * *Our Lord behold's me, in whose Presence I am.* And without doubt, their great attention to this Devotion, proceeded from the perfect Knowledge they had, of the great advantage of Walking in God's Presence: And

† Videmus nunc per speculum in ænigmate; tunc autem facie ad faciem.

1 Cor. 13. 12.

* Ista est meritum, illa præmium. Hesick. ubi sup.

† Videbar quidem vobiscum manducare, & bibere; sed ego cibo invisibili, & potu qui ab hominibus videri non potest, uto.

Tob. 12. 19.

* Semper vident faciem Patris mei, qui in cælis est. Matth. 18. 10.

† Providebam Dominum in conspectu meo semper: Quoniam a dextris est mihi, ne commovear. Psal. 15. 8.

* Vivit Dominus, in cuius conspectu sto.

3 Reg. 17. 1. &

4 Reg. 3. 14.

And of thinking that he continually beheld 'em. This alone is sufficient to oblige us to be very Regular in all our Actions; for what Servant is there so Insolent, as to condemn his Masters Orders, even in his Presence? But God is our Master, he continually beholds us, he is our Judge, he is All-powerful, he can make the Earth to Open, and cause Hell to Swallow us up; as he has several times done, to those that Displeas'd or Provok'd him to Anger. Who therefore dares be so Bold as to Provoke him? Which I attentively consider O Lord, says Saint *Austin*, that you have your Eyes continually fix'd upon me, and that Night and Day you keep a continual watch over me, with so great care, as if neither in Heaven nor in Earth, you had any other Creature to govern besides my self: When I think you behold all my Actions, that you penetrate my most hidden and secret Thoughts, and that all my desires are expos'd to your View; I feel my self fill'd with Confusion. Without doubt they ought to impose upon themselves a strict obligation to live well, who consider that all they do, is done in the Presence of a Judge, who observes all, and from whom nothing can be hid. If the Presence of a grave Person; is sufficient to keep us to our duty, what ought not the Presence of the Infinite Majesty of God to do?

August. cap. 14. Soliloq.

Saint *Hierom* upon the reproach which God made to *Jerusalem*, † *Because it had forgot him*, takes notice, * *That the Remembrance of God, banishes all sorts of Sins.* Saint *Ambrose* says as much. And the same Saint *Hierom* adds in another place, † *That when we find our selves Tempted to commit any Sin, if we wou'd but think that God Behold's us, and that he is Present with us; we shou'd never consent to any thing that were displeasing to him.* There needed no other consideration than this, to oblige the Sinner *Thais* to change her Life, and to do Penance in the farthest part of the Desert: * *Do's not our Lord, says Job, consider my Paths, and do's he not count all the Steps I take?* This being so, who dares be so bold as to Sin, or to do any thing that is displeasing to him?

† *Meique oblita es.*

Ezech. 22. 12.

* *Memoria enim Dei excludit cuncta flagitia.*

Hieron. & Ambros. lib. de fide resur. T. 4.

† *Certe quando peccamus, si cogitavimus Deum videre, & esse presentem, nunquam, quod ei displiceret, faceremus.*

Hieron. circa illud.

Ezech. 8. Dicunt enim, Non videt Dominus nos.

* *Nonne ipse considerat vias meas, & cunctos gressus meos dinumerat?*

Job. 31. 4.

† *Ex dixisti, Non est qui videat me.*

Isa. 47. 10.

* *Non videbit novissima nostra.*

Jere. 12. 4.

On the other side, the Ruin and Damnation of the Wicked, proceed from nothing else, but because they forget that God is Present, and that he behold's 'em. † *There's no Body*, say they, *Sees us.* * *Our Lord, shall not See our last End's.* And this Saint *Hierom* takes notice of, upon

upon the twenty-second Chapter of *Ezekiel*, where the Prophet after a long Enumeration or Catalogue, of the Crimes of *Jerusalem*; reproaches her in the end, for her forgetfulness of God, as the cause of all those disorders she had fallen into. A Horse without a Bridle cast's himself head-long into a Precipice, and a Ship without a Rudder cannot but perish: A Man also that has not the Bridle of God's Presence; and is not govern'd by his Fears, run's head-long to his own Destruction, and abandon's himself to all his irregular Passions. † *He has not God before his Eyes*, says the Royal Prophet, *and therefore he is Defil'd with all sorts of Crimes.*

The Presence of God is that Sovereign and Universal Remedy; that Saint *Basil* prescribes; for the overcoming all sorts of the Devil's Temptations, and all repugnancies of Nature. So that if you desire a short and easie means to gain Perfection, and such a one as contains within it self, the force and efficacy of all others, make use of this, which God himself gave to *Abraham*, a very powerful one indeed. * *Walk before me*, says he, *and you shall be Perfect.* Hereupon we must take notice by the by; that tho' the Text says, *Be you Perfect*; yet here, as in many other places of Scripture, the Future is express'd by the Imperative; thereby to let us see the infallibility of the success. 'Tis therefore a thing so very certain, that you will become Perfect, by setting God before your Eyes, that from the very Moment you apply your self, with all attention to his Presence, you may make account that you are Perfect. For as the Star's borrow all their Lustre and Vertue from the Sun; so the Just who are Star's in God's Church, draw frow his Presence, and from their continual Elevation of Heart to him, all that Light with which they Interiorly Burn before him, and Exteriorly before Men, and also all that Vertue they possess; whereby they become profitable and useful for the general Good of the whole World. There is nothing can better express the need we have always of God's Presence, than this Similitude. Take notice of the dependance the Moon has upon the Sun, and the necessity it has, of continually regarding it; the Moon acts not upon sublunary Bodies, but according to the Light communicated to it by the Sun. So that it's effects augment or diminish, according to it's increase or diminution. And as soon as any thing interposes between the Sun and Moon, the Moon

† Non est
Deus in con-
spectu ejus;
inquinata sunt
vix illius in
omni tem-
pore.
Psal. 9. 26.
Basil. in *Reg.*
breu. & in
Reg. sup. disput.

* Ambula co-
ram me, &
esto perfectus.
Gen. 17. 1.

Moon presently looses it's Light and Force. The same thing happens between the Soul and God, who is it's Sun; and 'tis for this reason, that the Saints so carefully recommend to us, that we have the Presence of God constantly before our Eyes.

Saint *Ambrose* and Saint *Bernard*, speaking of the application we ought to have, in calling it continually to Mind, say, † *That as there's not a Moment in which Man enjoys not the Effects of God's Goodness; so there ought not to be a Moment, in which he has not God present in his Thoughts.* And Saint *Bernard* add's in another place, that * *In all our Thoughts and Actions, we ought to remember the Presence of God, and make account that all the time is lost, in which we think not of him.* God never forget's us, wherefore 'tis very just that we shou'd endeavour never to forget him. Saint *Austin* upon these Word's of the Psalmist, † *I will fix my Eyes upon you.* Cry's out, * *I will never withdraw my Eyes from beholding you, because you never take off yours from me; I will imitate the Prophet, † My Eyes shall be always fix'd upon our Lord.* Saint *Gregory of Nazanzen* says, * *That we ought not so frequently to Breathe, as to think of God.* For as we every moment stand in need of Breathing, to refresh our Heart, by tempering the Natural heat, and preserving our Life; so we stand in need of having recourse to God by Prayer, to repress the irregular Heat of Concupiscence, that excites us continually to Sin, and thereby brings us to Death.

† Sicut nullum est momentum quo homo non utatur, vel fratur Dei bonitate, & misericordia; sic nullum debet esse momentum, quo cum presentem non habeat in memoria.

Amb. lib. de dig. condit. humanae c. 2.

Bern. ca. 6. Medit.

* In omni actu vel cogitatu suo sibi Deum adesse memoretur; & omne tempus quo de ipso non cogitat, perdidisse se computet.

Bern. in Spec. Monach.

† Firmabo super te oculos meos.

Psal. 37. 8.

* Non auferam à te oculos meos, quia & tu non auferes à me.

Psal. 24. 18. Theol.

oculos tuos. *August. sup. illud Psal. 37.*

† Oculi mei semper ad Dominum.

* Non tam sæpè respirare, quam Dei meminisse deberhus.

Greg. Nazianz. in 1. Orat. Theol.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

In what the Exercise of walking always in God's Presence do's consist.

TO the end that we may draw more profit from this Exercise, I shall at present explicate, in what it consists. Which is chiefly in two Points; or rather in two Acts; the one of the Understanding, and the other of the Will.

That of the Understanding must precede, as being always requir'd and presuppos'd, for the producing any Act of the Will: But this Act is to consider God every where Present; that he Fill's and Replenishes the Universe; that he is All in All, and All in every part of each Creature that has a Being: And hereupon we must produce an Act of Faith; because in effect, 'tis a Truth that Faith Teaches us; † *For he is not far from any one of us*, says Saint Paul, *in him we Live, Move and have our Being*. We must not imagine God, as far from us, or as if he were without us; for he is within us. *I sought you O Lord*, says Saint Austin, *without me, and you were within me*. God is Present in us, and he is within us after a more real manner, than we are within our selves: 'Tis he that gives Life to all Living Creatures; he is the Force and Motion of all things that Move; and the Being, of all Creatures that are; he Conserves all things by the Power of his Presence; and without the continual help and succour thereof, all things wou'd cease to Be, and return to their first Nothing. Consider therefore that you are fill'd with God, incompass'd and surrounded by God, and that you as it were Swim in God. These Words, * *The Heavens and the Earth are full of your Glory*, are Words which agree admirable well with the Subject of this Meditation.

Some to render this consideration the more easie, represent the whole World fill'd with God as it is, and themselves in the midst of this Infinite Ocean of the Divine Immenity,

† Non longe est ab unoquoque nostrum: In ipso enim vivimus, & movemur, & sumus.
Ag. 17. 27. & 28.
Aug. lib. 10. Conf. c. 17.

* Pleni sunt Caeli & terra gloria tua.

Immensity, as a Spunge cast or plung'd into the midst of the Sea. This Compariſon at firſt ſight ſeems very juſt and proper, and to bear ſufficient proportion to Human Underſtanding; but in the bottom is very defective, to explicate ſufficiently what we wou'd ſay. For this Spunge in the miſt of the Sea, if the Sea be very high, keep's upon the very ſurface of the Waves; if it deſcends low, it touches the bottom of the Sea; and if 'tis carry'd either on the one ſide or the other, it meet's with the Bank's or Shore. But in God there is nothing of all this, there's no End nor Bound's in him, becauſe he is Immenſe and Infinite. † *If I aſcend to Heaven, ſays David, you are there, if I deſcend to Hell I find you there alſo; if I fly to the extremity of the Sea, with the ſame ſwifneſs, as the Ray's of the Aurora or Morning Sun fly from one Horizon to the other, 'tis your Hand will carry me thither, and your Right Hand will there ſupport me.* Moreover, as the Spunge is a Body, ſo the Water is a Body alſo, which can never Penetrate all Parts thereof: But as to us, we are in all, and in all parts Penetrated by God, who is a Pure Spirit. Theſe ſorts of Compariſons, tho' very imperfect, are notwithstanding good and profitable; becauſe in ſome manner they help us to conceive, the Infinite Immenſity of God; and after what manner he is intimately Preſent in all things; and 'tis for this reaſon, that Saint *Auſtin* makes uſe of 'em in ſundry places.

Moreover, we muſt remember, that to put our ſelves in the Preſence of God, 'tis not neceſſary we ſhou'd repreſent him by our Side, or in this or the other determinate Place, nor to imagine him in ſuch a Shape. Some imagine *JESUS CHRIST* to walk by their Side, and continually to over-look all their Actions; and thus they keep themſelves conſtantly in the Preſence of God. And amongſt thoſe who practiſe this Method; ſome repreſent him as Hanging upon the Croſs; others as Bound to the Pillar; others as Praying in the Garden of *Oliveſ*, and Sweating Drops of Blood; or in ſome other Myſteries of his Paſſion. Others alſo imagine him in ſome other Myſteries and Condition of his Life, according to that which touches 'em the moſt; or elſe they imagine him ſometimes in one manner, ſometimes in another, according to the Diſpoſition their Soul is in, or the different feelings of their Devotion. All this is good, when 'tis perform'd well; but commonly ſpeaking, this is not that which is moſt con-

Tom. I.

D d d

venient;

† Si aſcendero
in Cælum, tu
illuc es: Si
deſcendero in
infernum, a-
des. Si ſump-
ſero pennas
meas diluculo,
& habitavero
in extremis
maris: Etenim
illuc manus
tua deducet
me, & reſcribit
me dextera
tua.
Pſal. 138. 8. &
ſeq.

Aug. Epiſt. 57.
ad *Marcelin.* c.
l. 7. Conf. c. 5.

venient; because all these kinds of Representations of Sensible Images, do nothing else but tire out the mind, and break the Head. Saint Bernard and Saint Bonaventure, without doubt knew the Secret how to practise this, which we are Ignorant of; which was the cause they felt therein so great a Facility and Sweetness: For sometimes they imagin'd they heard those Words of the Spouse in the Canticles, * *Arise my Beloved, arise my Fair one, come my Dove, enter into the holes of the Rock, into the Cleft of the Wall.* So they hid themselves in Spirit in the Holes of the Wound's of JESUS CHRIST, enter'd into his Holy Side, and there found an assur'd refuge in all their Afflictions; a Sovereign Remedy in all their Infirmities; and an Infal- lible Ease and Comfort in all their Pains. Another time applying those Words of the Prophet *Isay*: † *You shall Drink with Joy, the Waters of the Fountains of our Saviour,* they imagin'd the Foot of the Cross, to be fix'd in their Hearts, and with an extream satisfaction receiv'd into their Mouth's, those Drop's of Blood which ran from the Pre- cious Wounds of the Saviour of the World: These great Saints found the benefit of this practise; but if we shou'd apply our selves to Exercise the Presence of God, after this manner, it might indeed succeed well for a Day, or for a Month, but wou'd perhaps hinder us from Praying the whole Year after, and we shou'd gain nothing else here- by; but an unprofitably drying up the Spirit of Devotion.

We shall easily perceive how necessary this Adver- timent is, if we consider, that those who have Writ the best upon Prayer, of the constitution of place, or representa- tion of the Subject of our Meditation, say, that this is nothing else but a Prelude to it, whereby we endeavour to render things as present to us, as if in effect they pass'd before our Eyes; wherefore they admonish us not to insist too much upon these kind of Fictions and Representations; because from them many Inconveniencies and Illusions may arise. Now if a simple Prelude, which takes up so very little time to make it, and is also made when we have nothing else to do, requires so painful and dangerous an Attention of Mind, what difficulty and prejudice, wou'd the apply- ing our selves all Day long, to conserve those Imagina- tions we have form'd to our selves in Prayer, even whilst we are busie about other Affairs, occasion in us? The Presence

* Surge, amica mea, speciosa mea. Et veni, columba mea, in foraminibus petrae, in caverna mace- rae.
Cant. 2. 13. & 14.

† Haurietis aquas in fudio de fontibus Salvatoris.
Isa. 12. 3.

Presence of God, which we now speak of, is intirely free from all these sorts of Fictions; because we pretend to speak of his Presence, as he is God; and in this, there is no reason to Feign or Imagine, that he is here or there; all we are to do, is only to Believe as a constant Truth, that he is Really and Effectually every where. JESUS CHRIST as he is Man, is in Heaven, and in the Blessed Sacrament, of the Altar; but is not in all sorts of Places; and therefore when we Imagine JESUS CHRIST Present, as he is Man, 'tis in effect a pure Work of our Imagination; but as he is God, he is always Present with us, and is both within us, and every where without us. † *The Spirit of our Lord, Fill's the whole Earth*: And there is no need of Imagining that which is not; but to produce Acts of Faith of that which is. Secondly, we may Imagine the Humanity of JESUS CHRIST, and Figure it to our selves; because he has a Body, and a Figure; but we cannot make any Imagination of God, as he is God, or conceive any Figure of him, or of what he is; because he has neither Body nor Figure, but is a Pure Spirit. Neither also for the same reason, can we imagine an Angel to be, what in Reality he is, nor even our own Souls; how far less therefore can we be able to represent God to our selves, after such a manner as he is, or make any Representation of him in our Imagination.

† Spiritus
Domini reple-
vit orbem ter-
rarum.
Sap. I. 7.

But you will say, how then must we consider God Present? I Answer, by forming a Simple Act of Faith hereupon; supposing that he is Actually and Effectually Present; because Faith assur's us that he is so, without searching any farther, how he is Present. Thus *Moses* did, who as Saint Paul Reports, * *Consider'd God as Invisible as he was, yet had him always Present in his Mind, as if he had Beheld him with his Eyes*. Thus when we speak to a Friend in the Dark, we think of nothing else but entertaining him, and of that satisfaction we have, by his being present with us, without amusing our selves to draw out his Image in our Imagination; in the same manner we ought simply to repose in this consideration, that God is Present; and content our selves in the enjoyment of that happy Fruit, which accompanies his Presence. Because if we will amuse our selves to represent him to our Mind's as he is, we shall never be

* Invisibilem
tanquam vi-
dens sustinuit.
Ad Hebr. II.
27.

† Cūm appa-
ruerit, similes
ei erimus, quo-
niam videbi-
mus eum si-
cuti est.
‡ Joan. 3. 2.

able to compass it: 'Tis yet too dark a Night, to see him after this manner; let us therefore expect till the Morning clear's up, and till the broad Day-light of the next Life appear's. † *For when he shall Discover himself to us in his Glory, we shall be like him; because we shall See him as he is.* At present our Sight is too Weak; and his Apparition to us, is like that he made to *Moyſes* in a Cloud; whereby he Teaches us, that he wou'd have his Presence here below, hid in such a manner from our Eyes, that we shou'd not be able to perceive him, but by the Eyes of our Faith, Blinded and Hood-wink'd by a Perfect Submission, to this Truth he Declares unto us, which is, that he is Present, tho' we cannot see him.

All that I have sayd, regards the first Act, which is that of the Understanding; but this is not the Chief Point, in the Matter we Treat of; for we must not only imploy our Understanding to consider God as Present, but we must afterwards Exercise our Will in Loving him, and in Uniting our selves to him as Present; and 'tis in this, that the Chief Exercise of the Presence of God consists, as we shall make appear in the following Chapter.

C H A P.

C H A P. III.

Of the Acts of the VWill, in which this Exercise chiefly consists, and after what manner they are to be Produc'd.

SAINTE Bonaventure in his Mystical Divinity, says, S. Bonav. vii. 3. & ep. 15. memor. c. 22. that the Acts of the Will, whereby we must Elevate our Hearts to God, in this Exercise of which I speak at present, consists in the ardent desires of the Soul to Unite it self to God, by the Bands of perfect Charity; by Burning and Inflam'd Sigh's that Love pushes her on to make, thereby to call her Beloved to her; and by tender and affectionate Motions, which serve her as Wings to Fly up, and to make her approaches nearer and nearer unto him. These sorts of Motions and Desires, are by the Saints stil'd *Aspirations*; because they make the Soul to raise it self to God, which is the same thing, as to Aspire to him, and because as the Action, of continually repelling from our Lungs the Air that we draw into them, is made without any precedent or foregoing reflection or resolution to respire or draw Breath; so these kind's of Burning Desires, proceed so suddenly from the bottom of our Hearts, that we sometimes make 'em, without having had beforehand so much time as to think of 'em, or to Design or Purpose with our selves to produce 'em. These Aspirations and these Desires, are express'd by short and frequent Prayers, which are call'd *Ejaculatory*, that is to say, according to Saint *Austin*, * *Suddenly, shot forth*, because they are like Inflam'd Darts or Arrow's, which the Heart Shoots one after another towards God (which as *Cassian* says, were very much in esteem, and as much in use amongst the Solitary Religious in *Egypt*) as also because † *Being short they did not weary the Mind*; and by reason they are full of Zeal and Fervor, they approach'd God's Presence, before

* Raptim, jacularas. Aug. ep. 121. ad Probam.

† Breves quidem, sed creberrimæ. Cass. l. 2. de instit. renunt. Collat. 9. c. 35.

before the Devil could have leisure to trouble him that made 'em, or cause any obstacle or hindrance to them. Saint *Austin* says, that upon this Subject, which ought to be very much taken notice of, by those who give themselves to Prayer. * *We must take care*, says he, *that this ardent and lively Intention, which is necessary for him that Prays, comes not to grow dull, by the length of our Prayer.* But this is not so much to be fear'd in Ejaculatory Prayers, and therefore the Saints in the Desert, ordinarily made use of 'em, endeavouring by a continual Elevation of their Hearts to God, to entertain themselves always in his Presence.

* Ne illavigilans & erecta intentio, quæ tamen necessaria est oranti, per productiones moras habetur.
Aug. ubi sup.

Collat. 10. c. 9.

† Deus in adiutorium meum intende, Domine ad adjuvandum me festina.
Psalm. 69. 1.

Moreover, there is not a more proper means for this effect, nor any one more easie or profitable: But we shall first explicate a little more fully it's practise. *Cassian* establishes it in that Verse, which the Church repeats in the beginning of each Canonical Hour: † *God intend unto my help, O Lord make haste to succour me.* Do we begin any other hard or difficult Employment, let us first of all by these Words, beg Grace that we may perform it well; and as in all things we stand in need of his Assistance, so let us continually have recourse unto him; this Verse says the same *Cassian*, wonderfully expresses all our Desires, in whatsoever State or Condition we can be in; by this we may beg God's Assistance, by this we Humble our selves, and acknowledge our Wants and Miseries. Hereby, we also Inflame our selves with his Love, considering that he is our Protector and our Refuge. In fine, whatsoever Combats or Assaults of the Enemy, we have to Sustain or Resist, we have in these Words an Impenetrable Buckler, a Coat of Mail that is proof, and an assur'd Rampire of Defence. Wherefore we must have these Words always in our Heart, and in our Mouth, we must make 'em our constant Prayer, and by them continually help our selves, to put us in the Presence of God.

Basil. hom. in martyr. Julianum.

Saint *Basil*, makes the practise of this Exercise consist in taking an occasion from all things, to call God to mind: If we Eat, let us give Thanks to God; if we Cloath or Drefs our selves, let us always render him Thanks; if we walk abroad into the Field's, let us Bless him for rendring 'em fruitful; if we look up to the Heaven's, or behold the Sun or Star's, let us Praise God who

who Created 'em; and as often as we wake in the Night, let us never fail to Elevate our Hearts to God.

But because there are three ways in a Spiritual Course, the *Purgative*, for those that begin; the *Illuminative*, for those that are Advanc'd; and the *Unitive*, for such as are Perfect; some therefore judge three sorts of Aspirations or Ejaculatory Prayers necessary; of which some regard the *Purgative* way, and help to obtain Pardon of our Sins; to Purifie our Soul's from Vices; and to withdraw it from all Terrene Affections: Others conduce to the obtaining of Vertues; the overcoming Temptations; the gaining Courage to embrace all sorts of Labors for God; and this belongs to the *Illuminative* way: Others infine appertain to the *Unitive*, and have for their End, the Union of the Soul with God, by the Bond of a Perfect Charity. That which they aim at in this Distribution, is, that each one shou'd find, wherewith to imploy himself, in that Exercise which is most Conformable to the present State of his Soul. But after all, let us be never so perfect, there cannot be an Exercise more agreeable to God, than to imploy our selves in Conceiving a Lively Sorrow for our Sins, and in begging Grace that we may never offend him: So also those that still labor to overcome their imperfections, and the ill habits they have contracted; or to gain those Vertues, they still stand in need of; tho' they shou'd not yet be in the State of Perfection, yet they may also exercise themselves in producing Acts of the Love of God; to the end that they may render their interprise more easie and pleasant. And all in general may sometimes apply themselves to make the following Acts. O my God, happy are they that have never offended your Divine goodness! Never permit me O Lord to be so unhappy as to displease you. Let me rather Die than Sin. Nay, Grant that I may rather Die a thousand Deaths, than ever commit one Mortal Sin. At another time we may elevate our Hearts to God, either by returning him thanks for the general or particular benefits we have receiv'd, or by asking him the grant of some particular Vertue we desire; as a profound Humility, a perfect Obedience, an ardent Charity, or a firm and unshaken Patience. At another time we may make Acts of the Love of God, of Conformity to his Divine Will, pronouncing these words, taken out of
divers

* Dilectus
meus mihi, &
ego illi.

Cant. 2. 16.
† Non mea
voluntas, sed
tua fiat.

Luc. 22. 42.
* Quid mihi
est in Cælo,
& a te quid
volui super
terram?
Psal. 72. 25.

† Domine,
quid me vis
facere?
Mat. 9. 6.

divers places of Scripture; * *My Beloved is all mine, and I am all his.* † *Let not my Will, but your Will O Lord be done.* * *What is there I pretend to in Heaven, besides you; and what do I desire upon Earth, in comparison of you?* All these sorts of Aspirations or Ejaculatory Prayers, are very proper to keep our selves in the Presence of God. But the best and most efficacious of all (tho perhaps they cannot be conceiv'd in such proper and expressive term's, as those we have just now mention'd) are such, as the Heart produces of it's own accord, when touch'd by God. Oftentimes a sole repetition of the same Act with fervor, is sufficient to keep us many Days in his Presence, or to entertain our selves withal, even for our whole Life. You may therefore if you think good, often Repeat those Words of Saint Paul. † *Lord what wou'd you have me do?* Or those Words of the Spouse. *My Beloved is all mine, and I am all his.* Or this Verse of the Psalmist, *What is there that I pretend to in Heaven, besides the injoyment of your self O Lord?* And *what is there I desire upon Earth in Comparison of you?* You need no other than these; wherefore entertain your self with 'em, let 'em be your continual Exercise, and the constant means you make use of, to keep and maintain the Presence of God in your Heart.

C H A P.

C H A P. IV.

In which, the Practise of this Exercise is more particularly Explicated; and a very Eafe, Profitable, and Perfect means is Prescrib'd, how to walk always in the Presence of God.

AMongst the many Aspirations and Ejaculatory Prayers we may make use of, for the practise of this Exercise; one of the chief and most proper, is that which Saint Paul prescrib's in the first Epistle to the Corinthians.

* *Whether you Eat, says he, whether you Drink, or what other thing soever you do, do all to the greater Glory of God.* Endeavour in all things you do, to Elevate your Heart to him, saying to him Lord 'tis for your sake I do this, 'tis to please you, 'tis because you will have it so. Your Will O Lord is Mine, and I have no other Comfort or Satisfaction but yours: I know not what to desire, or what not to desire, but what is your Holy Will I thou'd, or thou'd not desire. All my Joy all my Satisfaction, is the Fulfilling your Will; and so that I do but please and satisfie you, I desire nothing more; there is nothing in Heaven nor upon Earth that I desire to behold besides your self: And provided I can but please and satisfie you, I have all that can please, or be a satisfaction to my self. This is a most Excellent and most Perfect way of walking in God's Presence; because 'tis to entertain our selves in a continual Exercise of the Love of God. But since I have already spoken of it, and shall again speak of it elsewhere, I will here only add one thing more, after which I think nothing is wanting, to compleat the Encomium or Praise of this Exercise: Which is this, that of all the means we can imagine, there is no one better, nor more profitable.

Tom. I.

E c c

fitable

* Sive manducatis, sive bibitis, sive aliud quid facitis, omnia in gloriam Dei facite.
1 Cor. 10. 31.

*Treatise 3. ch.
8. & Treatise
8. ch. 4.*

firable than this, to keep our selves always in that continual Prayer; which the Saviour of the World requires we shou'd Practise, in these Words. † *It behoov's us to Pray always without Ceasing.* For what better Prayer can we make, than continually to desire the greater Glory of God; to Conform our selves continually in all things to his Divine Will; and to place all our Joy and Contentment, in the Joy and Contentment of God?

† Oportet
semper orare,
& non des-
cere.
Luc. 18. 1.

Dion. Richl.
lib. 1. de con-
templat. c. 25.

It was this, that gave occasion to a Famous Doctor, to say with a great deal of reason, that whosoever continu'd constant in this Exercise, wou'd from hence gather so much Fruit, that in a short time he shou'd find his Heart quite chang'd, and shou'd feel in it, an extream Aversion from the World, and an inconceivable Love for God. If you practise this so Holy a Method as you ought. * *You are no longer Guests or Strangers, but you are become Citizens of the Saints, and the Households of God.* 'Tis of those that make use of this Practise, of whom Saint John speaks in the *Apocalyps*, when he says, that the Servants of God, † *Shall behold him Face to Face, and his Name shall be Written in their Foreheads.* Those who Live after this manner, properly speaking, have no more Commerce or Conversation with the World. * *All their Conversation is in Heaven: † They consider not the things they See, but those they See not; because those they See are Temporal; but those they See not, are Eternal.*

* Jam non
estis hospites
& advenæ, sed
estis cives
Sanctorum &
domestici Dei.
Ad Eph. 2. 19.
† Et videbunt
faciem ejus &
nomen ejus in
frontibus eo-
rum.
Apoc. 22. 4.

* Nostra au-
tem conversa-
tio in Cælis
est.

Ad Philip. 3.
20.

† Non con-
templantibus
nobis quæ vi-
dentur, sed
quæ non vi-
dentur, quæ
epim videntur,
temporalia
sunt; quæ au-
tem non vi-
dentur, æter-
na sunt.

2 Cor. 4. 18.

Moreover, we must take notice, that when we make these Acts, which I have now spoken of, and say, Lord 'tis for you that I do this, 'tis because you will have it so; and such like things of this Nature; we must say them, not as Elevating our Hearts, or Raising our Thoughts to something without us, but as Speaking to God Present within us; for this is properly to Walk in the Presence of God; and this is that which will render this Practise more Sweet, Pleasant, Easie, and Profitable to us, than any other sort of Prayer whatsoever. For if for Example, when we Meditate upon JESUS CHRIST, Hanging upon a Cross, or Bound to a Pillar; those that have Writ of Prayer observe, that we are not to imagine this, as a thing that happen'd in *Jerusalem* so many Ages since; because
our

Part. i. *Of the Presence of God.* 403

our Imagination is hereby tir'd out, and our Heart is less Mov'd and Excited; but we must imagine it, as a thing Present, that passes before us, and as if we Heard the Blow's of the Hammer, and the Strok's of the Whip's. If we also Meditate upon Death, they say we must in like manner imagine, that we are in present danger of Death, that the Physicians despair of us, and that we already have the Hallow'd Candle, or the Crucifix in our Hands. With far greater Reason, therefore is it fit, that in the Exercise of the Presence of God, we shou'd make such Act's, as I have here Mention'd; not as if we were Speaking to one Absent, or far Distant from us, but as Speaking to God Present; because 'tis properly herein that this Exercise consists, and in effect, his Presence is thus Really and Truly Injoy'd by us.

E c c a

C H A P.

C H A P. V.

Of some differences there are between walking in the Presence of God in this manner, and in other ways that are practis'd: And the Advantages that this way has, above all others.

TO give us a more clear Knowledge, how Perfect and Advantagious this manner of Walking in God's Presence is, and to give us a more ample Explication thereof; I shall take notice in what, this manner Excell's all others. First, in most of those other Ways, it seem's that all is reduc'd to a simple Act of the Understanding, and ends only in imagining that God is Present: But this presupposes this Act of the Understanding, and of Faith also touching the Presence of God, and wholly imploy's it self, in making Act's of the Love of God; and consequently there is no doubt, but that 'tis the most Excellent, and most profitable of all others. For as in Prayer we must not rest only in forming Acts of the Understanding, which consist in the Meditation and Reflections we make upon things; but must proceed even to make Acts of our Will, which are affectionate Motions and Inclinations to Vertue, and vehement desires to Imitate JESUS CHRIST; and that these last Acts are those, upon which the Fruit of Prayer depends: So likewise all the Fruit of the Exercise of the Presence of God, is contain'd in the Acts of the Will; and therefore 'tis upon these, we must more particularly insist.

In the second Place; this Practise is more Easie and Pleasant than others; because in others the Understanding and Imagination, must take a great deal of pains to represent things, which is that which Spends, and Dry's up the Brain; but in this, there is no want of the assistance
of

of the Imagination; nothing but the affectionate Motions of the Will, are requir'd; which are produc'd without any Pain or Difficulty at all. For tho' 'tis very true, that the Presence of God, upon which this Exercise is grounded, cannot be Conceiv'd but by an Act of the Understanding, yet even when we are before the Blessed Sacrament, we content our selves, supposing by Faith that JESUS CHRIST is there Present, and we reduce all our Attention to Adore him, to Love him, and to Beg those Graces of him, we stand most in need of. So in the Exercise of the Presence of God, we must also regard this Presence, as a thing suppos'd by Faith, and without insisting upon Acts of the Understanding, we must pass to those of the Will. But as these are easie to produce, so we may persevere a long time in 'em; and therefore it happens that when Sick Persons are able to make no other kind of Prayer, they Counsel 'em often to Elevate their Hearts to God, by Acts of the Will; because 'tis a thing can easily be done at all times. So that if there were no other advantage, in the practise we have propos'd, than this, to be able to persevere longer in it than in others, this alone were sufficient to make us have a greater esteem of it, than of the rest: But there is still another Reason that ought to make us prefer it before 'em? Because this as far surpasses all others, as Real and Essential things, surpass Imaginary.

But that which is most of all considerable, and which we must very particularly take notice of, is, that when we put our selves in the Presence of God, 'tis not to remain or rest there, but 'tis, to the end that this Presence may serve us as a means or help, to perform all our Actions; for if we content our selves only with the Simple Presence of God, and so become negligent in our Actions, and commit thereby several faults in 'em; this Attention wou'd be no profitable Devotion, but a very hurtful Illusion. We must therefore endeavour, that as long as one Eye is fix'd in Contemplating or Beholding God; to help our selves with the other, to do all things well for his Love; so that the consideration of our being in his Presence, may be a means to oblige us, to a better performance of all our Actions: And 'tis for this Reason, that the Method we speak of, is far more proper than all others; for in the others, the Understanding is so taken

taken up, either in forming sensible Imaginations of those things, it wou'd represent to it self, by drawing out of these species some good thoughts that are proper unto them; so that the Soul gives all it's attention only to this, and has none for other things, and consequently produces only Imperfect and deficient Actions. But here, the Imagination having nothing to do, there is nothing can hinder that application we shou'd have, to perform our Actions well, but on the contrary, we here find great help and succour to perform 'em as we shou'd: Because by thinking that we do them for God, and in the Presence of God, we endeavour to perform 'em after such a manner, that they may be worthy to appear before his Divine Majesty; and that there may be nothing in 'em unworthy of his Presence. I have spoke in another place, of an excellent means to walk always before God; but since I have sufficiently explicated it there; I shall here dispence with a repetition, of what I have before sayd of it.

*Treatise 2.
Ch. 3.*



T H E

THE SEVENTH TREATISE OF The Examin of Conscience.

CHAP. I.

*Of how great importance, this Examin
of Conscience is.*



NE of the chief and most efficacious means, we have for our Spiritual Advancement, is that of Examin of Conscience; and therefore the Saints so earnestly recommend to us it's Practise. Saint Basil one of the most Ancient, of those that have made Rules for Religious Persons, Ordain'd that they shou'd every Night make this Examin. Saint Austin in his Rule injoyns the same. Saint Anthony taught also the same to his followers, by his own Example: And Saint Bernard, Saint Bonaventure, Cassian, and generally all the Founders of Religious Orders, as well as all Masters of Spirit, wou'd have us Daily apply our selves to this Exercise. Saint Chrysostom (upon these words of the Psalmist, † *In your Bed's excite your selves to Compunction and Sorrow of Heart*) is of Opinion, that we shou'd make

*Basil. hom. 1.
de inst. Mon.
de ser. de abdic.
fac. & spir.
perfect.
Aug. lib. 50.
hom. 24.
Bernard. de in-
ter. dom. c. 65.
de in spec.
monac. in Cass.
collar. 6. Abb.
Sensu. ca. 14.
Hug. de S. Ric.
lib. 5. de anim.
ca. 6.
Dorothe. doct.
to. 11.
Cros. de punir.
tom. 5
† In cubili-
bus vestris
compungi-
mini.
Psal. 4. 5.*

make

make this Examin before we go to Bed; and gives two good Reasons for it. First, that the Day following we may be the better dispos'd to preserve our selves from those faults we committed the Day before: For if we Examin our selves well over Night, and conceive a great Sorrow for our Defects, and propose firmly to correct 'em, 'tis certain that this will serve as a Bridle, to hinder us from falling again into them the Day following. Secondly, the Examining our selves at Night, will be an occasion of greater Moderation and Recollection all the Day long, for the Knowledge we have, that the same Day we must render an account of what we have done, will make us stand more upon our guard, and have greater attention to what we do. And as a Noble Man, says Saint *Chrysostom*, who keeps an Orderly Family, lets no Day pass without calling his Steward to an Account; for fear, that the want of doing so, shou'd make him less careful and capable of easily keeping his Accounts, but rather occasion the Embroyling of 'em. So 'tis good that we also Daily make up our Accounts, for fear lest our Negligence and Forgetfulness cause a great Disorder in 'em. Saint *Ephrem*, and Saint *John Climacus* moreover add, that as Marchants set down their Gains and Losses every Day; and when they find they have suffer'd any Loss, they presently endeavour to repair it; so we must Daily Examin the Gains and Losses, that happen to us in the great Affair of our Salvation, to the end that we may presently repair our Losses: Whereby we shall hinder their growing so great, as that at length they come intirely to Waste and Consume our whole Stock. Saint *Dorotheus* takes notice of another very considerable advantage, that we procure by this Examin: Which is, that by accustoming our selves to make it well every Day, and by Daily Repenting of our Faults, we hinder 'em from taking greater Root in our Heart, and prevent our Ill Habits from growing Stronger.

The same happens not to those who are careless in Examining themselves; and the Saints compare the Consciences of such as these, to the Field and Vineyard of those, of whom the Wise Man Complain'd. † *I pass'd by the Field of Idle Persons, and the Vineyard of the Fool, and all was Overgrown with Nettles, all was Cover'd with Thorn's, and the Dry Wall about it was thrown down.* The Conscience of those who do not at all Examin themselves,

S Ephrem ser.
Asctico de vii.
Relig.

Dorothei. de h. 11

† Per agum
hominis pigri
transivi, & per
vineam viri
stulti, & ecce
to uni repleve-
rant urticae, &
operuerant su-
perficiem ejus
spinæ, & ma-
ceria lapidum
destructa erat.
Prov. 24. 30.
6. 31.

selves, is like a Vineyard that is Deserted and layd Wast; which is presently overgrown with Thorn's and Brambles, for want of being Cultivated. For our Corrupt Nature is so very Bad a Soil, that of it self it produces nothing but Weed's. And therefore we must always have our Pruning Hook in our Hand, and imploy our selves in Cutting, or Rooting 'em out. Which is done by means of our Examin. 'Tis this that cut's up Vice by the Root's, that pluck's up our bad Inclinations as soon as they begin to sprout out or appear, and hinder's ill Habits from taking any Root.

But the Importance and Efficacy of this means, has not only been made known to the Saints, but also to many Pagan Philosophers, who were Illuminated only by the Light of Nature. Saint *Hierom*, and Saint *Thomas* report, that one of the chief Documents *Pythagorus* was wont to give his Disciples, was, that they shou'd Daily Morning and Evening, imploy some time in Examining themselves upon these three Questions. What have I done? How have I done it? And what have I omitted to do? Rejoycing at what they found they had done well; and Repenting, and being Sorry for what they had done Amis. *Seneca*, *Plutarch*, and *Epicetus*, and many others recommend the same thing.

Saint *Ignatius* Founding himself upon the Doctrine of the Holy Fathers, upon the Light of Reason, and upon the Authority of Experience, made so great an account of this Examin, that he Affirms, as Saint *Bonaventure* had done before him, that 'tis one of the best and most profitable means, we can help our selves withal, to make great progress in Spirit; and has also giv'n us particular Rules concerning it. Let all the SOCIETY, says he in one place, take care to Examin their Consciences every Day. In another place he ordains, that this Examin shou'd be made twice a Day: And in some measure prefers this Examin even before Prayer it self. Because what we only purpos'd to do in Prayer, ought to be put in execution in our Examin; wherein the Extirpation of Vices, and the Mortification of our Passions, is that, in which we must chiefly imploy our selves. Wherefore this Examin is held in so great an esteem amongst us, that the Religious are twice a Day call'd to it by the sound of the Bell, in the Morning before we go to Dinner, and at Night before

Tom. I.

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*Hier. in apolog.
adversus Rufin.
cap. 10.
Thom. lib. 4.
de regim. prin-
cip. cap. 22.*

*3. P. Conf. c. 1.
9. 11. & Reg.
6. summ.*

P. 7. Conf. c.
4. list. F. &
lib. exerc. spirit.
reg. seu annot.
18. ex priorib.

we go to Bed. And that none may neglect to apply themselves to this observance, all are Visited at that time, as at the time of Prayer. But Saint *Ignatius* is not content only with Establishing the use of this Examin in the SOCIETY, but wou'd have those of the SOCIETY, to persuade, as much as they can, all Seculars with whom they Converse, to practise the same. From whence it happens that amongst us, those who are good Laborers in our Lord's Vineyard, fails not as soon as any one puts himself into his Hands, presently to Teach him to make, his General and Particular Examin of Conscience; thereby to break, and overcome more easily any ill Habits he may have contracted; as that of Swearing, Lying, Backbiting and other such like: 'Twas after this manner that our first Founder made use of it. Father *Fabri*, recommended nothing more to those whose Consciences he Govern'd. And when Saint *Ignatius* had undertaken the Cure of any Person that was Spiritually Sick, he was not contented only to give him the wholesome remedy of the particular Examin; but he moreover assign'd some Pious Person, in whom the Patient had great confidence, and oblig'd the Patient, every Noon and Night to go to him, to give him account if he had made his Particular Examin; and whether he had observ'd what was prescrib'd for the well performance of it: We know also that for a long time together, whilst he employ'd himself in the Spiritual Conduct and Instruction of his Companions, he did nothing else, but Exhort 'em to Prayer, Examin of Conscience, and Frequenting the Sacraments; believing that if they acquitted themselves well of these, this was sufficient to preserve and maintain 'em in Vertue.

Lib. 3. vit. 5.
Ign. cap. 10.

Lib. 2. cap. 4.
vit. 5. Ign.

All this ought to give us a great esteem of this Exercise, and make us consider, and look upon it as the most efficacious means, for our Advancement in Perfection; and move us to be very exact in making our Examins twice a Day; and convince us, that we cannot neglect 'em, without neglecting at the same time, the chief Obligations of a Religious Life. Nothing ought to be able to divert us from so Holy an Exercise; or if any indispensable occupation hinders us from making it, at the time appointed, we must endeavour afterwards to satisfy this obligation, as soon as possibly we can. And Sickness it self, which dispenses with our ordinary hour
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of Mental Prayer, dispenses not with our General or Particular Examin: Wherefore we must hold it for an infallible Maxim, that we must never Exempt our selves from it upon any account whatsoever. The Sick Person moreover, has Daily sufficient matter for his Particular Examin, either by Conforming himself in Pains and Sickness, which God sends him, to his Divine Will; and also to the Remedies he is oblig'd to take; which are sometimes more troublesome, than the Disease it self: Or else the supporting with Patience the want of several things, he imagin's he stands in need off; or infine, in resigning himself intirely into the Hands of God, to Live or to Dye, as it shall please the Divine Providence to ordain.

CHAP. II.

Upon what things the Particular Examin ought to be made.

IN the SOCIETY two sorts of Examins are made use of, the one Particular, the other General. The Particular is made upon one Single Matter or Subject: The General is made upon all the Faults and Imperfections we have that Day committed, in Thoughts, Words or Works: And 'tis call'd the General Examin; because it Generally embraces all things. I shall speak first of the Particular Examin, and afterwards briefly touch what shall be necessary to add, concerning the General; because almost the same Method we are to practise in the Particular, must also be practis'd in the General Examin. So that what I say of the one, will in like manner serve for the other. There are two things to be consider'd in the Particular Examin; the one, upon what Subject 'tis to be made; the other how it ought to be made. As to the first; to the end we may the better know upon what we ought chiefly to make this Examin, we must very well Imprint in our Minds, an advertisement

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Reg. 14. admo-
tus animi di-
fcrep. Bonav. 3.
p. brevilogus.

that Saint Ignatius gives us in his *Spiritual Exercises*, and which he collected out of Saint Bonaventure. He says, that the Devil deals with us, as a General of an Army, deals with a Town he design's to take: He first endeavours to know the weakest part thereof, to Raise his Batteries against it, and imploy all his Troop's thereabouts; because he know's that as soon as he has gain'd that Post, he will presently become Master of the Town. The Devil in like manner takes all care imaginable to know the most feeble and weakest part of our Souls, to make his Attacque afterwards in that part, that thereby he may more easily reduce us to his Subjection: Let us make use of this Admonition, to keep our selves upon our gaurd, and the better to proceed and strengthen our selves against our Enemies. Let us attentively seek and find out which is the weakest part of our Soul, and most unprovided of Vertue, let us see where our Natural Inclination renders an Attaque more easie; and what part is most of all decay'd and ruind by ill Habits; and let us labor every where to Repair, and Fortifie, the Weakest Places by strong Rampiers. See here what the Masters of Spirit wou'd chiefly have us do; that we shou'd endeavour to tame our Irregular Inclinations, and Root out our ill Habits: And since this is what's most of all necessary, 'tis also to this, to which we must chiefly apply our Particular Examin.

Cass. col. 5.
Abb. Serap. cap.
14.

Cassian gives three Reasons of the necessity we have, thus to begin to Combat with our ill Habits. The first, because 'tis from them that our chief and greatest dangers proceed, they being the occasion of our greatest and most grievous Falls; and therefore 'tis very just to take care of this, before all other things. The second, because having once overcome the most Formidable Enemies, and those that make most Cruel War against us; the rest becoming more Weak by the Defeat of these, will afterwards be more easily overcome by us, since our Soul, becomes Stronger and more Couragious by this first Victory. He upon this Subject reports, what was heretofore practis'd at Rome, in the Combats with Wild Beasts; where those who desir'd to Signalize themselves after an extraordinary manner, and to give the Emperor a greater Pleasure and Divertisement, presently set upon that Beast, that seem'd the most Fierce; because having Kill'd that, they easily dispatch'd all the rest. He says we must Act after this manner,

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we see by Experience that; ordinarily speaking, each one has a particular Vice, or predominate Passion which Masters him, and causes him to commit those things, which otherwise he wou'd not. From whence it happens, that 'tis a common saying amongst many People, if I had not this or the other ill Inclination; I think there's nothing cou'd hinder, trouble, or give me any pain. Behold here that very thing, we must first of all set upon and fight against; see here what we must make choice of for our Particular Examin.

In the War which the King of *Affyria* wag'd against the King of *Israel*: He commanded all his Captains, † *Not to fight against any one, little or great, but only against the King of Israel.* Promising himself that the Death of the King, wou'd give him an easie Victory over the whole Army; as in effect it happen'd. For King *Achab* being Kill'd by an Arrow, which was Shot at Random, all gave Ground on all sides, and the War was presently ended. Let us imitate this Example, let us overcome that Vice which in us is King of the rest, and we shall easily Tame and Vanquish all others. Let us cut off the Head of *Goliath*, and all the other *Philistians* will soon be Defeated, and intirely Routed. We cannot prescribe a better General Rule or Direction, upon what every one ought chiefly to make his Examin, than this. But what may still be added to this Subject, is, that 'tis very good that every one confer's with his Spiritual Director, after having first giv'n him an exact account of the present State of his Conscience, of his Inclinations, Passions, Propensions, and ill Habits; omitting nothing that he acquaints him not withal. For the necessity of each one, being hereby perfectly known, 'twill be very easie for the Director afterwards, to determine upon what matter or subject, the Penitent ought to make his Particular Examin. One of the things above all others that we ought chiefly to observe, when we render an account of Conscience, is to declare upon what Subject we make our Particular Examin, and in what manner we profit by it. For 'tis of very great concern, that this Examin be effectually made upon that Subject, which each one finds of greatest Importance. For as a Physician has made no small Advancement in his Cure, when he has found out the true cause of the Disease, because he then applys the true Specifick remedies, which fail not of their effect;

† Ne pugnetis contra minimum, aut contra maximum, nisi contra solum Regem Israel. 2. Para. 18. 30.

so we may look upon our selves to have gain'd a very considerable Point, if we succeed, in finding out the true Source of all our Spiritual Infirmities; because hereby we shall have discover'd the true means to cure 'em, by applying the proper remedy of the Particular Examin. That which is in some manner the cause why many Persons profit very little by what they do, is, that they apply not themselves to that they shou'd do. If you cut off the Root of a Tree, it Withers, grows Dry and Dy's presently; but if you only Lop the Branches, 'twill soon Sprout out new ones, and will become greater than ever.

C H A P. III.

Of two very important Advertisments, how to succeed well in the choice of the Subject, upon which we shou'd make our Particular Examin.

TO Treat this matter more in particular, I say, that there are two things chiefly to be observ'd, of which the first, is, that when we have any Exterior Defects, that Offend and Scandalize our Neighbor, 'tis there that we must begin to fortifie our selves, by means of our Particular Examin; tho' we shou'd have other Interior Defects far more considerable. For Example, if one be Defective in Speaking too much, or Speaking too hastily, or too sharply to his Brethren; or let's himself be carry'd so far, as to say things that touch their Reputation; and infine, be subject to other failings that may hurt or prejudice their Neighbor: Reason and Charity obliges us, first to correct our selves in what may give any pain or trouble to our Brethren, that we may endeavour to Live with 'em in such a manner, as to give no one any occasion of Complaint

plaint or Scandal. The Gospel speaking of the Father and Mother of Saint John Baptist, says, * *That they were both just before God, Walking according to all the Commandments and Ordinances of our Lord, without giving any one occasion of Complaint.* This was a very great praise for a Servant of God, and 'tis what every Religious Person that lives in a Community, ought particularly to aim at. 'Tis not sufficient to be Just before God; but 'tis moreover necessary, so to live in Religion, as to give no one any occasion of Complaint; and if he find's any thing in himself, that is any way offensive to his Neighbor, 'tis upon this he must begin to make his Particular Exam'n.

* Erant autem justi ambo ante Deum, incedentes in omnibus mandatis, & justificationibus Domini sine querela. Luc. 1. 6.

But at the same time we must also take care, which is the second advice I have to give, that we do not so apply our selves to make our Exam'n upon these sorts of Exterior things, that all our whole Life passes only in this; for 'tis far easier to overcome our selves in these Exterior, than in our Interior Defects. I Command my Hand says Saint *Austin*, and the Hand Obeys. I Command my Foot, and it Obeys; but I Command my Appetite, and it Obeys not. The Reason is, that neither the Hand nor the Foot, have either of 'em any Motion in themselves, that is contrary to the Will; but the Appetite has a proper Motion in it self, which is often Opposite to the Will; and therefore 'tis necessary that we endeavour to free our selves from Exterior things as soon as possible, to the end we may be more at leisure to attend to those, which are more Essential and of greater Importance. To obtain for example a profound Humility of Heart, which reaches not only to a Contempt of our selves, but also to be glad, that others shou'd Contemn us; to gain so much upon our selves as to do all things, purely for the Love of God, and always to have before our Eyes, that 'tis God and not Man whom we Serve; to arrive to an intire Conformity with the Divine Will; or to gain insin any other Vertue or Interior Perfection.

Aug. lib. 8. Conf. cap. 7.

For tho' the Particular Exam'n, was properly and chiefly Instituted and Establish'd, for the retrenching and lessening our Defects and Imperfections, and that this would be a sufficient employment during our whole Life; because we can never be quite free and exempt from Venial Sins; yet nevertheless it were very unfit, that all

our

our time shou'd be employ'd and taken up, in nothing else but this. He who is put to pluck up the Weeds of a Garden is well employ'd, but yet, must he never do any thing else but this? The end of plucking up the Weeds, is, that the Flowers and Fruit may grow in their Place. The time therefore of the Particular Examin, is in like manner well employ'd, when we Exercise our selves in Rooting out of our Souls Vicious and bad Inclinations; but all this must be done, with design to Plant the Odoriferous Flowers of Vertue in their place: † *I have Establish'd and Appointed you, says our Lord to Jeremy, that you shou'd Pluck up and Destroy; that you shou'd Pull Down and Dissipate; to the end that you shou'd Build and Plant again anew.* We must first Demolish and Pluck up; but afterwards we must Build and Plant again.

† Constitui
te hodie, ut
evellas, &
destruas, &
dissipes, &
disices, &
plantes.
Jerem. 1. 10.

That which moreover ought to oblige us still more, to practise this Method, is this, that even for the correcting those Exterior Faults to which we are Subject, oftentimes the sweetest, shortest and most efficacious means, is to take for our Particular Examin, the Perfections most opposite to these Defects. Have you that Defect of Speaking with Passion, and after a Commanding way, to your Brethren? Employ your Examin in looking upon 'em all, as being Superior to you in all things, and look upon your self as the Least, and Unworthiest of 'em all: By this you will soon learn, both how you ought to Speak to them, and how to Answer 'em; and if you get but true Humility, you may assure your self, you will never say any thing to them that is Rude or Mortifying. Do you feel a Repugnance against any thing? Do you find difficulty in Submitting your self, to what happens to you? Let your Examin be of receiving all things, as coming from the Hand of God, as proceeding from a particular Disposition of his Divine Providence, and as being sent to you for your good; and thus you will be able easily to submit your self, to whatsoever shall happen. Are you failing in Modesty, and a Decent Comportment? Are you subject to Turn your Head, to look about you on every Side? Or have you a Violent Curiosity to know all that passes? Let your Examin be upon the Presence of God, and upon the obligation you have of doing all your Actions, so as they may appear before him; and by this means

means you will soon become Modest in every thing you do, without any pain, or even so much as thinking of it; be very Recollected in your self, and wholly giv'n to Spirituality and Devotion. For, do you not Experience, when you have made your Prayer with Fervor, you are not at all mov'd after you go from it, with any Vain Curiosity? Because the Commerce and Conversation you have had with God, makes you easily Contemn all other things. For shou'd you take in Hand to correct all your Exterior Faults one after another, notwithstanding it wou'd be a long Affair, and hard to compass, as for Example, to make your Examin upon Custody of Eyes, yet you will not be able to compass it, for your Head will turn about upon a sudden, and even constrain you to break your Purpose of Modesty. Wherefore a Grave Doctor had good reason to blame those Directors, who apply their Penitents only to correct their Exterior; whilst their chief care ought to be to Reform their Hearts: But a true Pastor of Souls, ought to Imitate *Moyse*, * *Who led his Flock to the inmost part of the Desert*; that is, he ought to make them enter into themselves, and imploy themselves wholly in Correcting their Interior, which being done, their Exterior will afterwards easily Correct and Reform it: self.

* Cumque
minasset gre-
gem ad interi-
ora deserti.
Exod. 3. 1.

Tom. I.

G g g

C H A P.

CHAP. IV.

That the Particular Examin must be made only of one thing at a time.

THE Particular Examin, must be made only upon one Matter or Subject, as I have already sayd; and the reason is, that hereby 'tis far more efficacious, than if we shou'd take several Matters at once. For 'tis certain, and the very Light of Nature Teaches us this truth, that we are better able to resist one, than many Vices together. According to the common saying: He who Run's after many Hares will catch none, that is, † *He who sets upon too many things at once, performs none of 'em well.* Any Sense that is Intent upon divers Objects, Acts more weakly upon any one of 'em in particular: We easily overcome many Scatter'd Enemies one after another, whom we cou'd not Vanquish in an intire Body. *Cassian* says, that this way of overcoming our Enemies, that is to say, our Vices and Passions, was Taught us by the Holy Ghost, when he Instructed the Children of *Israel*, how they were to carry themselves for the overcoming the seven Nations, of their Enemies in the Land of Promise.

* *The Lord your God, says he, will by little and little Consume these Nations before your Face, because you cannot Exterminate them all together.*

The same *Cassian* also, as thò he answer'd an Objection that might be made, takes farther notice upon this point, that we must not be afraid, that by being imploy'd against one Vice alone; and by using our sole endeavours to overcome it, we shall receive any prejudice from the rest. First, because the Attention we exercise in overcoming one Particular Vice, will excite in the Soul a General Horror of all the rest; by reason of that Malice which is common to them all; and therefore when we shall

† pluribus intentus, minor est ad singula sensus.

Cass. collat. 5. Abb. Ser. cap. 14.

* Ipse consumet nationes has in conspectu tuo paulatim, atque per partes non poteris eas delere pariter.
Deut. 7. 22.

shall be well Arm'd and Fortifi'd against one Vice, we shall also be Fortifi'd against all others, and be in a condition to make a Vigorous Resistance against 'em all. Secondly, because the care we take in our Particular Examin, to Root out of our Hearts any ill Habit, cuts and destroy's by degrees the Roots of all the rest; which is nothing else but too great a licence or liberty, in letting our selves be carry'd, to whatsoever we have a mind to. So that to endeavour in our Examin to overcome one Vice, is to overcome all; because the means we make use of to secure our selves from that, will secure us from all others. Just as the keeping the Bridle firm, of a Head-strong Horse, and the Correcting him, when he is Unruly, serves also to hinder him from being so upon another occasion. Add also another reason to these, which is, that we Daily make a General Examin that comprehends all Vices; and therefore there is no reason to fear, that the endeavouring in our Particular Examin to Correct one Vice in our selves, will give any occasion to the rest to Fortifie themselves against us.

There is moreover so great a consideration to be had, in the making our Particular Examin upon one Vice alone; that very often when we wou'd Examin our selves, either upon a Vice, or upon a Vertue, 'tis very profitable to divide the matter into several Parts or Degrees, and to make our Particular Examin first upon one, and then upon another, to the end we may be the better able to attain to what we aim at; because if we shou'd only undertake it in Gross, we shou'd never be able to come off with Success. If we wou'd for example, apply our Particular Examin to the Rooting Pride out of our Souls, and the gaining Humility: 'Tis not sufficient to propose to our selves in general, not to take a Pride in any thing, and to be Humble in all things; because this Purpose being of as great an extent, as if we shou'd make our Examin upon three or four different Matters, we shou'd infallibly profit nothing by it, but we must divide our Matter into different Points; and our Enemies being thus Divided, and Separately Attack'd by us one after another, we may more easily overcome them, and compass what we aim at.

But to the end this may the better be put in practise, I shall here give you a Pattern or Example, dividing

some of the chief matters upon which we make our Particular Examin; into different Head's or Degrees; and thô I have observ'd the same Method where I have Treated of some of these Vertues in Particular, yet to the end that all things that have relation to this Exercise, may be collected and connected together; and because this is the proper place to speak of 'em, I shall here make an abridgement, of what I have elsewhere Treated more at large; which may serve us for a Glafs or Model, to see whether we profit in Vertue, and what Degrees we still want for our intire Perfection.

C H A P. V.

How we ought to divide the Examin, according to the Parts and Degrees of Vertues.

Of Humility.

I. **N**EVER to speak a Word that may tend to our own Praise.

II. Not to take pleasure in hearing our own Praises: Or any thing sayd of us that is Good: But on the contrary taking thereby occasion to Humble our selves, and cover our selves with shame and confusion, to see we are so far from being such as we are thought, or such as we shou'd be. We may add to this, our Rejoycing to hear others well spoken off: And if we find our selves Displeas'd thereat, or find any secret Envy within our selves, to note it as a Fault, as well as when we find we have any Satisfaction, in hearing any Good that is say'd of us.

III. To do nothing out of Human Respects, nor to draw the Eyes or Esteem of Men upon us, but to do all things purely to Please God.

IV. Never

Part. I. Of Examin of Conscience. 421

IV. Never to excuse our Faults; much less cast 'em upon others, either Interiorly or Exteriorly.

V. To drive away all Thoughts of Vain-glory and Pride, occasion'd by any thing that brings Reputation and Esteem along with it.

VI. To prefer all the World before our selves, not only in our Opinion, but in our Practise; carrying our selves towards all our Brethren with the same Humility and Respect, as if they were our Superiors.

VII. To receive as from the Hand of God, all the occasions he shall vouchsafe to send to Humble us, and go on Daily advancing and increasing in this Vertue, mounting as it were by three Step's; of which the first is, to support all occurrences with Patience; the second, to accept the same with Promptitude and Easiness; and the third, to Imbrace 'em with Joy. Because we must not stop till we are come to be glad to Suffer all sorts of Affronts and Contempts, the better to Resemble JESUS CHRIST, who for the love of us wou'd become:

† *The Reproach of Men, and Out-cast of the People.*

VIII. In the last place, both in this Matter and in all others of the like Nature, we must apply our selves to Produce Interior and Exterior Acts of Humility, or of any other Vertue we have made choice of, for the Subject of our Particular Examin; exercising our selves therein a certain number of times, Morning and Evening, and Daily augmenting this number, till we have obtain'd a perfect habit of this Vertue.

† Opprobrium hominum, & abjectio plebis.
Isai. 53. 7.

Of Fraternal Charity.

I. **N**ever to Detract or Speak Ill of our Neighbor, nor Discover his Defects tho' never so Small, or never so Apparent. Never to do him any Prejudice, or let the least Contempt of him appear, either in his Presence or Absence: But carry our selves so, that at least according to our Testimony and Judgment, each one may pass for a Person of Merit and Vertue.

II. Never

II. Never tell any one what has been said of him, when the thing may give him the least Discontent: Because this is to Sow Discord, or Cockle amongst our Brethren.

III. Never to break forth into any Passionate Words, nor say any thing that may Mortifie our Neighbor: Nor to be Obstinate or Stiff in our Opinion, nor Dispute or Contest with Heat, nor Rreprehend any one, over whom we have no Authority.

IV. To Treat Charitably and Sweetly with all the World, endeavouring to render others all the service possible, and to pleasure every one as far as we are able; and if we have any employment that obliges us Particularly to help our Neighbor, 'tis that wherein we ought more Particularly to apply our selves, and endeavour both by Sweetness of our Carriage, Words and Answers, to supply for such other things, as we shall not be able to do for him.

V. To harbor no aversion against our Neighbor, and take care of shewing even the least sign thereof, either by forbearing to speak to him, or speaking to him after a Contemptible manner; or neglecting to succor him in his Necessities; or letting it any way appear, that we are not well satisfi'd with him.

VI. Not to have any Tie of Particular Affection to any one; to shun all Familiarities or Particular Friendships, which are opposite to the Spirit of Religion.

VII. Never to Judge hardly of our Neighbor, but endeavour to excuse his Faults to others, as well as to himself, and generally to have a good Opinion of all the World.

Of Fraternal Charity.

OF

Of Mortification.

I. **T**O Mortifie our selves in such occasions as are presented to us, whether they come immediately from God, from our Superiors, from our Brethren, or from any other way whatsoever. And endeavour both to receive 'em well, and make our profit of 'em.

II. To Mortifie and Overcome our selves in all things that hinder us from observing our Rules; or from performing as we ought the Ordinary Actions of the Day, as well Spiritual and Interior, as Exterior; for all the faults committed in 'em, proceed from not being so much Master over our selves, as either to suffer some Pain; or to deprive our selves of some Pleasure, requir'd for their well performance.

III. To Mortifie our selves, in Submitting to observe in all things that Modesty, which a Religious Person ought to keep, and chiefly in the Custody of our Eyes and Tongue; especially when we find that we are subject to fail in this Point.

IV. To Mortifie our selves in such things as are permitted, as not to go out of our Chamber; not to see any thing that is Curious or Extraordinary; not to hearken to what do's not belong to us to know; nor say what we have a mind to; and moderating our selves after this manner, in other things of the like Nature. 'Twill be good in what concerns this matter, to determine in our Examin, to Mortifie our selves thus, a certain number of times in the Morning and Afternoon; beginning with that which will be easiest to us, and continuing Daily to increase the number; for the Practise of these Voluntary Mortifications, tho' they be made only in little things, is always very Profitable.

V. To Mortifie our selves even in Necessary things: Even those we ought to Perform. As in the going to Eat, Sleep, or Study, Teach, Preach, or Perform any other Function that is Pleasing to us. In which

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we must Mortifie our Senses, and our Will also; saying from the Bottom of our Heart, 'tis not O Lord to satisfie my self that I do this, but I do it because 'tis your Will I shoud do so.

Of Abstinence and Sobriety.

I. **N**Ever to Eat or Drink before or after the Hour of the Community, and out of the Common place of Refection.

II. To Content our selves with what is given to the Community, without desiring any other Meat, or any other way of Dressing it, without Seeking any Particular Seasonings, unless for such a Necessity, as is known to all.

III. Never to Exceed the Rules of Temperance, either in Eating or Drinking.

IV. Not to Eat with too much Avidity or Precipitation, but with all Modesty and Decency, not giving too much way to our Appetite.

V. Never to speak about Eating, much less Complain of our Diet.

VI. To Banish far from us all Thoughts of Gluttony.

Of Patience.

I. **N**Ever to let the least mark of Impatience appear; but on the contrary in all our Words, in all our Actions, and in the Air of our Countenances, shew great Signs of Tranquillity and Peace of Mind; and Repress all such Motions that oppose it.

II. To let nothing enter into our Hearts that may any ways trouble it's Peace, or cause any Sadness, or Indignation; nor permit any desire of Revenge, to steal into it.

it, tho it shoud be never so small a thing that we desire to do, to the Person that has injur'd us.

III. Generally to receive all things, and all sorts of occasions, as Presents coming from the Hand of God: And this after whatsoever manner; or by whatsoever means they come to you.

IV. To Exercise our selves in producing the three Degrees of these following Acts. First, by supporting all things with Patience. Secondly, by accepting of sufferings with Promptitude and Easiness. Thirdly, imbracing 'em with Joy; because 'tis the Will of God.

Of Obedience.

I. **T**O be punctual in Exterior Obedience, even to leave a Letter half ended; and as soon as any way we come to know the Will of our Superior to perform it, never expecting for his express Command.

II. To Submit our Will to that of our Superior, having no other Will but his.

III. To Submit our Understanding and Judgment to his, having no other Sentiment but our Superior's, rejecting all Lights to the contrary.

IV. To hear the Voice of our Superior, and the Sound of the Bell, as the Voice of God: And Obey our Superior, whosoever he is, and those that Command under him, as JESUS CHRIST himself.

V. To have a Blind Obedience, that is, Obey after such a Manner, as not to Examin wherefore such a thing is Commanded, but let it suffice and be a stronger reason to us than all others, that the Superior Ordains, and Obedience Injoyns it.

VI. To proceed to the Acts of our Will; by accustoming our selves to think, that when we Obey, 'tis the Will of God we perform, and therefore we must place all our Joy and Satisfaction in Obedience.

Of Poverty.

I. **N** Either to give nor receive any thing without Leave, that belongs to the House, to any one in, or without it.

II. To lend or take any thing of the House, or that belongs to the Chamber of any Religious, without Leave.

III. To have nothing Superfluous, and to give up all things we have that are not necessary, whether Books, Moveables, Cloaths, or any thing else whatsoever.

IV. To seek occasions to appear Poor, even in the things most necessary to preserve Life, endeavouring in all things we make use of, that they be always the worst, and meanest of the House. So that the Poverty we profess may not only appear in our Chambers, in our Habits, in our Meat, and in all other things; but that we make it also shine forth in our selves; desiring for our greater Mortification, and for our greater Advancement in Spirit, to have never any other things giv'n us for our use, but such as are the worst in the House.

V. To be glad to Want any thing that is necessary, even for the Preservation of Life; for this is the Character of one that is truly Poor in Spirit, and of a Perfect Imitator of JESUS CHRIST: Who being Rich and Powerful became Poor for the Love of us, and would want even Necessaries, suffering Hunger and Thirst, Heat and Cold, Weariness and Nakedness.

Of

Of Chastity.

I. **T**O be extreamly Reserv'd and Moderate in all Respects, and not permit our selves to be Carry'd or Mov'd, to any thing that may cause the Flesh, to Rebel against the Spirit.

II. Neither to Speak nor Hearken to any Words, or to Read any Books, that may Excite in us any Thoughts or Motions against Purity.

III. Not to entertain any Impure Thoughts, but promptly to reject all those that shall present themselves.

IV. To touch no-body either in their Hands or Face, nor permit 'em to touch us.

V. To take care of all possible Decency and Modesty in order to our selves, neither Beholding or Touching our selves without absolute Necessity.

VI. Never to entertain any Particular Affection, nor give or receive Presents; and as to those Persons who may give us occasions of Falling, and for whom we feel any Particular Inclination, to avoid their Company and Conversation by a prudent Slight, which ordinarily is the only remedy in such kinds of Rancounters or Occasions.

To Perform our Ordinary Actions Well.

I. **N**Ever to let any Day pass without intirely performing our Spiritual Duties: Faithfully employing in 'em the whole time allotted for 'em; and when we shall be hinder'd by any indispenfable employment, to supply it afterwards as soon as possibly we can.

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II. To

II. To make our Mental Prayer well, and diligently observe all the Additions in it; to make our General and Particular Examin: And to stay less upon the Examining exactly the number of our Defects, than in raising a lively Sorrow and extream Confusion for 'em; and in making a firm resolution to correct 'em: For 'tis in this that all the Vertue and Fruit of our Examin consists; and some because they neglect to use this Method, fail to receive that advantage thereby, which otherwise they might and would receive.

III. To perform well all our other Spiritual Exercises. As to hear or say Mass; to attend to Vocal Prayer, and Spiritual Reading; to perform our Ordinary Penances; to Exercise both our Publick and Private Mortifications; and to gather all that Fruit out of 'em, for which each thing was appointed; and to do nothing negligently, out of custom, or to gain favour and esteem of others.

IV. To perform exactly whatsoever belongs to our Office and Imployment, and use all possible care and application therein, as performing all things for God, and in his Presence.

V. Not to commit any deliberate Defect, how little soever it may be.

VI. To have a great esteem, even of the least things.

VII. And since our whole Spiritual Advancement, depends upon the well Performance of our Ordinary Actions, we must from time to time, as soon as we perceive we begin to relent in any one, take care to make it the Subject of our Particular Examin; to renew by this means our Fervor and Attention, and to put our selves in a way of performing exactly even the smallest things.

To perform all things purely for God.

I. **T**O do nothing out of Human Respects, or to be seen and esteem'd by Men, nor for Self-interest, or our one Commodity, Glory, or Particular Satisfaction.

II. To perform all our Actions purely for God, and accustom our selves to refer all of 'em to him alone;
first

first in the Morning as soon as we Wake; secondly, in the beginning of every Action; and lastly, whilst we perform the Action it self; by often Elevating our Hearts in time of it to God, saying to him, Lord 'tis for you that I do this, 'tis for your Glory, tis because you wou'd have me do it.

III. To tie our selves to make such a certain number of Acts every Day, both in the Morning and Afternoon; beginning at first with a small number, and afterwards always augmenting it, till we find we have got a habit of frequently Elevating our Hearts to God in all our Actions, and that we regard nothing in 'em but God himself.

IV. We ought not to leave off this Exercise till we come to perform all our Actions, as if 'twere God himself and not Man whom we serve: And perform 'em after such a manner, that whilst we do them we find our selves Penetrated with the Love of God; so that placing all our Joy and Comfort in the Accomplishment of his Divine Will, it may appear in all our Actions, that we perform the least part of 'em; but that 'tis the Love of God, that Reigns in us, which chiefly produces 'em.

V. Behold what the Presence of God is, which we ought always to have before our Eyes; and that continual Prayer with which we ought to entertain our selves. Nothing can be of greater profit, or conduce more to our Spiritual Advancement than this, or be a greater help to us to perform all things in Perfection.

Of Conformity to the Will of God.

I. **T**O receive all things, of what Nature, what way, or what manner soever they happen to us, as coming from the Hand of God; who sends 'em with the tender Love and Compassionate Bowels of a Father, for our greater good; and to Conform our selves in this, so intirely to his Divine Will, as if we saw JESUS CHRIST himself, and heard him thus tell us, *My Child I wou'd have you do or suffer this for Love of Me.*

II. To

II. To force our selves to go on always increasing in this Conformity with the Will of God; first, supporting with Patience whatsoever Evils shall happen unto us; secondly, accepting 'em promptly and willingly; and in the last place, imbracing 'em with joy, because this is the Will of God.

III. To persevere in this Exercise so long, till we are arriv'd so far, as to be glad that the Will of God is Accomplish'd in us, by means of Afflictions, Contempts and Sufferings; and till such time as this Accomplishment, becomes all our Joy and Content.

IV. Never to omit any thing we know to be the Will of God, or for his Glory or Service: Endeavouring in this to Imitate the Saviour of the World, † *Who did continually what was most pleasing to his Father.*

† Ego quæ
placita sunt ei,
facio semper.
Joan. 8. 29.

V. The practise of this Exercise, will be an excellent means, always to conserve in us the Presence of God, and to keep our selves in continual Prayer.

VI. What has been sayd of Mortification, may be the better practis'd, if we apply it to the Exercise of the Conformity with the Will of God, by taking all things as coming from the Hand of God. For by this means the practise will not only become more easie, but 'twill be more pleasing and profitable; because 'twill be an Exercise of the Love of God.

VII. Lastly, I pretend not that the order here prescrib'd, whether concerning any Vertue, or concerning the degrees of it, shoud be the Rule each one is to observe in his Particular Examin. For the true Rule is, that each one chooseth the Vertue he has most need of, and that he begins to Exercise himself therein, by that degree, he perceives most necessary for him; and having gain'd that Point, he afterwards is to apply himself to that which shall be most convenient for him, till he comes perfectly to Possess it.

C H A P.

C H A P. VI.

That we ought not lightly to change the Matter of our Particular Examin; and for how long time 'tis necessary to continue the same Subject.

TIS good here to observe, that we ought not easily or lightly to change the Matter of our Examin, sometimes taking one, sometimes another Subject; for this will only keep us back without receiving any profit, and without any advancement at all; but we must endeavour to apply our selves to the same thing, till we have compass'd the very end we aim'd at; and afterwards apply our selves to another with the same constancy. The reason why some reap so little profit by their Examin, is, that they perform it with too much precipitation, and by fits: So that after we have apply'd our selves ten or fifteen Days, or for a Month at most, we become weary, and without having obtain'd what we aim'd at, we go to another; which we undertake and leave off after the same manner, to go to a third; in which we succeed as little as in the former. If a Man that had undertaken to carry a Stone to the top of a high Mountain, after he had carry'd it a considerable way up, thou'd let it fall down again, and always begin to do the same thing anew: 'Tis certain that what pains soever he takes, he will never compass the carrying up the Stone, to the place he design'd. 'Tis the same in those who embrace one Matter for their Examin, and leave it off again before they have compleated it, to take another, and another after that, without profiting in any. These can never attain the end they propose to themselves, they are weary'd and tir'd out, and get nothing: † *They are always Learning,* as the Apostle says, *and never arrive to true Knowledge;*

the

† Semper discites, & nunquam ad scientiam veritatis pervenietis. 2 ad Tim. 3. 7.

the affair of Perfection is not an affair that is gain'd by sudden Sallies, and by slight and inconstant endeavours; but is compas'd by a long Perseverance: We must take it to Heart, we must insist upon it, we must fully resolve to compass it whatever it costs us.

*Chrysost. hom. 5.
sup. Genes.*

'Tis a Thought of Saint *John Chrysostom*, that as those who take pains to find out a Treasure, or a Mine of Gold or Silver, leave not off digging and removing all Impediments, till they have found what they search for; so we who seek after true Spiritual Riches, and the Rich Treasure of Virtue and Perfection, must Persever in our Search, till we have overcome those Difficulties that oppose us, and have found what we seek after. * *I will Pursue my Enemies*, says the Royal Prophet, *till I overtake 'em; and I will not return or leave 'em, till they are wholly Defeated.* 'Tis by this strong and constant Resolution, and not by short Sallies, or weak Endeavours that Vice is overcome, and Virtue obtain'd.

* Persequar
inimicos meos
& comprehen-
dam illos: Et
non con-
vertar, donec
deficiant.
Psalm. 17. 38.

Call your self to an account; cast up the time, and see how long it is, since you have undertaken your Examin, and also how many different things you have imbrac'd. If you had compas'd all you have undertaken, you wou'd have been Perfect ere this; and if there be any one Point in which you have not succeeded, see why you left it off: You will perhaps tell me, 'tis because you found you succeeded not in it, but do you know the cause of your ill Success? 'Tis because you chang'd your Design every moment; and because you did not long enough Persever in it, thereby to obtain a happy effect of your Endeavours. Moreover, in applying your Examin, and your care to one thing alone, you have so little or not at all succeeded, you may assure your self you will succeed far less, when you have no Attention at all to any thing, and when you make not any use of your Examin. For if he who makes good Purposes, is not exempt, as we have sayd in another place, oftentimes from falling, what will he do who never makes any at all, or at least makes those Purposes too late? After all, 'twill be a kind of a Bridle to you, to keep you from falling into those frequent Defects, Regularly to Purpose three times a Day, not to fall into them: And tho' after some time you think you are not any thing more advanc'd, than you were in the beginning; yet loose not Courage,

nor

nor leave off what you have undertaken, but Humble your self in your *Examin*, conceive a great confusion for your weakness, and make new Resolutions to correct and amend your self. God permits our Failings, he always suffer'd a *Jehusire* in the Land of Promise: That is, he permits some Defect or Vice to remain in us, that we may Resist and Fight with it; to the end, that we being hereby fully convinc'd that of our selves we can do nothing; and that 'tis from God alone we must expect Strength and Succour, we shou'd always have our Recourse to him, and continually apply our selves to overcome it. And it often happens that from the difficulty we find in perfectly overcoming our Passions, we take greater care, and become more Fervent in our Spiritual Advancement, than if God had presently granted us the Victory we Begg'd of him.

But you will ask me, for how long time then must I continue my *Examin* upon the same Matter? Saint *Bernard*, and *Hugo* of Saint *Victor*, ask almost the same Question: That is, for how long a time we ought to Fight with any Vice? And they Answer, that we must Fight with it, till we find we have got so much Ground and Advantage over our Enemy, that as soon as he dares shew himself, we are presently able to overcome him, and Subject him to Reason. So that we must not stay till the Passion is quite Extinguish'd, and till we feel no Repugnance at all, for this we must never expect in this Life; and *Hugo* says, this is rather what is bestow'd upon Angels than Men. 'Tis sufficient that the Passion we propose to our selves to overcome, gives us not much trouble, and that 'tis of so little a hindrance to us, that as soon as it rises, we are able easily and certainly to overcome it: So that then we may set upon other Enemies, and take another Subject for our *Examin*. *Seneca* himself Teaches us, how we are to behave our selves in this matter. † *We Fight*, says he, against Vices, not that we may intirely overcome 'em, but that we may not be overcome by them. 'Tis not necessary therefore that we shou'd Expect till the Vice is so Dead in us, that we feel nothing at all of it, 'tis sufficient that we have so Weakn'd, and so Disarm'd it, that 'tis no hindrance to us at all, in the performance of what conduces to our Salvation.

The surest means notwithstanding, not to deceive our selves in this, is to Confer with our Spiritual Director, it being

† Contra vitia pugnamus, non ut penitus vincamus, sed ne vincamur. *Senec. lib. 3. de ira.*

† Si omni an-
no unum viti-
um extirpare-
mus, cito viri
perfecti effice-
remur.
Tho. à Kemp.
l. i. c. ii. n. 5.

being in effect one of the chief things, in which we most of all stand in need of Counsel. There are some things upon which 'tis sufficient to Examin our selves only for a short time; and there are others in which an Examin of many Years, would be well imploy'd; † *For we should soon become Perfect Men, if every Year we cast out of our Soul's some one Vice or Imperfection.* And there are other Vertues also, in the gaining of which our whole Lives would be very well spent; since the gaining one of these alone, is sufficient to render us perfect. We have the Example of some Persons, who having taken one thing only to Heart, and made it for their whole Life the matter and subject of their Examin, have very much signaliz'd themselves; one in Patience; another in Humility; and others in a Perfect Conformity to the Will of God, and in performing all things purely for his sake. We must therefore after the same manner endeavour to excel in some one Vertue, insisting and persevering in our undertaking, till we have intirely obtain'd the effect. But this notwithstanding hinders us not from interrupting sometimes the Examin, we have purpos'd to make every Day upon this matter; but on the contrary, 'twill even be very profitable sometimes to discontinue it for ten or fifteen Days, taking for that time the observance of Silence, the performing well our Spiritual Exercises, the speaking advantageously of all the World; the saying nothing that may any ways offend any one; the Reforming and Amending our selves; and upon many other things of the like Nature; and by Correcting other small Faults which spring up and easily flourish in us, when we take not care in time to Root 'em out. But after this interruption we must return to our first and chief affair and undertaking, and continue to apply our selves to it, after such a manner, that at length we may obtain what we aim at.

C H A P. VII.

How we ought to make our Particular Examin.

THE second thing of importance, which I propos'd to treat of, is the manner we ought to observe in our Particular Examin. There are three times for this Examin; and of these three, there only two in which we can Examin our selves. The first time is the Morning when we awake; at which time we have nothing else to do, but to make a firm Purpose to abstain the following Day, from that Vice or Defect we pretend to Correct. The second time is at Noon before Dinner; when we are to make our first Examin, which is reduc'd to three Points: The first, to beg Grace of God, to know how often we have fallen into this Vice or Defect, which we have taken for the subject of our Examin; the second is, to require of our selves an exact account, by reflecting from the moment we awak'd, and upon the Resolution we then made, to the very time of our present Examin; to see how many times we have offended therein; and to mark down upon a Paper or Table-book so many Points, as we find we have committed Defects. The last is, to conceive a deep sorrow and regret, for the defects we have fallen into, to beg Pardon of God, and to make a firm Resolution, by the assistance of his Divine Grace, not to fall any more into the same during that Day. The third time is at Night, before we go to Bed; and then we must renew the Examin we made at Noon, keeping the same order, and running over the time from that Examin, to this we are about; and noting upon a different Line from the former, so many Points as we find our selves to have fail'd since that time. But still for the more ease Rooting out any Vice or Defect, which we take in Hand to free our selves from; Saint Ignatius gives us four excellent Instructions, which he calls *Additions*. The first is, that every time we fall into this Defect or Vice, we presently make an Act of Repentance, laying

laying our Hand upon our Breast: For thô we shou'd be in Company, that may easily be done without any ones taking notice of it. Secondly, that after the Examin at Night, we compare the Points we have noted, with those noted in the Morning; to see if after Dinner there be any amendment. The third and fourth, that in like manner we compare, for the same end, the Points of that Day with those of the Day before, and those of that Week, with those of the Week before.

This whole Doctrine is taken out of the Saints, Saint *Anthony*, who as 'tis recounted in the *Ecclesiastical History*, Counsell'd his Religious in their Examin, to note down in Writing those Defects they found themselves guilty of; to the end that afterwards Reading 'em, they might conceive a greater Confusion, and endeavour with more Fervor to correct 'em. Saint *John Climacus* wou'd have us Imitate a good Marchant, who as soon as he has Bought or Sold any thing, presently notes it down in his Day-book, to the end he may forget nothing, and be the better able to make up his Accounts at Night: The Saint wou'd have us, as I sayd, that as soon as we have committed any Fault, we presently note it down, to be able to make our Examin at Night with greater facility. Saint *Basil* and Saint *Bernard*, expresse Counsel us, to compare one Day with another, to the end we may the better see how we advance or go back in Vertue, and that we may endeavour with more Zeal to Live every Day better than other, and thereby more resemble the Angels. Saint *Dorotheus* is also of the same Opinion; that we shou'd confer Week with Week, and Month with Month.

As for the Method prescrib'd by Saint *Ignatius*, for the Correcting any Defect, which is, that we shou'd undertake this amendment by degrees, at different attempts, and for some Hours only at a time; 'tis a Method that Saint *Chrysostom*, Saint *Ephraim*, and Saint *Bernard* very much approve, as efficacious to Root out any Vice whatsoever. And even *Plutarch* recommends the same as very profitable, and relates an Example very much to the purpose, of a Man who being Naturally of an exceeding Cholerick Temper, and finding it a difficult business to overcome this Passion; impos'd the task upon himself to remain a whole Day without flying out into Anger; and for that Day contain'd himself

Ant. Abbas.
Sozomen. lib. 1.
Hist. trip. cap.
11. & Niceph.
lib. 8. cap. 4.
Climac. grad.
4. art. 114.
Basil. ferm. 1.
de renunciat.
sc. & spirit.
peis.
Bern. in speculo
Monac.
Dorothe. doct.
10. Chrysost. ser.
contra concu-
binarias.

Bern. in qua-
dam formula
boni vivendi
canonic. & vi-
cior. c. 24.
Plot. in dial.
de cohibenda
ira.

himself from it; when seeing he was able so long to refrain, he resolv'd the Day following to keep the same guard over himself; and this Enterprize succeeded as well as the former; wherefore practising the same for many Days together, he by this means so intirely overcame himself, that he at length became of a very sweet Temper. Behold here just the very same Method, that Saint *Ignatius* wou'd have us observe in our Particular Examin; thereby to render the Combat and Victory the more easie: When a Sick Person is Disgusted with all sorts of Meat, and wants something for his Nourishment, we set not before him the whole quantity we wou'd have him to Eat; because the sight of so much, wou'd give him still a greater repugnance; to avoid which we present him bit by bit, only a Mouth-full at a time, and hereby cause him to take so much, as is necessary for his Sustenance. Saint *Ignatius* Treats us after the same manner, in order to our Particular Examin, in which he governs us like Sick Persons, desiring that we shou'd propose to our selves only one thing at a time, and that for a short space, for some few Hours only; for if we shou'd undertake many things, or one thing for a long time together; if we shou'd for example, keep Silence for a whole Year together; or cast down, or keep Custody of Eyes during our whole Life; the very Thought of it wou'd perhaps create such a difficulty, as wou'd divert us from it, and perhaps we shou'd believe, we cou'd never be able to overcome our selves so much, as to be subject to such a Moderation, and so strange a Restraint, and that we shou'd think, that this wou'd be to lead too Melancholy and Tedious a Life. But when we think that 'tis but for a Morning, we look upon it but as a small matter, and there's no one who is not able to overcome himself so far, as to keep Custody of his Eyes and Tongue for so short a Space: The Afternoon following we make the same Purpose till Night; for God will take care and provide for the next Day: And how do we know whether we shall Live to see it? But suppose we do, we only make the same Purpose for that Day, and when we have gone thus far, we shall not repent our selves for having pass'd the Day before with Modesty and in the same observance, nor shall we find there was any great constraint in having impos'd this observance upon our selves; but on
the

the contrary we shall experience a greater facility, and perceive our selves better dispos'd to continue it. When I reflect upon this, I think that many Persons do themselves wrong, in not forcing themselves to make a Resolution for half a Day only; for that wou'd affar'd 'em great assistance to render their Resolutions more efficacious.

*Hist. Min. p.
2. l. 6. c. 38.*

'Tis reported in the Chronicles of Saint Francis, that Brother *Juniper*, notwithstanding he was always very sparing of his Speech, and therefore needed not to Restrain himself therein, once kept Silence for six Months together, helping himself by the following Method. He resolv'd to keep Silence the first Day, in Honor of God the Father, the second in Honor of God the Son, and the third in Honor of God the Holy Ghost, the fourth in Honor of the Virgin, and so every Day following to the end of the six Months in Honor of some particular Saint or other. Thus undertaking the thing by degrees, we shall not only excite our selves the better, to Correct the Defect we have undertaken to overcome, but we shall have more Shame and Confusion to fall into it, when we perceive we cannot overcome our selves for so short a time. So that we must need's think it very good and profitable, to put this Method in practise.

CHAP.

C H A P. VIII.

*That in our Examins we must chiefly stay
upon making Acts of Sorrow for our Faults,
and a Resolution to amend 'em.*

THAT which above all we must take notice of, in the making our Examin, is of the three Points it contains; the chief of which are the two last, which consist in raising in our Hearts a great Sorrow and extream Regret for our Defects and Negligences; and in making a firm Resolution to Correct 'em. † *Excite your selves to Sorrow and Compunction in your Beas*, says the Psalmist, and since all the Vertue and Efficacy of our Examin consist in a Compunction and true Repentance for our Faults, and a firm Resolution not to fall into them again, 'tis therefore to this that we ought particularly to apply our selves. One of the chief reasons why very many profit so little by their Examins, is, that in a manner they only apply themselves to find out how often, they have fail'd of their Duty; and they have scarce made an end of this, but the time of the Examin being almost at an end, they pass over very Superficially all the rest: And they have no time at all left to Repent themselves of their Defects, to ask God Pardon for 'em, to make a Purpose of Correcting 'em either in the Afternoon or in the Morning, or to beg Grace and Strength for this effect. From whence it happens, that the next Day they fall into as many Defects as they did the Day before; because having done nothing else but call'd to mind the number of 'em, they sought not after the means how to amend 'em, which is to raise a lively Sorrow in their Hearts for 'em, firmly to Purpose not to fall again into them, and to beg Grace of God to fulfill this Purpose. Without this we can never hope to Correct our selves; for the amendment for the future, so much depends upon the Sorrow for what is past, that the

† In cubili-
bus vestris
compungimi-
ni. Psalm. 4. 5.

the one is regulated by the other; it being certain, that as great a horror as we have for any thing, so great a care we take to avoid it.

We Daily Preach that Morality to Secular Persons that Live in the World, which we our selves ought to Practise. How do's it happen, say we, that Persons in the World so easily fall again into the same Sins, after so many Confessions? It ordinarily happens, from their not having a true horror of their Sins; and because they brought not with 'em to Confession, a firm Resolution of not falling into them for the future: So that their Heart not being intirely Converted to God, and having Renounc'd Vice only by halves, they easily return to what they never intirely left. But had they had an efficacious Sorrow and Regret, and a true Horror of their Sin, and had they made a firm Resolution not any more to fall into it; they wou'd never have Committed it as soon as as they had Confess'd it. Let us therefore Examin our selves by this Rule, and we shall find that that which causes us to commit in the Afternoon, and they Day following, the same Sins we committed the Day before, is, that we had not a true Repentance, that we did not abhor 'em with our whole Heart, and that we did not stay long enough, during our Examin, in the Exercise of these Acts. For did we but acquit our selves well of this duty, we shou'd not fall into so many Relapses; because we are not wont to permit our selves so easily to be carry'd away, with the things we detest, and which we have a Regret to have done.

When the Repentance is true, 'tis not only a Remedy for what is past, but also a Preservative against what is to come. For whosoever has a Horror of Sin, is far from falling into it. The efficacy of this Remedy, was not unknown to that Ancient Philosopher, who when a bad Woman, ask'd him a great deal of Mony to abandon her self to his Desires: * *I Buy not Repentance*, says he, *at so Dear a Rate*. And if we take notice of this Answer, we shall find it to be worthy not only of a Philosopher, but of a Christian and a Religious Man also: I sometimes set my self to consider the Strange Folly or rather Madnefs of those, who resolve to commit Sin, saying I will afterwards Repent, and God will Pardon me. Can any one of Common Sense imagine, that for the satisfying an

Irregular

* Ego tanti
penitere non
emo. De De-
mostene refert
Aut. Cell. l. 1.
c. 3.

Irregular Appetite, and for a Moments Pleasure, you shou'd resolve to purchase Trouble and Regret all your Life long, and a continual Repentance? For I grant, as you say, that God afterwards Pardons your Sin; but if you desire he Pardons it, you must have true Repentance, you must have a real and intire Sorrow for having Committed it. This seem's to me a most powerful Reason, which morally speaking, ought to take place, tho' that of the Love of God, which shou'd be our chief Motive, moves us not; and tho' we had but regard only to our selves, and our own satisfaction. I will not do that which I shall afterwards extremely Regret, and be Sorry to have done. The Pleasure of contenting my self, will pass in a Moment, but the Sorrow for not having been able to overcome my self, will last during my whole Life. Wherefore I cannot find any satisfaction in committing Sin, *I will not Purchase Repentance at so Dear a Rate*: I cannot suffer that so short a Pleasure shou'd cost me so long a Regret: Which Saint Paul still better expresses by these Words; *† What Fruit have you gather'd from the things you now Blush to think on?* What proportion is there between so short a Satisfaction, and so long a Sorrow, which we must afterwards undergo? All that I have sayd, ought maturely to be consider'd before-hand; and when after this, we are attack'd by any Temptation, let us say to our selves; I will not do that which will give me Shame and Regret all my Life long. When you wou'd dissuade any one from any undertaking; you say, take care of what you are about to do, for you will Repent your self heartily afterwards: And if he will still persist in his design, he'll make Answer that he shall not Repent it. So there's no one, if he believ'd he shou'd afterwards Repent himself, wou'd commit so great folly, as to do what he knew wou'd afterwards cause him great Sorrow and Confusion.

I have enlarg'd my self somewhat upon this matter, to shew evidently that a real Compunction and true Repentance of our Faults, is a powerful remedy to hinder us from falling again into the same; and also that we may know of how great importance it is, to stay some time and remain hereupon in our Examins. 'Tis true, that tho' we may have conceiv'd a lively Sorrow for our Sins,

Tom. I.

K k k

and

† Quem fructum habuistis tunc in illis, in quibus nunc erubescitis? Rom. 6. 21.

and a firm Resolution of Amendment, yet notwithstanding we may be subject to a relapse; because when all is done we are not Angels, but Weak Men, Form'd of Clay, and consequently of a Matter which may be easily broken and dissolv'd, and as easily mended and made whole again. But as when a Secular Person, as soon as he go's from Confession permits himself to be overcome by the same Passions, and Sins, he but just came from Confessing; we ordinarily say he had not a true Sorrow for 'em, and had not made a firm Purpose of Amendment; because he returns so soon to his former strain of living: So 'tis a great mark, that a Religious Person in his Examin at Noon or Night, has not truly Repented himself of breaking Silence, or resolv'd to break it no more; when the very same Day, or the next at least, he is no more careful of keeping it, than if he had made no Examin at all. And what I say of Silence may be apply'd to all other things, upon which the Particular Examin is made. You wou'd be asham'd to own a Fault before your Brethren, or to hear your self Reproach'd of it in their Presence, which you had three or four times accus'd your self of before 'em: How far greater Confusion therefore ought you to have, to be Reproach'd of it in God's Presence, if you had before heartily accus'd your self of it unto him. If you had truly and from the bottom of your Heart Repented your self of it, had ask'd him Pardon, and promis'd Amendment; and that not only for three or four times, but even for three-score or fourscore. There's no doubt but we shou'd soon grow better, and shou'd advance in Perfection after another manner than we do, if we truly Repented our selves, and made a firm Purpose and Resolution of Amendment.

C H A P.

C H A P. IX.

*That 'tis very profitable to add some Penance
to our Examin.*

S AINT *Ignatius* contents not himself with our only having a lively Sorrow in our Hearts for our Faults, or in making a firm Purpose not to fall into the same again; but to the end we may more easily compass an intire Amendment, he wou'd have us add some Corporal Penance to our Particular Examin; and that we afterwards inflict it upon our selves, as often as we find we fall into the same Imperfections we formerly purpos'd to amend. Father *Lewis Grenada* recounts the Examples of several Servants of God, with whom he was acquainted, who practis'd this Method: And amongst others he speaks of one, who was wont to Bite his Tongue very severely, when in his Examin he found he had that Day let slip any preposterous or misbecoming Words: And of another also, who Disciplin'd himself at Night very rigorously for all the faults he found he had fallen into that Day. The Holy Abbot *Agatho* carry'd a Pebble-stone in his Mouth for three whole Years together; thereby to obtain the Vertue of Silence: For as a Hair-cloth serves to Mortifie the Flesh, and is a perpetual admonition to observe Chastity, so this Pebble-stone serv'd him as a Bridle to Curb his Tongue, and a continual admonition not to give himself too much Liberty in Speaking. We Read also that Saint *Ignatius*, being in the beginning of his Conversion, subject to Laugh very much, overcame this difficulty by Disciplining himself as often as he found himself faulty herein; inflicting as many Strok's at Night as he found he had Transgress'd during

*Lib. 1. ejus
vita ca. 10.*

*Refert Polare.
lib. 1. Annap.*

during the whole Day. And without doubt, it cannot choofe but be a very great help, thus to add some Penance to our Examin; becaufe the fear of Chastifement, makes us stand more upon our guard, nor to fail in our good Purpose. Let a Horfe be never fo dull or reftive, the Spur will make him go forwards, and if he only know's we have one, 'tis enough to make him go, tho' we never prick him with it. If every time we break Silence, we were oblig'd to take a Publick Discipline, or to Fast three Days with Bread and Water, which was the Ancient praftise of Religious, we thoud certainly be far more reserv'd in fpeaking than we are.

Befides this Advantage, and the Merit that Penance carry's along with it, and that it ferves for Satisfaction and Expiation of our Faults, it ftill contains another Advantage, which is, that God is wont to hear the Prayers and Defires of thofe who Mortifie themselves, and Affli& their Bodies. And this is one of the effects that the Saints attribute to Exterior Penance and Mortification, which Saint Ignatius takes Particular notice of in his Book of *Spiritual Exercifes*, * *From the first Day*, fays the Angel to Daniel, *that you apply'd your Mind to the Understanding of Spiritual things, by your Afflicting your Body in God's Presence, your Prayers were heard.* So that Daniel added Fasting and other Austerities to his Prayer, whereby he obtain'd the Liberty of his People, and Merited that God thoud Reveal to him feveral great Myfteries, and beftow many fignal Graces and Favors upon him. We fee alfo that 'tis a means, always very much praftis'd by the Church, for the Imploring God's Affiftance in thofe Publick Calamities it has fuffer'd, and in all the wants and neceffities of the Faithful. When an Infant expreffes not it's defires of the Breaft by preffing and earnest figns, the Nurfe oftentimes refufes it, or makes it ftay the longer: But when by Cry's and Sob's it ask's it, the cannot refufe the giving it prefently. God Treats us after the fame manner, when we ask the Vertue of Humility, Patience, Chafity, or a Victory over fome Particular Temptation, or any other thing whatfoever; and when we only offer up our Defires and Prayers to him, he often do's not grant us what we ask; or at leaft he defer's it for a long time. But when we joyn Penance to Prayer, when we Mortifie our Flefh,

and

* Ex die primo quo pofuisti cor tuum ad intelligendum, ut te affligeres in conspectu Dei tui, exaudita sunt verba tua.
Dan. 10. 12.

and Afflict our selves before him, then we more easily, and more certainly obtain all that we desire or wish for. God Loves the Just very tenderly, and when he sees 'em Torment and Afflict their Bodies to obtain any thing of him, he has Compassion of 'em, and shew's great Mercy toward's 'em. If the Scripture says, that *Joseph* seeing the Tears, and Affliction of his Brethren, could not refrain any longer from discovering himself to them; what will he do to those whom he Loves far more tenderly than *Joseph* Lov'd his Brethren? What will *JESUS CHRIST* our Brother do, when he sees our Mortification and the Sorrow we Suffer? 'Tis therefore, a means which cannot but be of great Advantage and Profit, to us in all manner of Ways.

All this agrees very well, with what *Cassian* says, when he Treats, after what manner we ought to behave our selves in this Spiritual War, we make against our selves in our Particular Examin. Because the chief thing we aim at, is the obtaining what we stand most of all in need of, and what is most necessary for us; it being made for the Rooting out of that Passion, and bad Inclination which chiefly Domineers over us, which draw's us after it with greater Violence, that exposes us to greater Dangers, and causes us to fall into the most grievous Sins; and because hereby also we endeavour to overcome that Vice whose Defeat gives us an assurance of a Victory over all the rest; and to gain that Virtue the Possession of which will help us to gain all others. What Care therefore, what Precaution, and what Application ought not a Religious Man to take, in a thing that is of so great Importance as this is to him? * He ought, says *Cassian*, to make it his chief Endeavour, he ought to apply his whole Study and Attention to obtain it, all his Faults must be offer'd up for this End, all his Sins and earnest Desires of his Heart, must be for the obtaining this; this ought to be the Fruit he proposes to himself in his Watchings and Meditations; he ought to be continually in Prayer and Tears upon this account, and must Beg and Insist without ceasing till he obtain of God what he desires. But 'tis not only in our Particular Examin that we are seriously to apply our selves to this, we must do the same in our Prayer; and that not only in the ordinary time prescrib'd for Prayer, but also very

Non se poterat ultra cohibere *Joseph* & dixit fratribus suis: Ego sum *Joseph*. *Genes.* 45. 1. & 3.

* Adversus illud arripit principale certamen, omnem curam mentis ac sollicitudinem erga illius impugnationem, observatoremque deficiens, adversus illud quotidiana jejuniarum diuturnarum vigilarum labores, ac Meditationem sui cordis impendens, indefinenter quoque orationum fletus ad Deum fundens, & impugnationis uix extinctionem ab illo specialiter ac iugiter poscens. *Cass. coll. 5. 4bb. Serap. cap. 14.*

very often throu'out the whole Day by Elevating our Hearts to God, saying with Sigh's and Groan's; Lord give me Humility; Lord give me Chastity; Lord give me Patience. We must also for this end, often Visit the Blessed Sacrament, begging with Fervor of JESUS CHRIST the Grace we stand most in need of, and have Recourse also to the Intercession of the Blessed Virgin, and the Saints, to obtain it. Our Fasts, Disciplines, all our Austerities, and all the Particular Devotions we practise must tend to nothing else, but the obtaining of this. And lastly, it being a business of so great Importance to us, we must continually have it in our Mind and in our Thoughts. And if in this manner we take it to Heart, we shall soon perceive the great profit we get by our Examins; because God beholding our Afflictions, will hear our Prayers, and grant the accomplishment of our Desires. And this moreover deserves to be so much the more taken notice of; because we may hereby help our selves upon all occasions, and in all Temptations. Saint *Bonaventure* reports that the Blessed Virgin appearing once to Saint *Elizabeth* of Hungary, told her that God did not ordinarily grant any Particular Grace or Favor to a Soul, but by means of Prayer, and Corporal Mortifications.

*Panew. in Vit.
Christi ca. 3.*

C H A P. X.

Of the General Examin of Conscience.

THERE are five Points in the General Examin of Conscience: The first, is to give thanks to God for the Benefits we have receiv'd. And this is put in the first place, to the end that afterwards comparing his Benefits, with our Sins we have committed against him, we may hereby be mov'd to a greater Sorrow and Confusion.

fusion. Thus when *Nathan* would make *David* conceive a great Horror and Regret for his Crime of Adultery, he first layd before him those many Benefits God's Liberal Hand had heap'd upon him. The second Point is, to beg Grace to obtain a perfect knowledge of all the Sins we have Committed. The third, to call our selves to account how often we have Sinn'd, since the last Resolution and good Purpose we made; beginning with the Examination of our Thoughts, and afterwards continuing it about our Words and Actions. The fourth is, to beg Pardon of God for all those Sins, into which we find we have fallen, and Repent our selves of 'em, and conceive a great Sorrow for 'em. The fifth is, to Purpose a firm amendment, and afterwards end with Reciting a *Pater Noster*, or the *Lords Prayer*.

This General Examin ought always to be joyn'd to the Particular; and to this end, the first thing we ought to do every Morning when we get up, is to offer to God all the Actions we shall do throuout the whole Day. For tho in speaking of the Particular Examin, I have sayd that as soon as we Wake, we shou'd Purpose to abstain from that Vice, we have undertaken to Correct; and that in this we shou'd imploy the beginning of our Examin; yet this ought not to be done, till after we have offer'd up to God all our Thoughts, Words and Actions; referring 'em all before-hand to his greater Glory; and having made a firm Purpose and Resolution, not to Offend him, and having begg'd his Grace for this end; we must afterwards twice in the Day, at Noon and Night, joyn the General Examin with the Particular: And this is that which according to our Constitutions all are to Practise in the SOCIETY, according to the first of the Common Rules; which says, *That twice a Day all shou'd take care to Examin their Consciences, at the time appointed for it.* For as to make a Clock go well, they ordinarily Wind it up twice a Day, in the Morning and at Night; so to give a Regular Motion to our Heart, we must help our selves twice a Day, by our General and Particular Examin. After this we must excite in our selves, and conceive a lively Sorrow for the one and the other, and Purpose not to fall into the same in the Afternoon: And the same thing must be observ'd after the

4. p. Const. c. 4.
§. 3. & 4. &
Reg. 1. Com.

the same manner in our Examin at Night before we go to Bed.

But the most Important Advice that can be given, concerning the manner how we are to make our General Examin, is that of which I have already spoken, when I Treated of the Particular Examin; which is, that all the force and efficacy as well of the one as of the other, consists in the two last Points: That is to say, in a lively Sorrow for the Faults we have Committed, and in a firm Purpose and Resolution to Correct 'em. Father Avila Treating of this General Examin, You ought, says he, to imagine, that you have a Young Prince committed to your Charge, of whom you are to take Constant Care, to Teach him good Breeding, and to break him of those bad Habits and Propensions, that you perceive he has got, or find him inclin'd unto; and that 'tis requir'd you shou'd Daily give an account, how he behaves himself. 'Tis very certain that in such a case as this is, you wou'd not Build the chief hopes you have of his Improvement, upon the exact account he himself shou'd give you, how often he has fail'd to observe your Directions, but upon the knowledge you have, that you use your utmost endeavours to make him sensible of his Faults, by Reprehending him for 'em; and that you take all care to Teach him his Duty, by your constant Counsels and Advice, and that you perceive he takes to Heart both your Reprehensions and Advice, by the care you see him take to amend his Faults, and to put in practise your Counsels. You ought to Act after the same manner with your one Soul, of which God has given you the Charge, that you shou'd take care of it; and therefore, 'tis not the calling to Mind the number of your Sins, to which in your Examin you are chiefly to apply your self, and in which consists your amendment; but it consists in a great Confusion for having Committed 'em, to Repent your self of 'em from the bottom of your Heart, to reprehend your self for 'em, after the same manner you wou'd reprehend another, whose Education was Recommended to you; and to make a firm Purpose and Resolution never to fall into them any more.

Another thing which ought more particularly to excite us to put what I have sayd in practise, is, because the General

M. Avila cap.
62. Audi filia.

Part. 1. Of Examin of Conscience.

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General Examin, is a most proper and profitable disposition to Confession, as may be gather'd from the Tide Saint *Ignatius* gives it in the Book of *Spiritual Exercises*, where he call's it, † *A General Examin of Conscience, very proper for the Curing of Souls, and for the Confession of our Sins*. The reason of this is very clear: For two things are chiefly requir'd for Confession, the Examin of our Sins, and Sorrow for having Committed 'em. Both which are included in the Examin of Conscience; so that if we make this Examin well we may be assur'd, that we shall make our Confessions well also. Moreover, according to the Council of *Trent*, we must take notice, that the Sorrow necessarily requir'd to make it well, contains two things, a Regret for our past Offences, and a Resolution not to Commit 'em any more; so that wanting one of these two, the disposition for Confession is not sufficient. Some may think that their Confessions are only invalid, when out of a Sinful Bathfulness, they neglected to accuse themselves of some one Sin: But I hold those Confessions far more invalid and Sacrilegious, which are made without true Repentance of the Sins we have Committed, and without a firm Resolution of not Falling into them any more. By this we may see how necessary the Preparation we speak of, is, for Confession, and how much it imports us to accustom our selves in our Examins, to practise and stay particularly upon these two Points. Wherefore I say, that of the three chief Points contain'd in our Examin, for the other two are but as it were Preambles to it; are first, that which consists in calling to Mind our Faults, in which we are to imploy least of our time, and a third part of the Quarter design'd for our Examin being sufficient for it: But as to the two others, which consists in begging Pardon of God for our Sins and Defects, and conceiving a Regret and Confusion for 'em, and the making a firm Resolution to Correct 'em, we must allow the other two parts of the time; because hereupon depends the efficacy of our Examin, and the Fruit we are to gather from it.

But how is it possible may some Object, that in the third part of a Quarter, we shou'd be able to find out how often we have fail'd, as well in the

Tom. I.

LII

Matter

† Examen generale conscientie ad purgationem animæ, & ad peccatorum confessionem utilissimum.

Conc. Trid. Sess. 14. cap. 4.

Matter of our Particular Examin, which is limited to one thing, as in that of our General, which comprehends all our Thoughts Words and Actions since even a whole Quarter seems not a sufficient time to do this in? The best and surest means is, to endeavour before-hand to satisfy this Point. And 'tis reported; that Saint *Ignatius*, for this end was wont, as often as he happen'd to commit any Fault, which regarded the Subject of his Particular Examin, to tie a Knot upon a String which he wore at his Girdle; and afterwards by seeing the number of the Knot's, without any other application, he knew the number of his Faults. As to what concerns the General Examin, he took care to let no Hour pass, throu'out the whole Day, in which he did not Recollect himself, leaving off whatsoever he was about, to make a short Reflection and Examin of Conscience. And if by chance he was so taken up, and press'd with Business of Importance, or so imploy'd in any other indispensable Occupation, that he cou'd not satisfy so Good and Holy a Practice, he fail'd not to repair it the Hour following, or as soon as he cou'd have leisure. 'Twoud without doubt be a very laudable and profitable custom, thus for the twinkling of an Eye, to look upon our Consciences whilst the Clock Strik's: Some others extend this Practice so far, as to Examin themselves at the end of every Action they do: But if you think it too great a Subjection to Examin your self every Hour of the Day; or after every Action, it will at least not be amiss to practise it at the end of your chief Actions: Because there are some of 'em, as that of Prayer, which as I have sayd before, we are to Examin our selves about, as soon as we have perform'd 'em. Saint *Bonaventure* says, that a true Servant of God, ought to Examin himself seven times a Day. And if we diligently observe this Addition in our Particular Examin, which requires that as often as we fail in the matter 'tis about, we lay our Hand upon our Breast, we shall easily remember all the Faults we have Committed. 'Tis true that this Addition was not made by Saint *Ignatius*, to the end that we shou'd call to Mind our Defects, but to the end we shou'd Repent our

*Lib. 5. cap. 5.
Vita S. Ignatii.*

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our selves of 'em; and therefore he Injoyn's us to lay our Hand upon our Breast, as if we wou'd say, *Lord I have Sinned*; yet after all, if we exactly Practise this Addition, 'twill extreamly help us to remember the number of times we shall have fallen. That which is still to be added upon this Subject is, that when we attend to our selves, and thus take to Heart our Advancement, we shall scarce have Committed any Fault, but presently we shall have a Remorse of Conscience, which will assuredly make us remember it.

This may serve for an Answer for two sorts of Persons; for there are some to whom a Quarter of an Hour, seems too little time, to call to Mind the number of their Faults; and to these we have already prescrib'd a means, which is, to bring with 'em this Point almost ready made, so that they may have more time to apply themselves to the two last. There are others on the contrary, that in a Quarter of an Hour find a great deal of time to spare, and know not in what to imploy it. And 'tis therefore far easier to satisfie these, by giving 'em some employment. For this end I need only repeat here, what I have sayd before, that the General Examin must be joyn'd with the Particular, and after we have run over the Faults we have Committed, as well in the Matter of the one, as of the other, we must stay to conceive a Confusion and Regret, and to beg God's Pardon for 'em, Purposing firmly to Correct 'em; and beg with Fervor that he wou'd grant us sufficient Grace to do this. Let us therefore apply our selves to this; let us imploy our time in it, and we shall find what to do: And we cannot imploy our time better than in this.

Saint *Dorotheus* adds to this, another very Profitable and Important Advice. He says, that in our Examin, we must seek out not only the Defects we have Committed, but chiefly the Roots of 'em also, applying our selves to Examin the Cause, and the Occasions; to keep our selves from Falling into them again. As for Example, if for having gone out of my Chamber, I happen'd to break Silence, or to fall into the Sin of Detraction, I must Purpose for the

time to come, not to go out without Necessity; and every time I shall be oblig'd to go forth, to stand extreamly upon my Guard. Otherwise it wou'd be to do like one who having stumbl'd against a Stone, and regarding what he stumbl'd at, shou'd stumble at it again the very next Moment; or like him who pretending to give Life and Health to a Dry or Sick Tree, contents himself with cutting off a few Rotten Branches, or pluck of some of the Rotten Fruit that hangs upon it. But if we make our Examins with such an Attention as I have now spoken of, the time Appointed for it will be so far from appearing too long, that it will infallibly appear unto us too short.

CHAP.

C H A P. XI.

*That the Examin of Conscience is a means
to assist us, in practising all other helps,
that regard our Spiritual Progress; and
that the reason why we profit so
little by it, is, because we take
not sufficient care to make
it well.*

S AINT Basil after he had given several Spiritual Advices to his Religious, concludes all by earnestly recommending to them, the making their Examin of Conscience every Night before they went to Bed. This Great Saint judging this Practise sufficient, to keep 'em in the observance of all other things, which he had recommended to them. Wherefore I pretend to finish this Treatise after the same manner, by recommending also to the whole World, to apply themselves seriously to this Examin of Conscience; since by the Grace of God, 'tis sufficient to inable them to put in practise all other Spiritual Advices, and to repair all our Defects. If you Relax, and grow Tepid in your Prayer; if you are become Negligent in what regards Obedience; if you give your self too great a freedom of Speech; if you begin to be a Libertine: This Examin of Conscience will easily hinder the Progress of these Evils, and will apply a speedy Remedy unto them. Whoever takes care Daily to make his Examin of Conscience well, may be assur'd that he carry's with him, a Director, a Master of Novices, and a Superior, that continually requires of him, an account in what State and Condition his Soul is in, who instructs him in what he is to do, and Reprehends him when he is Faulty in any thing. You will
not

*Basil. hom.
de Institut.
Monach.*

*M. Avila. cap.
62. Audi filia.*

not remain long in your Ill Habits, says Father *Avila*, if you are diligent in making your Examin after this manner, in exacting an account of your Behaviour, in reprehending your self for your Defects; but if you always Persever in 'em, and at the end of many Days, yea at the end of many Years, you find your self very little or not at all Mortifi'd, but your Passions as Lively, Strong, and Violent as ever they were; 'tis because you have not made use of those Remedies given for this end. For if you had undertaken to Correct any Ill Habit, or to acquire any Particular Vertue, and for this end had endeavour'd three times a Day, Morning, Evening and Night, to renew this Purpose and Resolution of Amendment, and compar'd the Faults over Night, with those of the next Day, and those of each Week, with those of the Week before; and made as many Acts of Confusion and Sorrow, as you found your self Faulty, and lastly Implor'd God's and the Saints Assistance, to be able to Correct your Faults, 'twould be impossible you should not after so long a time, have gain'd a Perfect Victory over your self, in what you aim'd at. But if we make our Examins Negligently and out of Custom, without having any true Sorrow for our Defects, or making any firm Purpose to amend 'em; this is no true Examin but only a piece of Formality, and a meer Empty Ceremony that signifies nothing at all. From hence it happens, that after many Years spent in Religion, oftentimes we retain the same Defects, the same Vicious Inclinations we brought out of the World with us; and if then we were Subject to Pride and Vanity, we are so still; if we were then Impatient and Cholerick, we are still the same; if we were easily provok'd to give Sharp and Mortifying Language, the same slips from us still; and infine, we are still as Irregular as we were the first Day, as much Addicted to our one Will, and Ty'd to our one Ease and Commodities. And God grant that many instead of Correcting themselves, and making Progress in Vertue, have not grown Worse, and even increas'd their Vicious Habits; and that their Antiquity in Religion, serves 'em only to become more Irregular and Urruly; and that instead of being more Humble than others, they are become Arrogant and Presumptuous, and give cause to have those
Words

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Words of Saint Bernard apply'd to them: * What is to be Lamented, says he, that many who wou'd have been Contemn'd, and led a Despicable Life, had they stay'd in their own Houses, cannot suffer the least Contempt even in God's House. And such as wou'd have even wanted Necessaries in the World, in Religion often seek Particularities, and Superfluities misbecoming their State.

* Quodque perverſum eſt, plerique in domo Dei non patiuntur haberi contemptui, qui in domo ſua non niſi contemptibiles eſſe poterunt.

Etern. hom. 4. ſup. Miſus eſt.

We may alſo eaſily perceive by what has been ſayd, how little thoſe Perſons are to be Excus'd, who caſt the fault of their Irregular Life, upon their Natural Temper and Conſtitution, or Inclination; for on the contrary they deſerve a more ſevere check than others, becauſe knowing to what Sins the Viciouſneſs of their Nature Carry's and Inclines 'em, and being oblig'd to Fortifie themſelves againſt this Weakneſs they find in their Nature, whereby the Devil gets more free and eaſie Entrance into their Souls; yet neglecting this after many Years they are as Irregular, and as little Maſters of themſelves, as they were the firſt Day they Enter'd into Religion.

Let all therefore who ſeriously reſolve to ſerve God (for here we Speak as well to Secular as Religious Perſons) Reflect upon themſelves, and let 'em begin again ſeriously to apply themſelves anew, and to endeavour for the time to come, to make their Examin of Conſcience ſo well that they may perceive the fruit and benefit they will gain by it. We are Men, and conſequently have our Defects, and ſhall have 'em as long as we Live, but notwithstanding we muſt endeavour to gain three things, by the help of our Examin: The firſt is, that if before we had a great many faults, for the future let us endeavour to have fewer: The ſecond, if before they were great, let us endeavour to leſſen 'em: The third, let us endeavour not to fall back Daily into the ſame faults; becauſe that's a mark of a great want of Application and Negligence.

Evagrius in one of his Books he Compos'd, of the Converſation of Religious Perſons, and their Corporal Exercices, makes Mention of a Holy Hermit, that ſayd, he did not remember that the Devil had ever made him fall twice, into the ſame fault. Without doubt this Man made his Examin of Conſcience very well; he had true Repentance; and alſo firm Reſolutions of Amendment. 'Tis thus we ought to do; and 'twas by this means that Saint Ignatius rais'd himſelf to ſuch a high degree of Perfection: We

In Hiſt. Eccl.
p. 2. lib. 6.
cap. 1.

In eins Viſ.
lib. 5. cap. 1.

Read

Read in his Life a very remarkable Passage, which is, that comparing one Day with another, and the present State of his Soul with the past, he found that he had Daily made a greater Progress in Vertue, and in the gaining of Heaven; insomuch that he sayd in his Old Age, that the State in which his Soul was in at *Manreze*, (for the time of his Studies, he ordinarily stil'd his Primitive Church) was as 'twere his Novithip, and that God by the lively Colours of his Grace had so beautif'd and perfected that Picture in his Soul, of which he had at *Manreze* only made a rough Draught, or drawn out only the out Lines. Let us therefore make a good use of so profitable a means, that God has vouchsafed to bestow upon us; let us have a firm Confidence, that hereby he will lead us to that height of Perfection, to which by the Assistance of his Grace we do Aspire.



T H E

THE EIGHTH TREATISE OF

Conformity to the Will
of God.

CHAP. I.

*In which two Principles are Establish'd
concerning Conformity with the Will
of God.*

* **N**O T as I will, but as you will. The Son of God, according to the Holy Fathers, Descended from Heaven, and Cloath'd himself with our Flesh for two Reasons; the one to Redeem us by his Blood; the other to Teach us by his Doctrine the way to Heaven, and to Instruct us by his own Example.

* Non sicut
ego volo, sed
sicut tu.
Matth. 26. 39.

For as 'twou'd have been to little or no purpose, says Saint Bernard, to have known the way, had we been kept in Prison; so 'twou'd have been to as little purpose to take us out of Prison, had we remain'd ignorant of the way. Wherefore, since God is Invisible 'twas necessary, for our

Bern. Serm. 3.
in Circumcis.
Dom.

Tom. I.

M m m

being

being able to follow and Imitate him, that he shou'd render himself Visible, and Cloath himself with our Humanity, as Shepherds are wont to Cloath themselves with the Skins of their Sheep, that seeing their one Resemblance they may follow the more willingly. † *If he were not truly God*, says Saint Leo, *he cou'd not have given us a Remedy; and if he were not truly Man, he had not given us an Example.* He has express'd in one and the other of these two things, the excess of his Love towards Man. * *The Grace of his Redemption has been very Plentiful*, and his Instructions have abounded as much. Because he has Instructed us not only by the Doctrine of his Words, but far more by the Example of his Deeds. † *JESUS began to Do and Teach*, says Saint Luke. He began first to Act, and that throu'out his whole Life, and afterwards he employ'd two or three of the last Years of his Life in Teaching.

But amongst many other Documents he has given us, one of the chief is, that we shou'd have an intire Conformity with the Will of God. This is a Doctrine which he taught us not only in Words, when he bid us say to his Eternal Father, * *Let your Will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven*; but what he has confirm'd by his own Example, because as he himself tells us, † *I Descended from Heaven, not to do my own Will, but to do the Will of him who sent me.* Wherefore in his Prayer in the Garden, when he was upon the Point of Finishing the Work of our Salvation, tho' as Man he had a great horror of Death, to manifest which, as well as his Humanity, he sayd, * *Father if it be Possible let this Chalice pass from me*: Yet his Will always remain'd, in a Perfect Submission to the Will of his Father, and therefore he presently add's: † *Yet let not what I Will, but what you Will be done.*

The better to handle this Matter as it ought, and the more soundly to establish this Exercise of Conformity, we must suppose two Principles or Truths, upon which this Doctrine is Founded. The first is, that our Advancement and Perfection consists in this Conformity with the Will of God; and that the greater this Conformity is, the greater also will be our Perfection. This Truth is clear and easie to comprehend; because without all doubt, Perfection Essentially consists in the Charity and Love of God;

† Nisi esset
verus Deus,
non adferret
remedium:
Nisi esset ho-
mo verus, non
præberet ex-
emplum.

Leo Pap. I.
Serm. I. Nativ.
Dom.

* Et copiosa
apud eum re-
demptio.

Psal. 129. 7.

† Cæpit Jesus
facere, & do-
cere.

Mat. I. 1.

* Fiat volun-
tas tua sicut
in Cælo, &
in terra.

Matth. 6. 10.

† Descendi
de Cælo, non
ut faciam vo-
luntatem me-
am, sed volun-
tatem ejus
qui misit me.
Joan. 6. 38.

* Pater mi,
si possibile est,
transeat à me
Calix iste.
Matth. 26. 39.

† Verunta-
men, non si-
cut ego volo,
sed sicut tu.
Ibid.

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God; and the more we Love God, the more Perfect we shall consequently be. All the four Gospels are full of this Doctrine, as well as the Epistles of Saint Paul, as also the Works of the Holy Fathers. † *The Love of God is the greatest, and the first of all the Commandments.* * *Charity is the Bond of Perfection.* † *Charity is above all other Vertues.* But as the Love of God is the most Elevated, and most Perfect of all Vertues, so the most Sublime the most Pure, and the most Excellent Practise of this Love, is an Absolute Conformity with the Divine Will. And to have no other Will in all things but the Will of God. * *For that Friendship, says Saint Hierom, (as the Roman Orator had sayd before him) is only firm and solid, when we can neither Will or not Will any thing, but what our Friend Wills or not Wills.* And therefore the more we shall conform and submit our Wills to the Will of God, the more Perfect without doubt we shall find our selves. Moreover, 'tis certain that there is nothing better or more Perfect, than the Will of God, and consequently we shall become better and more Perfect, according to the proportion of our greater Union with this Will: According to the Philosophers Induction. If God be the most Perfect of all things, 'tis infallibly true, that the more any thing shall Resemble him, the more Perfect it will be.

The second Principle or Truth is, that there can nothing happen in this World, but by the Order and Will of God: And this is always to be understood except in Sin. Of which he is neither the Cause nor Author. Insomuch that as 'tis against the Nature of Fire to Cool, so that of Light to Obscure, so 'tis more Repugnant to the Infinite Goodness of God, either to Love, or be the Cause of Evil. † *Your Eyes are pure O Lord, says the Prophet Habacuc; you cannot Look upon Evil, nor behold Iniquity.* As in the World, when we wou'd expresse the aversion we have against any thing, we ordinarily say, *We can't indure the Sight of it:* So the Prophet says here, that God cannot indure the Sight of Iniquity, to Express how great a Horror he has of it. * *You are not a God who are pleas'd with Iniquity.* says David, in a certain place, and in another: † *You have lov'd Justice and hated Iniquity.* Lastly, the Scripture speaks in innumerable places, of the hatred that God has to Sin, and there-

M m m 2

† Hoc est maximum & primum mandatum.

Matth. 22. 38.

* Caritas est vinculum perfectionis.

Ad Col. 3. 14.

† Major autem horum est caritas.

1. Ad Cor. 13. 13.

* Eadem velle, & eadem nolle, est demum firma amicitia est.

Hierom. ep. ad Demetriad. Cic. de Amicitia.

† Mundi sunt oculi tui, ne videas vanitatem, & respicere ad iniquitatem non poteris. Habacuc. 1. 13.

* Quoniam non Deus volens iniquitatem tu es. Psal. 5. 4.

† Dilexisti iustitiam, & odisti iniquitatem. Psal. 44. 8.

fore 'tis certain he can neither be the Cause nor Author thereof. But, Sin only excepted, all other things, as Sufferings, Pains, and Afflictions, happen by the Order, and by the Will of God. This is a truth not to be call'd in question. For that which the Pagans suppos'd concerning Fortune, is a meer Chimæra or Impossibility; since Fortune is nothing; and therefore consequently 'tis not she who bestows, those Goods upon us, which are commonly call'd the Goods of Fortune. 'Tis God alone who distribut's 'em, and the Holy Ghost Teaches us this truth by the Mouth of the Wise Man. * *Both Good and Bad, Life and Death, Poverty and Riches, come all equally from the Hand of God.*

For tho' all these things proceed from second Causes, yet 'tis certain that there is nothing done throu'out the whole Universe, but by the Order and Will of our Sovereign Master, that Orders and Governs it. There is nothing, in Respect of God, that happens by Chance; he has Regulated all things, and appointed every thing from all Eternity, he has taken an account of every Hair of your Head, and not one of 'em shall fall to the Ground without his Order. But why do I speak of Men, since his Providence extends it self over all other Creatures? † *Are not two Sparrows,* says JESUS CHRIST, *sold for a Farthing? And not one of 'em fall's to the Ground, without the Permission of your Heavenly Father.* No there's not a Leaf that Moves upon a Tree, but by his Will: And 'tis by this very Will, that those things are regulated in which Chance seems to have a greater share. * *They draw Lots,* says the Wise Man, *but 'tis by God they are directed,* we must not imagine that there's any thing in this kind that happens to Chance, or Hap-hazard, and drawing of Lots: that which seems most of all to depend upon Chance, is an effect of his unalterable Providence, which adjust's all things for his proper ends. † *The Lot fell upon Matthias,* says Saint Luke, and without doubt 'twas not by Chance the Lot fell there, but by a Particular Disposition of the Divine Providence, which from all Eternity had Destin'd him for an Apostleship, and wou'd make use of this means.

The Light of Nature alone has been sufficient, to make Philosophers themselves, come to the knowledge of this truth, and forc'd 'em to declare, that tho' in regard of second Causes, some things might happen by Chance, yet in regard of the first Cause nothing happen'd, but by Order of Providence. Which happens, say they, as when a Master, having

* Bona & mala, vita & mors, paupertas & honestas à Deo sunt. Eccli. 11. 14.

† Nōne duo passeres assueunt, & unus ex illis non cadet super terram sine Patre vestro. Matth. 10. 29.

* Sortes mittuntur in sinum, sed à Domino temperantur. Prov. 16. 33.

† Cecidit fors super Mattheum. Act. 1. 26.

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having sent his Servant about some business, thou'd afterwards send another to the same place upon a different Errand, yet with Intention that they thou'd meet with one another upon the way: Their meeting in regard to themselves, wou'd be truly by Chance, but in regard to their Master, it wou'd be a premeditated design. 'Tis the very same in things which seem to us to happen here below by Chance. In respect of Men, who see these accidents happen contrary to their Inclination, and without ever having so much as thought of 'em, 'tis an effect of Chance; but in regard of God, 'tis a necessary consequence, and an execution of the Eternal Order of his Providence, who wou'd have it thus for Secret and hidden Ends, which are known to none but himself.

What we ought to infer from these two Verities, is, what we have before spoken of, that since all things come to us from the Hand of God, and that all our Perfection consists in Conforming our selves to what he Wills, we must receive all things as coming from him, and in them Conform our selves intirely to his Divine Will. We must look upon nothing to happen by Chance, or by the Conduct or Malice of Man; for this is that which ordinarily is wont to give us most trouble and pain, nor must we imagine that this or that thing has happen'd to us, because such or such a one had a hand in it, nor that if such or such an accident had happen'd, things had fallen out after a different Manner. This is not what we are to amuse or trouble our selves about, but what way or what manner soever any thing happens to us, we must always receive it as coming from the Hand of God, because 'tis he in effect, who by these means sends these things to us.

An Ancient Father of the Desert, was wont to say, that a Man thou'd never enjoy true Peace and Satisfaction in this Life, till he cou'd persuade himself that there were none but God and he in this World. And Saint *Dorotheus* reports, that the Ancient Fathers so accusom'd themselves to receive all things as coming from the Hand of God, of what Nature soever they were, and after what manner soever they happen'd, that by this means they enjoy'd a profound Tranquility and Peace of Mind, and always lead a Heavenly Life upon Earth.

Dorotheus, Deeth. 7.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

In which the Second Truth or Principle is more particularly Explicated.

TIS a Truth so sustain'd by the Authority of Holy Scripture, that all misfortunes and sufferings come from the Hands of God, that 'twould not be necessary to stop any longer to prove it, if the Devil by his vain Subtilties did not endeavour to obscure it and render it doubtful. For from that other Truth I before propos'd, that God is neither the Cause nor Author of Sin, he endeavours to draw a false conclusion, making some believe, that tho' the Evils which happen by Natural Causes, or from Irrational Creatures, as Sickness, Hunger, Thirst, Heat and Cold, comes from the Hand of God, because the Cause from whence they Proceed are incapable of Sin; yet the Evils which happen by means of Man, as to be Robb'd, to be Wounded, to be Dishonor'd, they come not from God's Hand, nor are Directed by the Order of his Providence, but proceed only from the Malice and Sinful Will of Man. We cannot hold this Opinion without falling into a dangerous Error, and Saint *Dorotheus* discourseth very well upon this Subject, whilst he reprehends those, who receive not all things as coming from the Hands of God. * *When we have any thing sayd against us, says he, we Imitate Dogs, who when a Stone is thrown at 'em they run to Bite it, and take no notice of him that throw it; so we take no notice of God who sends us these Mortifications, for the Expiating our Sins, but run after the Stone, and fall Foul upon our Neighbor, endeavouring to Revenge our selves upon him.*

To destroy intirely this Error, and solidly establish the contrary Truth, Divines take notice, that in every Sin we commit, there are two things that concur to it. The one is, the Motion or Exterior Act; the other is the Irregularity

* Nos vero cum verbum ullum in nos dictum audimus, canes imitamus. Hi enim, si quis in eos lapidem jecerit, jacente dimisso, lapidem remordent. Ita nos Deo derelicto, qui nobis tribulationes humilicemodi ad peccatorum purgationem procurat, ad lapidem, hoc est, ad proximum, currimus.
Dorothei, Deu. 7.

Irregularity of the Will, whereby we Transgress what the Commandments of God Prescribes. God is the Cause and Author of the first: Man only is the Cause and Author of the second. Let us put the case for Example, that a Man Fights against another and Kill's him: To Kill him he must have his Sword in his Hand, he must lift up and stretch out his Arm, and make a Thrust, and perform several other Natural Motions; which may be consider'd in themselves, and be quite distinguish'd from that Irregular Will, which caus'd him to Kill the Man. God is the Cause of all the Motions consider'd in the first place; and 'tis he who properly produces 'em, as he produces all other effects that proceed from Irrational Creatures; for as they cannot move themselves or Act without God; so neither can Man without his help be able to move his Arm, or put his Hand to his Sword. Moreover, these kind's of Natural Motions or Actions, have nothing in 'em that is bad; because if a Man shou'd make use of 'em, either for his one Defence, or in a Just War, or as a Minister of Justice, and shou'd Kill another, 'tis certain he wou'd not commit any Sin at all. But as to what makes the Action Sinful, that is to say, as to the Irregularity of the Will, that Moves or Determines him to Commit a Murder, and turns the Mind out of the right way of Reason, tho' this be what God permits by a Secret Judgment of his Providence, because when he might he do's not hinder it, yet for all this, we may say with Truth that he is not the cause of it. The truth of this is Explicated by the following Comparison: One has receiv'd a hurt in his Foot which makes him Lame; that which causes him to go, is the Faculty and Power he has to move himself; but that which causes him to Halt is his Hurt in his Foot. 'tis the same in every Vicious or Sinful Action, The cause of the Action is God, but the cause of Sin mix'd with the Action, proceeds from the free Will of Man.

So that God neither is nor can be the Cause or Author of Sin. But as to other Evils, whether they proceed from Natural Causes, and Irrational Creatures, or whether they come from Men, or from what other Source soever they Spring, or after whatsoever manner they happen, we must hold for certain that they proceed from the Hand of God, and happen to us by his Divine Providence.

† Si erit malum in Civitate quod Dominus non fecerit.
Amos. 3. 6.

Providence. 'Tis God that mov'd the Hand of him that Struck you, 'tis God that gave Motion to his Tongue who gave you Injurious Language. † *And there is no Evil in a City*, says the Prophet *Amos*, which our Lord has not done. Which truth the Holy Scripture frequently takes notice of, often attributing to God the Evil, which one Man do's to another. And says, that 'tis God himself that has done it.

In the second Book of *Kings*, God speaking of the Chastisement wherewith he resolv'd to Punish the Crimes of *David*, makes himself the Author of all those Evils, which were to happen by the means of his Son *Abſalon*. * *It shall be*, says he, *from your own Family, that I will raise up Evil upon you. I will take away your Wives before your Face, and will deliver 'em up to your Neighbors. You have Sinned in Private; but I will accomplish what I have said, in the presence of all the People of Israel, and in the sight of the Sun.* 'Tis for this reason, and upon this very account that the Impious King's who exercis'd most unheard of Cruelties on the People of God, are term'd in Holy Scripture the Instruments of the Divine Justice. † *Woe be to Assur, the Instrument of my Fury!* says our Lord by the Prophet *Iſay*: And speaking of *Cyrus*, whom he intended to make use of in punishing the *Chaldeans*, he says,

* Ecce ego suscitabo super te malum de Domina tua, & tollam uxores tuas in oculis tuis, & dabo proximo tuo: Tu enim fecisti abscondite, ego autem faciam verbum istud in conspectu omnis Israel, & in conspectu solis.
2 Reg. 12. 11.
E. 12.

† Vix Affur virga furoris mei!
Is. 10. 5.

* Cujus apprehendi dexteram, ut subiciam ante faciem ejus gentes.
Is. 45. 1.

† Impietas eorum tanquam securis Dei facta est. Facti sunt instrumentum irati, non regnum placati: Facit hoc enim Deus quod plebunq; facit & homo. Aliquando iratus homo apprehendit virgam jacentem in medio, fortasse qualemque samentum, credit inde filium, ac deinde projicit samentum in ignem, & filio servat hereditatem: Sic aliquando Deus per malos erudit bonos. Aug. sup. Psal. 73.

* *That he conducted him by the Hand to subdue all Nations before him.* Saint *Austin* treating this matter, says, that † *Their Impiety and Wickedness was, as it were, an Ax in the Hand of God: They were the Instruments of God mov'd to Indignation, but were not any share of the Kingdom of God Appeas'd and Mitigated. For God do's in things of this Nature, as a Man ordinarily do's. A Father being angry at his Child, lay's hold of the first Twig he finds, gives him some few strokes, and then casting the Twig in the Fire, he designs for this his Child the Inheritance that belongs to him. Just so do's God make use sometimes of Wicked People for the Chastisement and Correction of the Good.*

We Read in the *Ecclesiastical History*, how after the taking of *Jerusalem*, *Titus* making his Tour about the Walls of the City, and seeing the Ditches fill'd with the Carcasses

of

Hist. Eccl. p.
1. lib. 3. c. 1.
Hist. Eccl. p.
2. lib. 9. c. 2.

of the Slain, whose Stench Infected the whole Country, lifted up his Hands to Heaven, calling God for his Witness, that it was not he himself who was the cause of that so Bloody a Massacre and so woful Desolation. The same History affirms also, that *Alaricus* King of the *Goths*, Marching with an Innumerable Army to Sack *Rome*; and meeting with a certain Holy Person, who Conjur'd him not to be the cause of those so great Calamities and Miseries which wou'd insue: 'Tis not my own Inclination, sayd he, which carry's me on in this Enterprize, but I find my self push'd on and forc'd to it by a certain Spirit or Ghost, that Hants and Torments me, and even compels me Day and Night by a constant Repetition of these Words, Go, and Destroy *Rome*. So that hereby we may see all things come from the Hand of God, and are sent us by his Holy Will and Appointment. Wherefore, when *Semei* curs'd and revil'd King *David*; and flung Stones at him; *David* hindering those who were resolute in taking Revenge upon the Wretch for this Affront, made Answer, * *Our Lord has order'd him to Curse David; and who is he that dares Dispute or ask, why 'tis our Lords Pleasure to have done so?* That is, our Lord has chose him as an Instrument, whereby to Chastise me.

But we must not look upon it so surprising a thing, that Men are made the Instruments of God's Justice and Providence; since even the Devils themselves, who are Obdurate in their Malice, and so ardently desirous of our Ruin and Destruction, are also here upon Earth sometimes made the Instruments and Ministers of the same Providence and Justice. Saint *Gregory* upon these Words of the first Book of Kings, † *The Evil Spirit of our Lord seiz'd upon Saul*, takes notice, that the same Spirit is call'd the Spirit of our Lord, and an Evil Spirit. *Evil*, by reason of it's bad intent; and of the Lord, to shew that God made use of it, to punish *Saul*: Which the Holy Text declares more openly in the same place, when it says, * *That the Evil Spirit was sent by our Lord, to Torment Saul*. 'Tis for the same reason, says this great Saint, that the Devils who Afflict and Persecute the Just, are stil'd in Holy Writ, the *Thieves of God*. They are call'd *Thieves* to denote the desire they have of doing us an Injury; and of God, to let us understand that they receive from him the Power of hurting us. Saint *Austin* makes a

* Dominus
præcepit ei ut
malediceret
David. Et quis
est qui audeat
dicere? Quare
sic fecerit?
1 Reg. 16. 10.

Greg. lib. 13.
Moral. cap. 3.
† Spiritus
Domini malus
arripiebat Saul.
1 Reg. 16. 23.

* Exagitabat
eum spiritus
nequam à Do-
mino.
1 Reg. 16. 14.
Gregor. lib. 14.
Moral. cap. 13.
Joan. 19. 12.

† Non dixit
Job: Dominus
dedit, Diabolus
abstulit.
Aug. in Ps. 31.

* Dominus
dedit, Domi-
nus abstulit.
Job. 1. 21.

† Proflus ad
Deum refer
flagellum tu-
um, quia nec
diabolus tibi
aliquid facit,
nisi ille per-
mittat, qui de-
super habet
potestatem.
Aug. ubi sup.
Matth. 8. 31.

very fit Observation upon this Point: *Job*, as he takes notice, did not say, † *The Lord gave and the Devil took away*; but knowing for certain the Devil cou'd do him no harm, but only what God had permitted him, he refer's all equally to God, and says, * *The Lord gave and the Lord took away*. So that, continues the same Saint, refer all your grievances and afflictions to God; for the Devil can do nothing to you, without the Permission of him who has his power from above. They cou'd not enter into the Swine of the *Gerasenians*, without demanding first the leave of *JESUS CHRIST*. How then can they Afflict, how can they Tempt you without this Licence and Permission. They who without this Licence cou'd not touch the Swine, how shou'd they touch the Children, or hurt 'em?

CHAP. III.

Of the great advantages we receive by a Conformity with the Will of God.

SAINTE *Basil* affirms, that all the Sanctity and all the Perfection of a Christian Life consists, in ascribing to God the cause of all things whatever in General, and thereupon to Conform our selves intirely to his Holy Will. But to the end we may the better comprehend the Merit and Importance of this Conformity, and that we may aspire to it with a Fervent Desire, and also that we may apply our selves with more diligence to the attaining it, we will Explicate in particular, the great helps and advantages annex'd to it. First then, it produces a true Resignation, or rather it is it self this Perfect and intire Resignation, which the Saints and Masters of a Spiritual Life, prize at so high a rate, as to esteem it the very Foundation, and beginning of all the Peace and Tranquillity of our Soul. For by this Resignation, a Man places himself in the Hands of God, as a piece of Clay in the Hands of the Potter; that

that is, to the end his Divine Providence shou'd dispose of him at his Pleasure; not desiring any thing for the future in order to himself, nor to Live for himself, neither to Eat, Sleep, or Work for himself, but to do all things for God alone, and for his Service and Glory. A Conformity with the Divine Will, work's the same effect; for thereby a Man delivers up his whole self in such a Nature, to this Holy Will, that he cannot Seek or Covet any other thing, then to see this Will totally accomplish'd in him, not only in all the Actions he do's, but also in all other Accidents whatever that can fall out; and this not only in Prosperity and Consolation, but even in Adversity and Affliction. This sort of Submission is so acceptable to God, that for this very one reason, he call's *David* a Man according to his own Heart.

* *I have found*, says he, *a Man according to my own Heart, who will comply with all my desires.* The reason indeed was, that *David* had that Submission of his own Will, to the Orders of Providence, as that his Heart was always dispos'd to receive all sorts of Impressions alike from the Hand of God, as a piece of Mollifi'd Wax, is dispos'd to receive any figure that's given it; insomuch that he Repeated it in a certain place: † *My Heart is dispos'd, O God, my Heart is dispos'd.*

Secondly, he who has an Intire and Perfect Conformity with the Will of God, will have also a Perfect Mortification of all his Passions; and all Evil Inclinations whatever. 'Tis sufficiently evident how necessary this Mortification is for a Christian, and how much 'tis recommended and inculcated to us by the Holy Scripture, and the Saints. Yet before we can arrive to a Perfect Conformity with the Divine Will, this Mortification is necessary to be ptesuppos'd, since Conformity is consider'd as the End, and Mortification but as the Means to attain this End; And as all know, the End is always more Perfect and Noble than the Means. That then this Mortification is a necessary Means to acquire a real Conformity with the Will of God, nothing can be more Evident: For, it is most certain that our own proper Will, and our own Irregular Appetite, are the chief things which hinder in us this Conformity; and by consequence, the more we Renounce our selves, and the more we Mortifie and keep in Subjection this Will and Appetite of ours, the more

* Inveni virum secundum cor meum, qui faciet omnes voluntates meas.
1 Reg. 13. 14.
Añ. 13. 22.

† Paratum cor meum Deus, paratum cor meum.
Ps. 56. 8. 69.
Ps. 107. 1.

we Unite and Conform our selves to the Divine Will. To joyn a piece of rough and unshap'd Timber, with another piece which is brought into form, we must first plain it and bring it into the same figure, without which 'tis impossible ever to joyn 'em together. We may see by this what effects Mortification has in us; it retrenches and cut's off all that which may any ways hinder us from this Union with God; to the end we may joyn our selves to him by a more strict Tie, in Conforming our selves to the Divine Will: And by how much we Mortifie our selves, by so much the stricter we Unite our selves to God, and when we shall have gain'd an absolute Victory over our Passions in all things, then shall we arrive to a Perfect Union with him.

Hence ensues a Consequence, which might be look'd upon as a third advantage, which is, that this Resignation and intire Conformity with the Divine Will, is the most grateful, and most acceptable Sacrifice that a Man can possibly offer to God out of his own Stock and Treasure. For in other Sacrifices, he only offers up something appertaining to him; but in this, he offers and delivers his whole self. In other Sacrifices, and other Mortifications, he only Mortifies himself in some Particular thing; for Example, as in Temperance, in Humility, in Modesty, and in Patience, he offers but a part of himself to God; but in this, he offers himself an intire Holocaust, to the end the Divine Majesty may determine and dispose of him, in what it shall Please, how it shall Please, and when it shall Please, without any the least Exception, or any the least Reserve. So that by how much difference there is betwixt a Man, and what belongs to a Man, betwixt the Whole, and a Part thereof; by so much there is, betwixt this Sacrifice, and whatever is found in other Sacrifices and Mortifications.

Moreover, God puts so high a Value and Esteem upon this Holocaust of our Heart, that 'tis this very one thing precisely, he demands of us. † *My Son*, says he, *give me your Heart*. As the *Eagle* the Prince of Birds feeds only upon the Heart; so what God most regards, is the Heart; and in case you bestow not this upon him, 'tis not in your capacity to bestow any other Present, which can give him Satisfaction. Nor is it indeed any great

† *Præbe, fili mi, cor tuum mihi.*
Prov. 23. 26.

great thing, he Demands of us: For if we who are but Dust and Ashes, cannot be fully satisfi'd with all things God has Created; and if there's nothing except God alone, can fill this Heart of ours, as little as it is; how do you imagine, you can satisfie God in giving him but a piece of your Heart, and reserving the rest for your self. To pretend this, is only to abuse him; since our Heart cannot be divided in this manner: † *For the Bed is so narrow*, says *Isay*, *that the one or the other must necessarily fall out; and the Cloke so short that it cannot cover both at once.* The Heart of Man is as a narrow Bed, it cannot contain any, besides God alone: And tis for this reason that the Spouse calls it a little Bed. * *I will search*, says she, *all Night in my little Bed, him whom my Heart Loves.* She has made the Bed of her Heart so narrow, that there's only place left for her Beloved: And on the contrary, whosoever enlarges his Heart to that extent, so as to admit place for another, he at the same time leaves no Room for God, and Expels him thence. 'Tis of this Division of our Heart, which God complains in the Prophet *Isay*, when he says, † *You have discover'd your self near me to receive an Adulterer; you have enlarg'd your Bed, and have contracted an Alliance with Others.* Had we a thousand Hearts, we ought to offer 'em all to God; and look upon it as but little, in regard of what we stand indebted to him.

In the fourth place, whosoever has a Perfect Conformity to the Will of God, will also have, as we have sayd before, a Perfect Charity: and the more he advances in this Conformity, the more will he also advance in Charity and the Love of God; and consequently in Perfection, which consists of this Charity, and of this Love. Besides that which we have sufficiently establish'd as to this Truth in the first Chapter, what we sayd in the precedent Article, may serve again for a Confirmation: Since the Love of God consists not in Words but Actions. * *The Proof or Trial of Love*, says Saint Gregory, *is the Performance of Deeds;* and the more painful and difficult the Works are, the more they testifie Love. Wherefore Saint John explicating the excess of Love which God had for the World: * *God*, says he, *so Lov'd the World, as to give his only Begotten Son.* And Jesus CHRIST speaking himself of the Love he bore his Heavenly

† Coangustatum est enim stratum, ita ut alter decideret, & pallium breve utrumque operire non posset.
If. 28. 20.

* In lectulo meo per noctem quæsiui quem diligit anima mea.
Cant. 3. 1.
Gilbertus Abb. serm. 2. in Cant. apud Bernard.

† Quia juxta me disceperunt, & suscepisti adulterum, dilatasti cubiculum tuum, & pepigisti cum eis cœdus,
If. 57. 8.

* Probatio dilectionis exhibitio est operis.
Greg. hom. 30. in Evang.

* Sic Deus dilexit mundum, ut Filium suum unigenitum daret.
Joan. 3. 16.

† Ut cognoscat mundus, quia diligo Patrem, & sicut mandatum dedit mihi Pater, sic facio. Surgite, eamus hinc.
John. 14. 31.

Heavenly Father, says thus: † *That the World may know that I Love my Father, and that I perform what my Father has Commanded me, rise let us go hence.* But where was it he went? He went to Suffer Death on a Cross; and by fulfilling so Rigorous an Injunction, he clearly evidenc'd to the World the Love he bore his Eternal Father. Inasmuch that hereby we see, that Love proves it self by Actions; and the greater and more difficult the Actions are, the greater do's the Love appear. Moreover, this intire Conformity to the Divine Will, is, as we say'd before the greatest Sacrifice we can make of our selves: Because it presupposes a Perfect Mortification of all our Senses; and an Absolute Resignation; whereby we offer up our selves to God, and put our selves into his Hands, to be dispos'd of at his Pleasure. We may hence therefore conclude, that there is nothing wherein we can testifie our Love to God more than by this Conformity; since by this means we Give and Resign up to him in General all things we have, and all things whatever we are in prospect of Injoying, or Desiring; and in case we Injoy'd more, or if it were in our Power, we wou'd offer it up wholly in like manner.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

That a Perfect Conforming our selves to God's Will, is to enjoy a Happiness and a sort of ~~Heaven~~ upon Earth.

HE who is arriv'd to that Pitch, as to have attain'd an intire Conformity to the Divine Will, taking all things as sent by the Order of Providence, and can comply herein with whatever it pleases God, will obtain the Supreme Felicity of the Servants of God upon Earth, and afterwards fully possess the profound Peace and Interior Joy, in which the real Happiness of this Life consists. * For the Kingdom of God, as the Apostle says, is not of either Meat or Drink: 'Tis Justice, 'tis Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghost. Here we may see what is the Kingdom of Heaven on Earth, and what that Paradise of Delights, which we may purchase to our selves on Earth: And we may well call it a Blessing, since thereby we resemble in some degree the Blessed in Heaven. For as there is no Vicissitude or Change in Heaven, and the Saints persist perpetually in the same State, by a constant Fruition and Injoyment of God: Never suffer themselves to be Disquieted or any ways Troubl'd, and Discontented at the Inconstancy of things, and divers accidents of this Life. Their Will is so totally Subjected to that of God, that the very assurance they have, that all things comes as sent by him, and that his Holy Will is Accomplish'd in whatever Adversity happens to 'em, makes 'em, by Preferring his Will before their own, look upon all their Tribulations and Sufferings as chang'd into Joy, and all their Griefs and Sorrows into Sweetness and Consolation. This is the reason that nothing is capable of Molesting or Afflicting 'em, or can have this Influence over 'em, except Discontents, Crosses, Griefs and Affronts; which,

* Non est regnum Dei esca & potus, sed iustitia, & pax, & gaudium in Spiritu Sancto. Ad Rom. 14. 17.

as

as long as they receive, as a singular favor in regard of the Hand that sent 'em, there is nothing else can possibly alter or take away the Peace and Tranquillity of their Soul.

Lib. 5. cap. 5.
vita S. Ignatii.

Behold here whence proceeded that Tranquillity and Joy, which always appear'd in the Countenance, in the Discourse and Comportment of the Saints: Of Saint *Anthony*, Saint *Dominick*, and Saint *Francis*, and several other most Eminent Patterns of Sanctity in past Ages. The same is also sayd of our *Father Saint Ignatius*; and the same was frequent amongst the *Saints*. But suppose these great Saints were wholly exempt from the Miseries of this Life; suppose they were not Subject to Corporal Infirmities; and had no Temptations to Suffer, no Conflict to Undergo; and infine, knew not the Experience of any thing, which brought with it Adversity and Affliction. 'Tis certain nevertheless, they had their Grievs and Mortifications, and those greater than what we have to Undergo: For Afflictions, Contempts and Sufferings, are the Portion and Lot of Saints, and those who are in most singular Favor with God, and most Belov'd by him, are frequently the very Persons he makes a trial of in all these sorts of Circumstances. For how is it possible they shou'd constantly remain in the same State of Mind, that they shou'd always retain so great a Tranquillity and Peace, both Interiorly and Exteriorly, and have such an abundance of Joy, in Heart and Countenance, as if each Day of their Life, were a Day of Jubily and Exultation? 'Tis because they have arriv'd to a Perfect Conformity to the Divine Will; because they place their whole Happiness in seeing it Accomplish'd; and thus they never want occasions of Content and Satisfaction.

* *All things end in Good, with those who Love God.*

† *Let what will happen, the Just Man shall not be Endamag'd.* All Pains, Temptations, Mortifications, and what-

ever Adversity besides, turns into matter of Joy; because they are satisfi'd, that these happen by the appointment of God, and proceed from his Holy Will, in which they have establish'd their Felicity: and possessing in this manner all the Happiness which can be found here upon Earth, they have a Taste of that Charm and Sweetness of Glory, wherewith they are to be Satiated hereafter in Heaven. Saint *Catherine* of *Siena*, speak's admirably well upon

* Diligentibus Deum omnia cooperantur in bonum.
Ad Rom. 8. 28.
† Non contristabit justum quidquid ei acciderit.
Prov. 12. 21.

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upon this Point, in comparing the Just to our Saviour JESUS CHRIST: For as JESUS CHRIST never lost the Beatitude of his Soul, amidst all the Torments Sorrows and Anguishes he underwent; so the Just, whatever Afflictions, whatever Adversities happen, never lose that Beatitude, which consists in a Conformity with the Divine Will: Because the Accomplishment of that Will in 'em, is always a new Subject of Joy. This sort of Perfection is so Elevate and Sublime, that the Apostle wishing it the *Philippians*, * *The Peace of God*, says he, *which infinitely surpasses all Sense, conserve your Hearts and your Souls in JESUS CHRIST*. He says this Peace is infinitely above all Sense, and surpasses all sort of Imagination; since in reality, it is a gift so much Supernatural, that Human Understanding of it self is never able to comprehend how 'tis possible, a Heart can remain so unconcern'd and quiet, amidst the Storms and Tempests of Temptation and Sufferings, wherewith it is Daily Toss'd and Assaulted in this Life. There seem's to be some affinity betwixt it, and the Miracle of the Bulh, that Burn'd and was not Consum'd; and with that of the three Children, who were not in the least indamag'd amidst the Scorching Flames of the *Babylonian* Furnace, but Sung forth Praises incessantly to the Almighty. This was also what made *Job* cry out in speaking to God; † *You Torment me O Lord, after a most wonderful manner*. As tho' he wou'd thereby expres on one side, the Pains and Afflictions he underwent; and on the other, the Joy and Satisfaction he receiv'd in Suffering 'em; since it was the Divine Providence that had order'd in that manner.

Cassian relates, of an Ancient Holy Man, who being upon a time in *Alexandria*, was surrounded by a great number of Infidels, who loaded him with Affronts and Injuries; who Beat and Puth'd him, and treated him with infinite other Contumelious usages. The Holy Man remain'd nevertheless amongst 'em, like a Lamb, Suffering and not uttering the least Word or Complaint; and some of the Multitude present, asking of him in Scorn, what Miracles had JESUS CHRIST ever wrought; he Answer'd, the Miracles he has done, are that whatever injuries you commit against me, and in what rude manner soever you treat me, I am not mov'd with the least Anger against you, nor

Tom. I.

O o o

concern'd

* Et pax Dei, quæ exuperat omnem sensum, custodiat corda vestra, & intelligentias vestras in Christo Jesu. *Ad Phil. 4. 7.*

Exod. 3. 2.

† Mirabiliter me crucias. *Job. 10. 16.*

Collat. 12. cap. 13.

concern'd at your hard usage. See here a most admirable Patience, see a Perfection most Excellent and Sublime.

Aug. lib. 1. de
Genes. ad lit.
in opere imperf.
cap. 13. & lib.
1. de Genes.
contra Manich.
cap. 15.

The Ancient Authors have left us in Writing, and Saint *Austin* mentions it after 'em in several places of his Works, that the Mountain *Olympus* in *Macedonia*, is of so excessive a height that it surpasses by much, the first Region of the Air: There's never either Cloud, Wind or Rain, touches it's Top; because those things are only Ingender'd in gross and thick Air, that of this place being so extreemly Pure and Refin'd: Even the Birds cannot mount here, by reason of it's height; and in case they do, they cannot remain any time, no more then Men and other Animals, who cannot live there by reason the Air is so Subtile, and cannot be Breath'd. This was Experienc'd by some Persons, who Ascended the Place every Year to perform certain Sacrifices, who carry'd with 'em Sponges full of Water, that when they found the Air too fine to be Breath'd, they might apply the Sponges to their Nose, and sucking the Air throu' 'em, by this means have it more condens'd. They were accusom'd also before they descended the Top, to Write certain Characters in the Sand, which at their arrival the Year following, they found as intire and perfect as when they were first Writ: Which cou'd never have been, had there happen'd the least Blast of Wind, or the smallest Drop of Rain fell upon 'em. See here the Symbole or Type of Perfection, to which those are arriv'd who have an intire Conformity with the Divine Will. For as *Olympus* is Elevated above the Clouds, and it's top injoys a continual Serenity, so these are Elevated above the things of this World; and these Birds of Prey, that is to say, their irregular Desires and Passions, not being able to take Wing so High, their Peace and Tranquillity of Mind is never disturb'd, by any Motion or Agitation of the World.

Nubes ex-
cedit *Olympi*,
Pacem lumina
tenent.
Lucan. lib. 2.
Pharal.

Aug. lib. 11.
de serm. Domini
in monte. c. 8.
* Beati Paci-
fici, quoniam
Filij Dei vo-
cabuntur.
Matth. 5. 9.

Saint *Austin* Writing on these Words of our Saviour, in Saint *Matthew*, * *Blessed are the Peace-makers for they shall be call'd the Children of God*, says, that the Saviour of the World call'd the Peace-makers Blessed and the Children of God, because there's nothing found in 'em opposite to the Divine Will: And that on the contrary, they conform themselves in all things as good Children, who endeavour to render themselves like to their Father,

in

in all they are able; who have no other Will or Desire, no other Content and Satisfaction, but in the Content and Satisfaction of their Father. This is one of the most considerable Points to be regarded in a Spiritual Life; and he who has attain'd this Conformity in all things to God's Will, to receive all things as coming from his Holy Hand; and to place all his Joy and Content, in the performance of what is God's Pleasure, will find a Paradise upon Earth. † *All things enjoy Peace about him, and his Habitation is in Mount Zion.* He may justly, says Saint Bernard, Sing with all confidence that Canticle of the Wise Man; * *I have sought my Content and Repose in all things, and will abide in the Inheritance of our Lord:* For he will find in effect a true Repose; he will find, † *This joy intire and compleat, which no one shall ever be able to dispossess him of.*

How happy thou'd we be, cou'd we gain so much upon our selves, as to place all our joy and content in the accomplishing God's Will; and arrive so far, as in all things to have no other Will but his. So that we truly say to him, Grant O Lord, that I may never Will, or not Will, but according to your Pleasure: Grant that this may be my only Desire and Comfort. * *For my only happiness consists in adorning so to God, as to Build all my Trust and Confidence upon him.* Moreover, how happy thou'd we be, if we were so United with God, that in all our Actions, all our Afflictions and Sufferings, we have regard to nothing but the fulfilling his Holy Will in us: Which made a certain Devout Person say, † *That he who has only one thing in prospect, who refer's all to one thing, and in this one thing Contemplates all things, will always conserve his Heart in a Peaceful condition, and will Rest and Repose in Peace, in the Bosom of God.*

† Factus est in pace locus ejus, & habitatio ejus in Zion.

Psal. 75. 3. Bern. in sen. ent.

* In his omnibus requiem quæsit, & in hereditate Domini morabor.

Ecc. 24. 17.

† Ut gaudium vestrum sit plenum. Et gaudium vestrum nemo tollet à vobis. Joan. 16. 24. & 22.

* Mihi autem adhære Deo, bonum est; & ponere in Domino spem meam. Psal. 72. 23.

† Cui omnia unum sunt, & omnia ad unum trahit, & omnia in uno videt; potest stabilis eode esse, & in Deo pacificus permanere.

De Unit. Christi. lib. 1. c. 3.

C H A P. V.

*That there's no true Content but in God
alone; and that it is not to be
obtain'd by any other Means.*

THose who establish their Content in God, and his Holy Will, enjoy a perpetual Satisfaction, because relying upon the immovable Pillar of the Divine Will, they participate of the immutability of this Will; remain by this Means always constant and firm, always immovable, and always in the same situation of Heart and Mind. But those who are addicted to the things of this Life, who have settled their Heart, and fix'd their Affections and Content therein, can never receive any Satisfaction that is constant and durable: For they follow the Impression and Nature of the Objects they Embrace; and in the same manner are expos'd to all the Vicissitudes and Revolutions, to which those Objects are. Saint *Austin* explicates this admirably well, speaking of those Words of the Psalmist: † *He has Conceiv'd Sorrow, and Brought forth Iniquity: * You will never see, says he, a term of your Sufferings and Discontents, unless you bend all your Affections upon one only thing, which tho' in spite of your self, you cannot be depriv'd of.*

When Saint *Francis Borgia*, being as yet in the World, arriv'd at *Granada* with the Corp's of the Empress *Isabella*; and being to deliver it up to those whose charge was to receive it, was according to his Orders to open the Coffin of Lead where it lay, and Expose the Face of this Princess; the Dreadful Change and Deformity which caus'd such a Horror in all Present, Struck him so in Particular, that, the Grace of God touching his Heart at the same time, and giving him a lively Sense of the Vanity of this Life, he made from that very Moment a firm Resolution in himself

† Conceptit
dolorem, &
peperit iniqui-
tatem.

Psalm. 7. 15.

* Non enim

poterit labor

finiri, nisi hoc

quisque diligit

quod invito

aufferi non

possit.

Aug. in illud

Psalm. 7.

Lib. 1. cap. 7.

vita Sancti

Francisci de

Borgia.

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himself to Renounce and Forsake the World; and Elevating his Soul to God, *I Promise, O Lord*, sayd he, *never to serve a Master more, who is Subject to Dying.* Let us Imitate him in this; let us form the like Resolution, and say to God; yes, O Lord, I Promise for the future, never to place my Affection upon any thing that's Mortal, upon any thing that's Subject to Perish, or any thing which can be took from me against my own Will and Desire. Without this we can never have true Content: † *For when we Love any thing, which can be took from us against our Wills*, says Saint Austin, *we must necessarily meet with a thousand Discontents and Afflictions.* For either the Apprehension and Solicitude we have of loosing it, makes us Uneasie, and Disquiets our Thoughts; or the Sorrow for having lost it, Afflicts and Torments us. We behold our selves to our grief depriv'd of what we affected with that Passion: And by how much this Affection was Stronger and Greater, by so much the Grief is more Sensible and Violent. He confirms this in another place, where he says, * *He who seeks his Content in himself, shall be Contristated.* If you seek yours in administering such a Charge, or in such an Employ, or in Living in such a Place, or in any other thing of this Nature; 'tis a content which your Superior can Rob you of, and you will never find any real Satisfaction. If you settle it upon any Objects, which please you for the present; if you place it in the fulfilling your Temporal Desires; these are things easily Subject to change; and supposing they do not change, yet you will change of your self; and what was pleasing to you to Day, to Morrow will be otherwise. The *Israelites* convince us sufficiently of this; who were tir'd with the Manna, which of it self contain'd all the tast's and qualities, that cou'd satisfie any Gust and Appetite: And had no sooner shooke off the Yoke of the *Egyptians*, and gain'd their Liberty, when they began to be weary of it, and Repenting their Delivery from Bondage and Captivity, Sigh'd after the Onions and Flesh-pots of *Egypt*. You will never find a true Satisfaction, as long as you Build it upon things that have no Solid Foundation, and such as admit of Change. † *But he, continues the Saint, who places his joy in God, shall have an Eternal joy, because God is Eternal. And if you desire your joy should be Eternal, apply your self*

† Nam cum ea diliguntur, quæ possumus contra voluntatē amittere, necesse est ut pro iis miserimē laboremur.
Aug. Tract. 24. sup. Joan.

* Qui vult gaudere de se, tristis erit.
Id. ibid.

† Qui autem de Deo vult gaudere, semper gaudebit, quia Deus

sempiternus
est. Vis habere
gaudium
sempiternum,
adhære illi qui
sempiternus
est.

Ibid. id.
* Stultus si-
cut Luna mu-
tatur, homo
sanctus in sa-
pientia manet
sicut Sol.
Eccl. 27. 12.

† Quia Chri-
stum a me tol-
lere nemo
potest.

Basil. in illud:
* Exultate
iusti in Do-
mino.
Epsal. 32. 1.

self to God who is Eternal, to God who admits of no Change, and who remains ever immovable in the same State and Condition.

The difference which the Holy Ghost makes betwixt a Fool, and a Wise and Just Man, is, * *That the Fool Changes like the Moon; and the Just Man in his Prudence, is like the Sun.* In reality, there's not more Change in the Body of the Moon, than there is in the Mind of a Fool: He is to Day in his Increase, to Morrow in his Decrease; to Day, Transported with Joy; to Morrow, Oppress'd with Grief: Infine, he is sometimes in one temper, sometimes in another; because he seeks his content in things of this World, which by reason of their Inconstancy and Vicissitude, make him subject to the like Frailties; and according to the diversity of the success he finds, he's carry'd away by different Motions and Impressions. But for the Just, he is always like the Sun; Constant in his own State: He has neither Increase nor Decrease; he is always Compos'd, always at Peace, always Satisfi'd: Because having fix'd his Content and Happiness in God, and in the Performance of his Holy Will, he partakes of a Good which never Changes, and which he cannot be dispos'd of. The Holy Abbot *Dionysius* is sayd to have had a Countenance always Smiling; and being once demanded, what made him have this continual cheerfulness, he Answer'd, the reason was, † *That no one could deprive him of JESUS CHRIST.* He had experienc'd a real Content, since he had built all his Felicity upon a Foundation which cou'd never Fail, and which he never shou'd be Rob'd of. Let us do the same, and * *Let the Just Rejoyce in our Lord.* Take notice, says Saint *Basil*, of these Words: The Prophet bid's us not rejoyce in the abundance of Temporal Goods, not in the attaining a great Capacity and Learning; nor that we Injoy a Perfect Health, or that we are of a Strong Constitution and Bodily Strength; nor infine, because we are look'd upon and regarded by others: But he says, Rejoyce in our Lord, that you have plac'd all your Joy and Hope in him; and that you make all your Satisfaction and Content rely upon the Accomplishing his Will. In effect, there's only this thing alone which can give us an intire Satisfaction, and whatever else is not capable of affording it.

Saint

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Saint Bernard in a Sermon made upon those Words of Saint Peter, * Behold we have left all things, and Follow'd thee, sufficiently proves this Verity. * A Rational Soul, says he, may well be Employ'd and took up in things of this Life, but can never be Satisfi'd with 'em. They can only inflame it's Thirst, they are not able to allay it. † The Covetous Man, says Ecclesiasticks, shall never have his fill of Riches: the more he has, the more he desires, and never says, Enough. The same may be sayd of all transitory Goods: And learn, says Saint Bernard, the cause why they cannot Satisfie him, * Because they are not the Proper and Natural Food of his Soul. For as the Air and Wind, can never serve for Nourishment to our Bodies; and he wou'd be look'd upon as a Mad-man, who being just upon the Point of Dying for Hunger, wou'd open his Mouth, like a Camelion, to suck in the Air, thinking thereby to get new Food and Sustenance: Just so, go's on the same Saint, it wou'd be a notable piece of Folly, to imagine a Rational Soul, which is a Pure Spirit, can be Satiated with Sensible or Corporal things. † It may be Puffed up, but can never be Fill'd; because it receives not a Nourishment proper to it's Nature. Give every thing what is proper for it; to the Body, a Corporal Refection; to the Soul a Spiritual one: Since Justice and Perfection is the Souls Bread; * And none can be happy, but they who have a Hunger after it; because they only shall have their Fill.

Saint Austin explicates this more at large in his Soliloquies; where Treating of a Rational Soul, he addresses himself to God in these Terms. † You have made it capable, says he, to contain your Infinite Majesty; to the end only you can possibly Satisfie it. When the In-chasing of a Ring, is made according to the Measure of the Precious Stone; whatever other thing you put in it, can never prove fit: Only the Stone, after which Figure it was made, can fill up the Hollow; if the Work be made in a Triangle, any thing of a different Cut cannot be fitted to it. Our Soul has been Created to the Image of the Blessed Trinity, and Adorn'd with an In-chasing, as I may say, which is Design'd and Form'd for God alone; so that 'tis impossible any other thing thou'd fit exactly the vacant Place: Not all the Earth, nor all we can Conceive except God will ever be capable.

* You

* Ecce nos reliquimus omnia.

Matth. 19. 27.

* Anima rationalis ceteris omnibus occupari potest, repleti non possit.

Bern. sup. illud Matth.

† Avarus non implebitur pecunia.

Eccl. 1. 9.

* Quia non sunt naturales cibi animæ.

Bern. de dilig. Deo. cap. 3.

† Infari potest, satiari non potest. Id.

* Panis namque animæ iustitia est, & soli beati qui esuriunt illam, quoniam ipsi saturabuntur.

Id. sup. illud, Matth.

Ecce nos reliquimus omnia.

† Facta est capax maiestatis tuæ, ut à te sola, & à nullo alio possit impleri.

Aug. cap. 30. Soliloq.

* Fecisti nos
Domine ad te,
& inquietum
est cor no-
strum: donec
requiescat in
te.

Aug. lib. 1.
Conf. cap. 1.

* *You have Created us O Lord for your self, and our Heart will never be at Rest till it repeseth in you.* The Comparison, we ordinarily use, of the Needle of a Dial, is very applicable, and explains Saint *Austins* Words to the Life. The property of this Needle is, by Touching it with a Load-stone, to turn always to the North: And the Impression and Vertue it receiveth by this Touch is so forcible, that move it which way you please, it never ceases to be in Agitation, till it has recover'd it's first Situation. 'Tis the same in us, in Respect of God: He has Inspir'd into us a Natural Inclination, which carry's us continually to him, as to our North Point, and our Last End: So that as long as our Heart turns not to God; so long like this Needle shall we be in a continual Motion and Disquiet: Of all the Moveable Parts of the Heaven, what ever Part it beholds in it's Motion, yet it rests not: But as soon as it has Found the fix'd and Immoveable North Point, it stands still and Immoveable: Just so, as long as your Eyes and Heart are cast upon the things of this World, which are Subject to Daily Alterations and Changes, you will never have repose and Satisfaction; but turn 'em towards God, who is unalterable and still the same, and you will obtain a perfect Joy and Tranquillity.

Altho' this were our only business, yet we shou'd at least, in consideration of our proper Good and Interest, make it our chiefest end to seek God. † *For we know well my Brethren, says Saint Austin, that the World seeks it's Content; but by misfortune it seeks it not where it shou'd.* Our main importance is, to discern the difference betwixt true and false Content; And 'tis our Misery, that we suffer our selves more frequently to be deceiv'd by the Vain representations of Pleasure, and false appearances of Good. The Covetous, the Ambitious, the Proud, the Gluttonous, and the Carnal Man, each seeks his Content: But the one seeks it in raking up Heaps of Store, and Riches; the other in climbing up to the highest Degrees of Dignity and Preferment; another in being Respected and Honor'd by Men; another in making good Cheer; and the Carnal Man in Complying with and Satisfying his Impure, and Unlawful Desires. None of all these seek their Content, where they ought; and therefore shall never find it: Because whatever they Cover, and

† Scimus.
fratres, quod
omnis homo
gaudere deside-
rat, sed non
omnes ibi qua-
runt gaudium
ubi oportet
inqui.

Aug. Serm. 30.
de Sanctis.

and whatever it can afford 'em, is not capable of Satisfying their Soul, and giving it a true Joy and Satisfaction. † Wherefore then, Imprudent as you are, continues the same Saint, do you Torment your selves in an Impracticable search after those Goods, with which you wou'd Satisfie your Soul and Body? Love and seek one only Good, which comprehends all other Goods, and that Suffices. Aspire to one only Good, which is both Sovereign and Universal, and 'tis enough: And you, * O my Soul, Bless our Lord, who Satisfies your Desires with his Heavenly Treasures.

est. Aug. de spiritu. & anima. cap. 64.
bonis desiderium tuum. Psal. 102. 5.

* Benedic anima mea Domino,

† Quid ergo per multa vagaris homuncio, querendo bona animarum & corporis tui? Ama unum bonum, in quo sunt omnia bona, & sufficit; desiderium simplex bonum quod est omne bonum, & satis qui replet in

CHAP. VI.

In which 'tis Declar'd after another Manner,
that Conformity with the Will of God,
is a Means of Content.

SAINTE Austin Writing upon these Words of our Saviour, in Saint John: † All you shall Petition my Father in my Name, I will grant; says, we are not to think that all the Peace and Tranquillity of our Souls consists in doing our own Will, and Obtaining whatsoever we Desire: Because we frequently Will and Cover, that which is not convenient for us; and the very fulfilling our own Desires, turns often to our no small Prejudice: But we must endeavour to find our Satisfaction in whatsoever God shall Ordain, and 'tis that alone we are to Petition at his Hands. * For whensoever our own Will and Desire, carry's us to things that are hurtful, and hinder us, from good, we are, says he, to Petition of God, not that he wou'd grant what is hurtful, but that he wou'd make us take a Delight in what is good. In a word, if we take less pleasure in performing his Divine Will, than in performing our own, we ought to ask of God, not to grant us our own, for that may

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turn

† Quodcumque petieritis Patrem in nomine meo, hoc faciam. Joan. 14. 13. Aug. sup. illud Joan.

* Quando enim nos delectant mala, & non delectant bona, rogare debemus potius Deum, ut delectentur bona quam ut concedantur mala. Id. ibid.

turn to our Prejudice and Misfortune; but that he would order it so, that we accommodate our selves to his, which can never be but for our greater Good and Advantage. He alledges upon this Subject, what the Holy Scripture recounts of the *Israelit's*, who Disgust'd with the Manna sent 'em from Heaven, desir'd and ask'd for Flesh. They obtain'd indeed their desire, but to their Damage and Misfortune. † *They had even the very Meat in their Mouths, when the Anger of God seiz'd upon 'em, Destroy'd the Chief amongst 'em, and overthrew the Eldest People of Israël.* 'Tis certain the Manna God sent 'em from Heaven, excell'd all the Meats they desir'd; and surpass'd the Onions of *Egypt*, after which they so much Sigh'd; and consequently, that was not the thing, add's Saint *Austin*, they shou'd have demanded. They shou'd have begg'd of God to put their Palat's in order, and rectifie their Taste, to Savour the Manna of Heaven, and so there had been no need of Petitioning other Food; since in the Manna alone, they had the Taste of all the Meats they cou'd desire or imagine. Whensoever then it falls out, that either by the Devils Temptation, or your own Irregular Appetite, you have lost the Taste and Savour of Vertue, and after the Nature of a Sick Person, you seek and demand what's dangerous for you; you must by no means yield to your Inordinate Appetite, nor give your Mind to attain what you desire: For instead of purchasing a Solid Content, you will only find dissatisfaction and trouble. What you shou'd desire, and what you shou'd ask of God, is, that he would Heal your Palate, and take away that Disgust and Bitterness, which hinders you from Savouring the Delicious Sweetness in the Accomplishing of his Will. And by this means you will come to possess a true Content, and a real Tranquillity and Peace of your Soul.

† Adhuc eorum e-
rant in ore ip-
sorum, & ira
Dei ascendit
super eos, &
occidit pin-
gues eorum,
& electos Is-
raël impedivit.
Psalm. 77. 30.
© 31.

Sap. 16. 20.

Doroth. Doct. 9

Saint *Dorothens* Teaches us how to arrive to this Point, by another way; or rather he explicates this same thing in another manner. Whosoever, says he, so submits his Will to that of God, as he know's not what to Will or not Will, but what God Will's or not Will's, comes also to do always his own Will, and to possess a constant Repose and Peace of Mind. Let's put the case in what belongs to Religious Obedience; and so we shall more evidently demonstrate what we intend here to Establish; and as 'tis sayd, kill two Birds with one Stone. We say, very frequently

quently to such Persons who intend a Religious Life, and design to follow the way of Obedience; Take care, I pray of what you undertake; for after you are engag'd in Religion, you must never think of doing your Will in the least thing. But Saint Dorotheus affirms the contrary: Go, says he, don't trouble your selves; you may if you please always do your own Will; and I will shew you how this may be, not only without any Fault, but even after a most Holy and Perfect manner. Do you know how? It is thus; † *He who has not a Will of his own, always perform's his own Will. A Religious Man who has an Humble and Conform'd Mind, and Subjell'd in all things to Obedience, who is not at all ty'd to his own Will, never do's any thing contrary to his own Will; because he do's his own, in that of his Superior.* And 'tis after this manner, that by renouncing our own proper Will, we perform it Daily. Endeavour to have no other Will than that of your Superior; and so, you may have your own Will all the Day long, and gain Merit thereby at the same time. By this means you shall Sleep as long as you please, because you desire not to Sleep longer than Obedience permits: You shall Eat what you please; because you would not Eat but what is put before you. Infine, you shall Pray no more, Read no more, but what you will; you shall perform no Penance, but what you will; have no other Employment but what you will; and so, as generally speaking, you shall do nothing but what is injoynd you by your Rules and Obedience. Thus a true Religious, by never desiring to perform his own Will, performs it always; and receives thereby this Satisfaction and Content of Mind, which cannot be purchas'd in Religion, but by making the Will of the Superior, and the Rules, his own.

'Tis also in this alone, wherein all the Facility and Difficulty of a Religious Life consists; and whereon all the Content or Uneasiness of those who have embrac'd this State, Depends. If you are resolv'd to quit your own Will, to take upon you that of your Superior; you will find all things easie and pleasant in Religion; and you will Live in Peace and Content of Mind: But if you retain any Will contrary to that of your Superior; you will never go on in that State, without Difficulty and Vexation: Two opposite Wills in the same Person, are things incompatible.

† Qui propriam non habet voluntatem, suam ipsius semper agit voluntatem.

Et sic nolentes propriam exple voluntatem, invenimus illam semper explevisse.

† Nemo potest duobus Dominis servire.
Matth. 6. 24.

patible. And we our selves, altho we have only one Will, nevertheless, because we have a Sensual Appetite, which always opposes this our Will and our Reason; what pain and difficulty do's it cost us in subduing it, altho it be so much Inferior and Subordinate to the Will? How then is it possible to Reconcile in Religion two contrary Wills, whereof each stand up and pretend for Superiority? † *No one can serve two Masters.* The Difficulty we find in a Religious Life, proceeds not so much from Exterior Mortifications, as from the Perversity and Repugnance of our Will; and from the Fault of our Imagination, which renders things painful and difficult, from the manner whereby it conceives 'em. We see this clearly in the difference we find in our selves, either when we are Molested with Temptations, or when we are free from 'em. When we are free we Experience all things easie and delightful: But if there rises a Temptation, and we perceive our selves seiz'd with Trouble and Melancholy; presently, what before seem'd so pleasing and grateful now becomes insupportable, and appears to us impossible to be Practis'd. The difficulty consists not in the thing it self, since 'tis ever the same it was heretofore; but it consists in the Evil Disposition of our Mind: So, when a Sick Person has an Aversion from wholesome and proper Meats; 'tis not his fault, but the fault of that Peccant and Vicious Humor, which makes all Food seem bitter, and of an ill Taste.

The most Signal and Eminent Favor God shews those who he call's to a Religious State, is, that he makes it a Pleasure to 'em to Follow the Will of Another. This is properly the Grace of a Vocation, whereby we Excell our Brethren that are in the World: For what is it that has given you this facility in vesting your self of your own Will to embrace that of Another? What has Created in you a new Heart, to Abjure the things of this World, that you might Love Retirement, Prayer, and Mortification? 'Tis not any Natural Inclination you have brought with you into this Life, Nature it self has given quite contrary Sentiments: * *For the Sense and Inclination of Man, are propense to Evil from his very Youth,* says the Wise Man. 'Tis a Gift which comes from God; and 'tis he, who, to the end you might be Disgusted with the things of this World, wherein you wou'd otherwise conceive such a sweetness, has render'd 'em bitter; and

* Sensus enim, & cogitatio humani cordis in malum prona sunt ad adolescentia sua.
Genes. 8. 21.

and that he might give us a liking to the things of Heaven, which before seem'd so ungrateful to our Palate, has season'd 'em with all sweetness and delight: † *I give you infinite thanks, my Lord God, sayd Saint Agatha, that you have Protected me from my Infancy, and have Rooted out of my Heart all Worldly Affections.* For 'tis not we that confer any great Obligation on God, by our Entrance into Religion; but 'tis he has conferr'd upon us the singular Grace and Favor in Calling us to this State, there to be Nourish'd with the Bread of Heaven; whilst Persons of the World Feed upon the Garlick and Onions of *Egypt*.

† Domine, qui me custodisti ab infantia, qui abstinisti a me a morem seculi. Sancta Agatha.

I have several times consider'd with my self, how those who Live in the World, ~~from~~ the highest to the lowest, Renounce their proper Will's, and Subject themselves to that of Another; and this for a small Interest of Honor or their own Profit. They Regulate their Eating and their Sleeping, to the Appetite and Sleep of others: And they are so brought to this, they are so Conform'd to Another's Will, as to take a Pleasure in this sort of Life, and to have gain'd a Custom which makes it more easie and acceptable. * *And nevertheless, they do this only to obtain a Temporal Reward; when on the contrary, we Hope for an Eternal and Permanent one.* What wonder then is it, that we take a pleasure and delight, in a sort of Life so Regulated as this of Religion, and that we make our Will that of the Superior, which is better than ours can possibly be; when Persons of the World Conform themselves so intirely to the Irregular Practises of others; and make it their Happines to Comply with them, by changing Day into Night, and Night into Day? What wonder is it, that we Act purely for the Love of God, and to purchase Eternal Life, when they do the same for a Poor consideration of Glory and Profit? Wherefore let's for the future, make a firm Resolution with our selves to change our Will into that of our Superiors; and so we shall always perform our own: We shall Live in Religion to our Perfect Satisfaction; and all our Joy and Content, shall turn to our Spiritual profit, and be in it self pure and Perfect.

* Et illi quidem ut corruptibiles coram accipiant, nos autem incorruptam. 1 Cor. 9. 25.

But let us return to what we sayd before, and apply it all to what we have in Hand. Let us always make the Will of God ours, and conform our selves in all things

to

to him by neither Accepting or Refusing, but what we know he would Accept or Refuse: And by this means we shall come always to follow our own Will, and Live in a perfect Peace and Tranquillity of Mind. 'Tis certain if you never desire any thing but what God desires, you will always attain the height and aim of your desires: Because God's Holy Will can never fail of being intirely perform'd; Seneca himself was sufficiently convinc'd of this Truth; by the very Light of Natural Reason: *What is our main Point,* says he, *is to be able to support Adversities and Crosses, with Joy and Cheerfulness;* and to receive what ever occurs, as tho we desir'd it shou'd happen: For we have oblig'd our Will to a Consent, if we are perswaded nothing can fall out but by the Divine Providences Ordination. How happy shou'd we be, cou'd we but so make our Will, the Will of God; and never cover any thing, but what he Pleases? And how happy might we Judge our selves, not only in that our Will is thus effected, but chiefly because, we see the Will of God which we Love, is effected in us, and all other things also? For tho we make use of the first Consideration; nevertheless 'tis the second upon which we ought chiefly to insist; and 'tis only in the Satisfaction of God alone, and in the only Execution of his Holy Will, wherein we ought to Ground and Establish all our Joy and Satisfaction. † *Whatever it has pleas'd our Lord, he has done in Heaven and on Earth; in the Sea, and the Abysses of the Deep:* And Will do, whatever it shall please him. * *For, O Lord, you can Perform what you Please?* † *All things are Subjected to your Power; and there's no one can Resist your Holy Will.*

Senec. in pref.
lib. 3. natur.
quest.

† Omnia
quæcumque
voluit, fecit
Dominus in
caelo, in terra,
in mari, &
in omnibus
abyssis.

Psal. 134. 6.
* Subest e-
nim tibi, cum
voveris posse.
Sep. 11. 18.

† In ditione
enim tua can-
ta sunt posita,
& non est qui
possit tui re-
sistere volun-
tati.

Escher. 33. 9.

CHAP.

C H A P. VII.

*Of some other Advantages we receive in this our
Conformity with the Will of God.*

ANother advantage in this Exercise we speak of, is, that this Conformity and this absolute Resignation to the Divine Will, is one of the best dispositions we can possibly have of our side, to oblige Almighty God to confer upon us his Graces and Favors, and enrich us with his Blessings. So when he had a Mind, that Saint *Paul*, of a Persecutor of Christians, thou'd become a Preacher of his Gospel, and an Apostle of the *Gentils*, he prepar'd him by the like disposition. He struck him on a sudden with a lively Light, which dazzling his Eyes and casting him off his Horse upon the Ground; open'd at the same time the Eyes of his Soul, and made him Cry out; * *Lord what would you have me do?* Behold me as a piece of Clay in your Hands, ready to receive whatever Impression you shall give me. It was by this means that he began to Merit so Highly, as to be Chosen of our Lord, and made, † *A Vessel of Election, to bear the Name of God before Nations, before Kings, and before the Children of Israel.* 'Tis reported of Saint *Gertrude*, that our Lord Appearing to her, told her, that those who desir'd he thou'd freely reside and live in their Hearts, ought first to put into his Hands the Key of their own Will, without ever pretending to demand it back. 'Tis according to this Holy Sentiment, that Saint *Ignatius* puts an absolute Resignation as a chief disposition, to receive all sorts of Graces from God; and expressly orders we shou'd begin our Spiritual Exercise after this manner. Since the Foundation he Establishes, for their right Performance, is to have so great an indifference for things of this World, and to be so intirely disingag'd; that not desiring either one thing or another, we limit all our Inclinations

* Domine,
quid me vis
facere?
Act. 9. 6.

† Vas electi-
onis est mihi
iste, ut por-
tet nomen
meum coram
gentibus, &
Regibus, &
filii Israel.
Act. 9. 15.
Refert Blos. c.
11. mon. Piris.

Lib. Exercit.
Piris.

Inclinations to the effecting God's Holy Will in us. He says also, in the Rules he prescrib's those who give the Spiritual Exercises, and in the Rules of those who perform 'em, that it conduces extreamly to the help of the latter, to place themselves in the Hands of Divine Providence, which might dispose of 'em, and what belongs to 'em, as it shall please and judge expedient. The reason moreover, why this Resignation draws down upon us so many Graces and Favors from God, is, that on the one side it destroys in us all whatever may put any obstacle to Grace; and on the other, the more assurance and confidence we place in God, by committing our selves wholly to his Conduct, and refraining from Willing any other thing but what he Will's, the more we oblige him to take us to his Protection, and confer upon us new Helps and Benefits.

This Conformity to the Will of God, is always a very efficacious means for the attaining all other Vertues; because the things appertaining to Grace, following for the most part those which are of Nature, the Habit of Vertue, as all other Habits cannot be acquir'd but by a frequent and assiduous Practise. And whilst you Exercise your self in this total Conformity with the Divine Will, you Exercise your self at the same time in all other Vertues: Because occasions occur every Moment of practising sometimes Humility, sometimes Obedience, at other times Poverty, Patience, and so of the rest: So that the more you practise this Resignation, and the more Perfect you are therein, the greater also will be the increase of all other Vertues. * *Tie your self to God*, says the Wise Man; or as another Version has it, *Bind your self to God, as it were with Glue, that you may still Increase even to the End of your Life*. The Masters of a Spiritual Life advise us, to cast our Eyes upon some eminent Vertue, which includes in it all the rest: Constantly to insist upon it in all our Prayers and Meditations, and to direct all our Spiritual Duties to the purchase of it. This Counsel is doubtless, the most profitable, and the most advantageous that can be given; In as much as by applying our whole endeavours to the attaining this one thing, we shall compass our End with more facility; and 'tis enough, if we possess but one of this Nature, to possess the rest. But amongst those, we can choose for this effect; one of the chief is

* Conjun-
ge Deo, &
sustine, ut
crescat in no-
vissimo vita
tua.
Ecclesi. 23.
Congluti-
nare Dno.

an intire Resignation and Conformity to the Will of God: So that whatever time we spend in obtaining this, altho 'twere the whole space of our Life, wherein we imploy'd all our Examin's, and all our Prayers, it wou'd be spent to our great Profit; since the obtaining this one Vertue alone, wou'd put us in Possession of all others whatever.

Saint Bernard explicating these Words of the Apostle, † *Lord, what is it, you wou'd have me do?* Cry's our, * *O short Prayer, but full of Sense, Efficacious, and Worthy of all Esteem and Recompence!* If you desire an easie and compendious way of arriving to Perfection, here you have it. Say Daily with the Apostle, *Lord, what wou'd you have me do?* And with the Psalmist: † *My Heart is Dispos'd, O God, my Heart is Dispos'd, to whatever you please to Ordain.* Have always these Words in your Mouth, have 'em in your Heart; and according as you Strengthen your self in these Holy Sentiments, so will you increase in the Perfection you aim at.

There's yet another advantage and profit in this Exercise; which is, that we may find here a Remedy against a certain Temptation, which molests us but too frequently, and which consists in Thoughts and Questions, we propose to our selves under a Condition; with which the Devil uses to Assault us, thereby to disturb and discompose our Peace of Mind: As for Example, suppose one shou'd speak so and so to us: What Answer shou'd we make? If such a thing shou'd happen, what wou'd we do? How wou'd we comport our selves in such or such a Circumstance? Being he is Malicious and Wicked in himself, he represents all this to us after this manner, that to what side soever we betake our selves, we find still we are put to Straits; so as not to be in a means of freeing our Thoughts, by reason of the Difficulties and Snares wherewith we are beset. For he troubles not himself if what he makes use of to Intrap us, be a real Difficulty or a meer Illusion; and so that he can but gain his Point, which is to force from us some Consent to what is Evil, for the rest the care is taken, as to what means he uses, whereby to Induce us. The ordinary Opinion in these occasions, and during these Temptations, is, that we are not oblig'd to return or frame an Answer, either yes, or no. And that 'tis even better not to Answer at all, especially if we are of a Scrupulous Disposition: Because, when we find our selves of

Tom. I.

Q q q

such

† Domine, quid me vis facere?

Act. 9. 6.

* O verbum breve, sed plenum, sed efficax, sed dignum omni acceptione.

Bern. serm. 1. de convers. S. Pauli.

† Paratum cor meum Deus, paratum cor meum.

Psal. 56. 8. & Psal. 107. 1.

such a Disposition, we enter into Discourse with the Devil, and permit our selves to hear his Arguments, and make our Reply's; which is, what he chiefly desires: He will never want Reasons; and we can never come so well off, in such an Encounter without at least a Broken Head. But in my Opinion, there is one Answer which may serve for all these sorts of Temptations, and that so Just and so inculpably Vertuous, that I think 'tis better to make use of it, than say nothing at all: Which is to Answer Blindly, and without Consideration of what was Propos'd to all the Devils Propositions. If what you Motion to me be the Divine Will, I am Content: If it please God, it also pleases me; I have no Will of my own, but what is his; I remit my self intirely to his; I wou'd endeavour to comply with what is my Duty; I hope God will afford me that Grace, that's sufficient and necessary to keep me from Offending him, and to do that which may be most acceptable to him. These General Answers are abundantly sufficient; and cause no trouble of Mind, or Inconveniency: For whatever God Will's, must of necessity be good; and if he Will's any thing, it must assuredly be that which is most for our good. In fine, we may with all safety commit our selves intirely to his Holy Will; and by this means the Devil will receive nothing but the Confusion and Shame of having once Attack'd us: And besides the Satisfaction we shall perceive in having overcome him, we shall moreover gain Strength and new Courage to Subdue him for the future. As in Temptations which Assault us in Matters of Faith, 'tis the common Advice, especially to Persons who are Scrupulous, not to Answer any thing in Particular, and to stick to the General Terms of the Church, in saying, I Believe all the Church Believes; so in these Temptations we now speak of, the best way is, not to enter upon any one thing, but always to have recourse to the Divine Will, which is Sovereignly Good and Sovereignly Perfect.

CHAP. VIII.

Wherein 'tis Evidenc'd by several Examples how Perfect and Acceptable this Exercise of Conformity is with God.

Cesarinus Recounts that in a certain Monastery there was a Religious Person, upon whom God had so abundantly conferr'd the Gift of Miracles, that he Cur'd the Sick by the very touch of his Habit or Girdle. The Abbot of the Monastery taking notice of it, and not discerning any Particular Mark of Sanctity in the Religious, took him upon a time aside, and forc'd him to discover whence it came, that God Work'd so many Miracles by his Means. I cannot conceive the Reason, Answer'd the Religious Man, for I do not Fast more than others; I Practise no more Austerities and Penances, then others; I neither Work nor Watch, nor do I bestow more time in Prayer and Meditation then others do. All in reality I can say of myself is, that I am neither Puffed up with Prosperity, nor Dejected with Adversity; so that whatsoever happens, I am never Discompos'd, or Troubl'd in Mind; and in all the Misfortunes which are annex'd to this Life, whether they fall upon me in Particular, or my Brethren in General, I always notwithstanding retain that equal Temper and Peace of Mind, as before. But were you not somewhat concern'd, reply'd the Abbot, when the Enemies put Fire to our Farm, and Burnt it Down? Not in the least, sayd the Religious; I was not at all troubl'd thereat; because I have long since Resign'd all things into the Hands of God: And so, let whatever happen, whether good or bad, great or small, I receive 'em, with the same rendering of thanks, and as coming from the Hand of the Almighty. At this, the Abbot clearly understood that doubtless this Resignation had caus'd so many Miracles, which God wrought by this Holy Man.

I ib. 1. Dial. cap. 6.

In appendice
ad institut. spi-
ritual. cap. 1.

Blossus Relat's of a certain Poor Man, who Living in great Sanctity of Life, was ask'd by a grave Divine, how and by what means he had arriv'd to so great Perfection? In making a firm Resolution, Answer'd the Poor Man, never to Tie my self but only to the Will of God; to which I have so Conform'd my own Will; that whatever he Will's, I Will the same. When I am Pinch'd with Hunger, or Nipt with Cold, I Praise God: And whether it be Foul or Fair, Sun-shine or Stormy, what Weather soever it be, I always Bless God for it. Whether he sends me of himself some Welcome or Unfortunate Accident, or Permits it to happen, I Receive all from his Hand with Joy; since nothing can come from him, but Good; and I Resign my self with a Profound Humility into the Arm's of his Fatherly Care and Providence. All that is not God, can never give me Content; and as soon as I find God, I Rejoyce in continual Comfort and Tranquillity.

Id. ubi sup.
cap. 10.
mon. spirit.

The same *Blossus* makes mention of a Holy Virgin; who being demand'd how she arriv'd to so high a Pitch of Perfection; she Answer'd, by Conforming my self in all things to the Will of God, and Receiving all things as sent me by him: In endeavouring always to render Good for Evil, and never complaining to any one of my Sufferings, when I receive any Injury from others; but still having recourse to God alone, of whom I receive new Vigor and Comfort. The same Author affirms also, the like Question propos'd to another Holy Virgin, who reply'd with great Humility; that she never yet had Suffer'd so much, but that she could have Wish'd to Suffer more for the Love of God; and that she receiv'd all the Afflictions sent her by God, as a most singular Favor, of which she Judg'd her self wholly Unworthy.

Taut. ferm. 1.
de Circumcis.

Taulerus Recounts of several Persons, who came from divers Parts to recommend the good success of their Affairs, to a Holy Virgin who liv'd in a Perfect Resignation to God's Will: She Promis'd 'em all to remember their Demands in her Prayers; but frequently forgot what she Promis'd. Nevertheless, all that was Recommended to her, succeeded Happily, and all attributed the Event to her Prayers; so that she receiv'd thanks and acknowledgments from all Parts, to which she Answer'd she had contributed nothing on her side, that they were to thank God only. Several People coming to thank her in this manner, she complain'd one Day

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Day to God most Tenderly, in that he had pleas'd to give success to all those undertakings recommended to her, of which thò she had not so much as thought of in her Prayers, yet she receiv'd all the thanks. My Daughter, Answer'd our Saviour, from the first moment you put your Will into my Hands, I put also mine into yours; so, as thò you ask'd me nothing in Particular, I never omitted to perform all things to your Intention, by the knowledge I have of what you desir'd.

There's mention made in the Lives of the Holy Fathers, of a Husband-man, whose Grounds brought forth more Fruit by much, than those of his Neighbors: Who asking of him the reason; he reply'd, do not be amaz'd that I gather a far greater Crop out of my Lands, than you out of yours; since I have all sorts of Seasons, all Weathers at my With: This Answer Surpriz'd 'em more than the former; and having urg'd him earnestly to declare to 'em the reason, 'tis, sayd he, for that I never With nor Seek for any other Weather than what God Pleases; and being I never desire any thing but what he Will's, he gives me an Income as good as I cou'd desire.

Severus Sulpicius in the Life of Saint *Martin*, relat's, that all the while he knew this Holy Bishop, he never saw him Transported with the least Passion of Anger, or Discontent; but on the contrary, his very Countenance carry'd an Air of Content and Satisfaction. The Cause of this, says he, is, that whatever happen'd to this Great Saint, he look'd upon as immediately sent him from God, and so Conform'd himself to the Divine Will, as to have an intire Abnegation, and Perfect Resignation of all he had.

C H A P.

CHAP. IX.

Of some other helps that will make this Practise of Conformity more facile, and easie to us.

TO the end this Exercise of Conforming our selves to the Will of God, may become more easie and pleasant to us, we must in the first place set continually before our Eyes, the Principle we Establish'd in the beginning of this Treatise; that nothing can fall out contrary to our expectation, which has not first of all pass'd throu' the Hands of God, and been Decreed and Determin'd by his Holy Will and Pleasure. JESUS CHRIST himself Teaches us this Truth, not only in his Words, but also by his Example. For when in the Night of his Passion, he Commanded Saint Peter to put up his Sword into the Scabbard, and added these Words, † *Will not you let me Drink the Chalice my Father has given me?* He says not, the Chalice prepar'd for me by Judas, or by the Scribes and Pharisees: Because he knew they only Executed the Will of his Eternal Father; and what they perpetrated throu' Hatred and Malice, was ordain'd him from all Eternity, by the Goodness and Wisdom of his Eternal Father, for the Redemption of Man. So, when Pilate sayd he had Power to Crucifie him, or Power to Deliver him; he Answer'd, * *You would not have any Power over me, if it were not given you from above.* Which is as much as to say, as the Saints Explicate it, if the Divine Providence had not Order'd it so. So that all things come from above, and is an effect of the Disposition and Ordination of God.

Saint Peter takes notice of this admirably well in the Acts of the Apostles, where explicating this Passage of the Psalmist: † *Why did the Gentil's Rage, and Peoples Meditate Vain things? The King's of the Earth stood up, and the Princes Assembl'd together against our Lord, and against*

† Calicem, quem dedit mihi Pater, non vis ut bibam? Joan. 18. 11.

* Non habet potestatem adversum me ullam, nisi tibi datum esset desuper. Joan. 19. 11. Christ. hom. 33. in Joan. Cyril. lib. 12. cap. 22. Iren. lib. 4. contra heres. cap. 34. August. Tract. 216. sup. Joan. † Quare fremuerunt gentes, & populi meditati sunt inania? Asterunt Re-

against his CHRIST: * We see, says he, clearly that Herod and Pontius Pilate Assembl'd together with the Gentils and and Israelit's in this City, against your Holy Son JESUS, upon whom you have pour'd forth your Holy Union, and that they were met together to Execute what your Eternal Power, and Providence has Decreed: The Princes and great Persons of the Earth, are Combin'd together against our Divine Saviour, to execute only what was resolv'd on in the Sacred Assembly of the most Blessed Trinity; for their Power was of no more Extent: And in effect we see that Herod's Power, and all the Stratagems he us'd to destroy him in his Infancy, were not capable of depriving him of his Life; since 'twas not the Will of God he shou'd Die. The Bloody Massacre made by this Tyrant of all the Children of those Parts, who were under the Age of Two Years, avail'd him but little: He cou'd never amongst 'em all find him whom he Sought; because our Saviours Hour prescrib'd by himself, was not then come. Wou'd not the Jews and Pharisees, have lay'd Hands several times upon him, and put him to Death? The People of Nazareth, once led him out of the Town to Precipitate him down a great Rock, upon which their City was Built? And the Holy Scripture says, † He pass'd throu' the midst of 'em, and Retir'd. He pass'd safely throu' the midst of 'em, because having not determin'd upon this sort of Death it was not in their Power to inflict it upon him. Another time those of Jerusalem wou'd have Ston'd him, and had even the Stones ready, and their Hands lifted up; but he, unconcern'd, only Answer'd 'em, * I have done you many Good Works, in the Name of my Father; and for which of all these is it, that you wou'd Stone me? And by this means he ty'd their Hands, and Permitted 'em not to Execute their Design; † Because his Hour was not as yet Come. But no sooner was it come, as he had before design'd it to himself, but they had all power and force to handle and treat him after the manner he had resolv'd to suffer; because 'twas his Holy Will, and he gave 'em Permission. * This is your Hour, sayd he to 'em, when they Assaulted him at first, and this the time of the Powers of Darkness. I was Daily with you in the Temple, and you seiz'd me not; because this Hour was not come: But now 'tis come, here you have me, do with me in whatever the Eternal Providence of my Father has Com-

mission'd

ges terræ, & Principes conveniunt in unum adversus Dominum, & adversus Christum ejus. Psal. 2. 1.

* Conveniunt enim verè in civitate ista adversus sanctum puerum tuum Jesum, quem unxit Herodes & Pontius Pilatus cum Gentibus & populo Israel facere, quæ manus tua, & consilium tuum decreverunt fieri. Act. 4. 27.

28.

† Ipse autem transiens, per medium illorum ibat. Luc. 4. 30.

* Multa bona opera ostendi vobis ex Patre meo, propter quod eorum opus me lapidatis? Joan. 10. 32. † Quia nondum venerat hora ejus. Joan. 7. 30.

* Hæc est hora vestra, & potestas tenebrarum. Luc. 22. 53.

mission'd you. Did not *Saul* use the like endeavours, to take *David*? What Arts and Stratagems did he not Practise to get him into his Clutches? What Pains and Labors did not this Great and Potent King undergo, to Destroy one Particular Person, and † *Catch*, as *David* himself sayd, *one little Flea*? Notwithstanding he could never compass his Designs; and the reason the Holy Scripture gives, is, that * *Our Lord had not Deliver'd David into his Hands*. 'Tis for this reason that Saint *Cyprian* Writing upon these Words, † *And lead us not into Temptation*, says, that in all our Temptations and Adversities, we ought to turn all our Attention, and all our Apprehension and Fear to God; because neither the Devil nor any other thing whatsoever, can indamage or hurt us in the least, unless God gives Permission before hand.

But tho' this Verity being once well Imprinted in our Hearts, may effectively suffice to oblige us to an absolute Conformity with the Will of God; nevertheless we are not to content our selves with this single Consideration, but we must proceed farther, even to the knowledge of another Verity, which is deducted from the former, and which is very particularly inculcated to us by the Saints: Which is, that considering all things as sent us from the Hand of God, we are to consider the same time they are sent us for our Good. The Pains of the Damn'd in Hell, come from the Ordination of God; and yet they are not sent for their Good, but purely for their Punishment. But as to the Pains which either the Just or Sinners Suffer in this Life, we are always to Presume so far upon the Infinite Goodness and Mercy of God, as to assure our selves they happen for their greater Good, and they are positively such as are most proper, and most contributing to their Salvation. So that, when *Judith* Harangu'd the Citizens of *Bethulia*, Besieg'd by *Holofernes*, and reduc'd to an extremity, † *Let us be convinc'd*, sayd she, *that all this has happen'd for our Amendment, not for our Destruction*. In reality, the Intention of God is so Good, and his Love so Tender and Passionate, that we may safely confide, what he do's is for the best, and what he Orders is what is most expedient for us; as we shall Demonstrate more at large in this following Treatise.

'Tis not, for all this, sufficient that we know by a meer Speculative Knowledge, that all things come from the

Hand

† Ut quærat pulicem unum.
1 Reg. 26. 20.

* Non tradidit eum Dominus in manus ejus.
1 Reg. 23. 14.
Cyprian. serm. de orat. Dom. sup. hac verba.
† Et ne nos inducat in tentationem.
Matth. 6. 13.

Doroth. Doct.
19. Nil. de orat. cap. 9.

† Ad emendationem, & non ad perditionem nostram evenisse credamus.
Judith. 8. 27.

Hand of God; nor that we believe it in general Terms, because Faith Teaches us so, or because we have Read it, or heard it deliver'd in Sermons. But to draw more profit out of this Truth, and by this Means to arrive to a Perfect Conformity to the Divine Will; we must in the third place have a strong and lively belief, and apply this belief to whatever can happen to us, by so accepting it, as thò we beheld our Saviour JESUS CHRIST who spoke thus to us: Receive this my Son; 'tis I send it you; and 'tis I who wou'd have you do thus, or suffer this and that difficulty. So that in this manner, it will be extream easie and pleasant to Conform our selves in all things to the Divine Will: For if JESUS CHRIST himself shou'd appear to you, and say; consider, my Son; 'tis I, who desire this of you; 'tis I, wou'd have you undergo this Affliction, or this Sickness for the Love of me: That 'tis I who wou'd have you Serve me in such a Function, or such a Charge and Employ. And althò what he demanded were the most painful and difficult task imaginable; wou'd you not, I do not say only Submit your self most willingly to Execute it for your whole Life, but even look upon your self happy, that God wou'd please to accept of your Service? Wou'd you not in this case easily persuade your self whatsoever he appointed you, to be for the best and greatest advantage of your Salvation, and not so much as question or suffer the least thought to the contrary?

We must in the last place endeavour in our Prayers to reduce by frequent Acts, this Exercise into Practise; and never cease searching this Rich Vein of God's Fatherly Providence over us, till we have found the inestimable Treasure of a Perfect Conformity with his Holy Will.

C H A P. X.

Of God's Fatherly and Special Providence over us: And the Filial Confidence we are to have in him.

ONE of the greatest benefits, those who are Illustrated with the true Faith receive, is a Confidence in the Providence of God, and an assurance they have that nothing can befall 'em, which is not an effect of his unalterable Decree, and a Present bestow'd by his own Hand. Wherefore the Royal Prophet sayd: † *Lord you have Guarded us with your Holy Will, as it were with a Buckler.* And 'tis certain, we are so surrounded and protected on all sides with the Love God bears us, that nothing can approach or molest us, which has not first pass'd this Guard: So that there's nothing can put us in fear, since 'tis clear, he lets nothing pass but what contributes in a special manner to our greater good and profit. * *He has hid me under his Tabernacle in the Day of Afflictions,* says the same Prophet, *and has afforded me a Sanctuary, in the inmost retreat of his Tabernacle.* He do's more yet; he hides us under his Wings: And as tho' this were not enough still, † *You shall Conceal 'em,* says this great King, *in the most Secret Place of your Face.* And as another Version has it, *In the very Eyes of your Face:* And the care he yet has of us makes him go so far, as to hide us in the very Apples of his Eyes: Which agrees very well with what is sayd in another place, of the same Prophet; where he desires of God, * *To Protect him as the Apple of his Eye;* and with what our Lord himself says in the Prophet Zachary; where he assures us, † *He who Touches us, Touches the Apple of his Eye.* Can any one conceive a thing more precious, and of greater value, than so singular and tender a Protection?

What

† Domine, ut scuto bonæ voluntatis tuæ coronasti nos.
Psal. 1. 13.

* Quoniam abscondit me in tabernaculo suo, in die malorum protexit me in abscondito tabernaculi sui.
Psal. 26. 9.

† Abscondes eos in abscondito faciei tuæ.
Psal. 30. 27.
In oculis faciei tuæ.

* Custodi me ut pupillam oculi.
Psal. 16. 8.
† Qui tetigerit vos, tangit pupillam oculi mei.
Mat. 2. 8.

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What a singular comfort shou'd we receive in all our Adversities, and what a strong confidence and ease in the midst of our greatest Afflictions, and pressing Calamities shou'd we have, were we but throu'ly convinc'd of this Truth. If a Son saw his Father invested with great Titles, abounding in Wealth, and one of the chief Favorites of his King; what assurance wou'd he not have, that all the Credit and Power of his Father wou'd never be wanting to him in his most Important Affairs. With how much greater reason then ought We to have this assurance, when we consider we have him for our Father, who is Absolute Lord of Heaven and Earth; and that nothing can happen to us, without his Order and Permission? And with how much more reason ought we to have a thorow Confidence in the special Providence of him, who is by a thousand degrees more our Father, then all Carnal Fathers, who in comparison of him deserve not the very Name of Fathers? For there's no tenderness nor affection can come nigh that of God towards us. It infinitely exceeds all that which Nature Imprint's in the Hearts of Fathers: So that we rest satisfi'd; that whatever such a Father ordains, he ordains it us for our greater advancement and greater good. The Love he bears us in his only Son, will never permit him to be backwards in procuring the good of those, for whose sake, he gave up this Son of his to the Sufferings and Ignominy of the Cross. * *He who has not spar'd his own Son, but has Deliver'd him over for us all; has he not also given us all things, in giving us him?* And he who has so freely given us all whatever he had most precious and dear, will he not also give us whatever else we stand in need of? If then, all the World ought to have this Confidence in God; how much more ought Religious, whom he has been pleas'd to Adopt after so particular a manner; whom he has Inspir'd with those real Sentiments, which a Son shou'd have for his Father, and who has made 'em forsake and renounce their Carnal Fathers, to assume him for their only and real one? What affection, what tenderness of a Father, ought they not to assure themselves, he bears 'em? And what care and sollicitude, ought they not to imagine, he will have of 'em? † *My Father and Mother have forsaken me; but our Lord has receiv'd me. What a happy exchange have you made? And what a good*

R r r 1

Father

* Qui etiam:
proprio Filio
non pepercit,
sed pro nobis
omnibus tradi-
dit illam, quo-
modo non
etiam cum illo
omnia nobis
donavit?
Ad Rom. 8. 32.

† Pater meus,
& Mater mea
dereliquerunt
me, Dominus
autem assump-
sit me.
Psal. 26. 16.

* Dominus
regit me, &
nihil mihi
deerit.
Isai. 12. 1.
† Ego autem
mendicus sum,
& pauper:
Dominus sol-
licitus est mei.
Isai. 39. 23.

Father have you made choice of, in place of him who has cast you off? From henceforward you may say with more reason and confidence than others. * *Our Lord Rules me, and I shall want for nothing.* † *It is true, I am Poor and Destitute of all things; but our Lord is Solicitous and careful of me.* Who is there, that may not comfort himself, and who is there that finds not in his Heart, a strange Inclination of Affection for God; when he reflects that 'tis God himself who has care of him, and protects him with so much goodness and vigilancy, as thò in the whole extent of his Eternal Providence, he had not any other Creature to Conserve? What Motives shou'd we not find of Loving God, and giving up our whole selves to him, if we only consider'd as we ought, his Paternal Providence, and the tender Affection he has for us?

Hence arises that Filial Confidence which the true Servants of God have in him; and this is so great in some, that there's not a Child has a greater in the Protection of his own Father. Since they know God has more than the Bowels of a Father towards 'em; and not only more than of a Father, but even more than of a Mother; and even more tender a thousand times, than those of the most tender Mother ever yet Living. 'Tis he himself who assures us of this, speaking to his People by the Prophet *Isay*: * *Can a Mother, says he, so far forget her own Child, as not to have any Pity or Commiseration on Him, she bore in her Womb? Yet thò she forget him, yet will I never forget you: I bear you, O Sion, Engrav'n in my Hands, and your Walls always in my Sight.* As thò he shou'd say, I carry you in my Hands, and have my Eyes continually fix'd upon you, for your Safety and Defence. He explain's this in another place, by the same Prophet, using another comparison full of tenderness: † *Hearken, says he, Children of Israël, whom I have bore from my very Womb.* As thò he wou'd let us understand thereby, that as the Entrails of a Mother serve for a place of Habitation, and of Nourishment, and of whatever else to the Infant she bears; so the Entrails of the Divine Mercy and Goodness, supply the place of all things, and furnish us in all our occasions. For this reason 'tis, the Just in all their reckonings, conceive so firm an assurance of his Assistance; that

* Numquid
oblivisci po-
tuit mulier in-
fantem suum,
ut non mise-
reatur filio u-
teri sui? Et si
illa oblita fue-
rit, ego tamen
non obliviscar
tui: Ecce in
manibus meis
descripti te,
muri tui co-
ram oculis
meis semper.
Isai. 49. 15.

Qui portamina
a meo utero.
Isai. 46. 3.

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that nothing of all those Afflictions which can possibly happen to 'em in this Life, is able to discompose or molest 'em. He who puts his Confidence in our Lord, says *Jeremy*, is as a Tree Planted by the River side. * *He shall want for nothing in time of Barrenness and Drought*: that is to say, that nothing shall touch his Heart, and he shall not be dejected or troubl'd at whatever variety or change of this Life; because he is certain nothing can fall out but by the Will and Appointment of his Father; in whose tenderness and affection he so much confides, as to be persuaded nothing can happen, but for his greater good; and whatsoever he takes from him on one side, he will on the other repay with Usury.

From this Filial Confidence the Just place in God, there proceeds that Peace of Mind, and that happy Tranquillity signifi'd in the words of *Isay*: † *My People shall Repose in the beauty of Peace, and in the Tabernacles of Confidence, and in the peaceable Abundance of all sorts of Goods*. The Prophet joyns Peace and Confidence together: Because in reality Peace of Mind is but a necessary effect of Confidence; and he who confides in God, fears nothing, nor troubles himself at whatever occur's, since he knows God is his Protector. * *I will Repose and Sleep in Peace*, says the Psalmist, because 'tis you, O Lord, who out of your singular goodness have confirm'd me in my Hope. But the Confidence we speak of afford's us not only Tranquillity; it replenishes us also with the Joy of the Faithful: † *The God of all Hope*, says the Apostle, *fill you with all sort of Joy, and Bless you with his Peace in your Belief; to the end you may still increase in Hope, and in the Vertue of the Holy Ghost*. The firm Belief we have, that God know's what's better for our good, than we our selves, is the reason, that we are not only exempt from all those troubles, and all those anxieties which are consistent to such as Contemplate things with the Eyes of Flesh and Blood; but that even in the most unexpected accidents, we enjoy an intire content and satisfaction. And the more perfect this Confidence is; the greater also will be the joy and tranquillity: Because the more we Love God, and confide in him; the more assur'd shall we be that all which comes from him, will turn to our profit and advantage; it being impossible we can persuade our selves

* Et in tempore siccitatis non erit sollicitum.
Jerem. 17. 8.

† Sedit populus meus in pulchritudine pacis, & in tabernaculis fiducia, & in requie opulenta.
Isa. 32. 18.

* In pace in idipsum dormiam & requiescam, quoniam tu Domine singulariter iussisti me.
Psal. 4. 9. & 10.

† Deus autem spei repleat vos omni gaudio, & pace in credendo, ut abundetis in spe, & virtute Spiritus Sancti.
Ad Rom. 15. 13

selfes any thing else from that goodness and tenderness of affection he always has for us.

'Tis this which animated the Saints; this, which gave 'em such Interior Peace, and Confidence in their Sufferings and Encounters, that they fear'd neither Men nor Devils, neither Savage Beasts nor any thing else which cou'd happen to 'em from Creatures; because they were satisf'd, that without the Permission of God, there was no Power to hurt or indamage 'em. Saint *Arhanasius* in the Life of Saint *Anthony*, recounts, how the Devils appear'd to this Great Saint under the several figures of Lions, Tygres, Bull's and Serpents; surrounding him on all sides, and endeavouring to terrifie him; some with their Teeth and Talons; others with their dreadful bellowings and hisings. The Saint all this time Laugh'd at 'em, and sayd: If you have any Power, one of you all wou'd be strong enough to Encounter a Man; but because God has robb'd you of your force, and you are but weak and feeble, you come thus in a crowd to frighten me with your number: If God has given you any Power over me, here I am; Devour me: But if he has not given you Permission, why do you make so many vain attempts upon me? The knowledge this Great Saint had, that these cou'd not of themselves do him any injury; and his intire Resignation to the Will of God, was that which gave him this Constancy and Courage of Mind. The *Ecclesiastical History*, abounds with passages of this Nature: And the Life of Saint *Ignatius* furnishes us with the like Examples: But not to repeat the same thing twice, I will content my self in relating, what is found in the second Book of his Life. One Day whilst he Sail'd towards *Rome*, there arose so Violent a Tempest, that the Mast being broke by the rage of the Winds, and all the Tacklings and Cables of the Vessel rent; those who were Aboard being in a Consternation, imagining their last Hour was come, expected nothing but Death. In this Extremity of Danger and Horror, which the approach of Death causes in all Persons, the Saint was not seiz'd with the least apprehension or fear: The only trouble he had, was, that he had not serv'd God so as he ought to have done; But as to any thing else he was not concern'd, knowing, that * *The Winds and Seas Obey'd our Lord*: That the Tempests arose not but by his Command, and the

Greg. refert h.
mille annis.
lib. 3. dial.
cap. 16.

L. 16. 5. v. 10
Matth. 8. 16.

* Quia venti
& mare obe-
diunt ei.
Matth. 8. 27.

the Waves Swallow'd not any one but by his Permission. This is that Confidence, this that Tranquillity and Composition of Mind we ought to aspire to; in constantly producing Acts of Conformity and Resignation to the Divine Will, and searching by the means of Prayer and Meditation, into the All-Fatherly Providence of God over us. I am certain nothing can happen to me without his Orders; and that neither Men, nor Devils, nor any other Creature whatever, can effect any thing contrary to his Holy Pleasure. Let then his Orders be Executed upon me: I must refuse nothing he sends, and I desire nothing but the accomplishing his Holy Will.

We Read in the Life of Saint *Gertrude*, that neither dangers, nor crosses, neither loss of her Goods nor even her own Sins and faults, were ever able to diminish that firm Confidence and Trust, she had in the Mercy of God: Insomuch, that she was strongly persuaded, whatever fell out either according or contrary to her desire, was equally design'd for her greater good, by the disposition of Providence. As this Holy Virgin had frequent Revelations, God appear'd upon a time to her, and told her: Whosoever has a firm Confidence in me, and believes I can and will assist him in all things, pierces my Heart after such a fashion, that I cannot in some manner determine with my self, either to bestow my comforts upon him, by reason of the satisfaction I take in seeing in him this absolute Conformity, which augments his Merit; or, be wanting to his assistance, to satisfy the Obligations of my Infinite Bounty, and the extream affection and tenderness I have for him. He uses our manner of speaking; and expresses himself as a Person, whose excess of Love transported him so far, as not to determine what is to be done.

Plaf. c. 1. 1. men. Spiritual.

'Tis related also of Saint *Mechtildis*, that God thus sayd to her: I am very well pleas'd, that Men rely upon, and trust in my Mercy; and whoever has an humble and firm confidence in me, I will favor him in this Life, and will reward him in the next, with more then he Merits. The more they confide in me, the more Graces shall they receive from me: For 'tis impossible they should not obtain of me all they hope for, by relying on the Fidelity of my Promises. Wherefore 'tis very expedient for those who expect great things from me, to confide intirely

Id. ubi supra.

intirely in me. Another time this Saint asking of God what she ought chiefly to Believe, and what to Expect from his unspeakable Goodness. Believe, sayd he to her, that after your Death, I will receive you as a Father receives his dearest Child; and that there yet never was any Father who has so Liberally imparted all his Goods to his only Son, as I will impart to you the inexhaustible Treasures of my Grace, in bestowing my self upon you. Whosoever has this Confidence in my Infinite Goodness, and Resign's himself into my Hands with the Spirit of Charity and Humility, shall be Eternally Happy.

CHAP. XI.

*Some Examples drawn out of Holy Scripture,
to help us in attaining this Perfect Con-
fidence in God.*

IT conduces much to our advantage, if in the first place, we cast our Eyes upon the Custom that all the Ancient Patriarchs had, of always ascribing to God whatever accidents occur'd, in what Nature and by what Means soever they fell out. The Son's of Jacob having gone to buy Corn in Egypt, Joseph their Brother who Rul'd under Pharaoh, as yet unknown to 'em order'd their Sacks to be fill'd, and the price they pay'd to be secretly convey'd therein. In their return, one of 'em going to refresh his Beast in the Inn, found his Mony in the mouth of the Sack, and having shew'd it his Brothers, they were all seiz'd with a fright, and sayd; *† What is this, the Lord has done us?* Where we must take notice, they did not say; is not this a Stratagem layd to intrap us? Has not the Master of the Inn left this by a mistake here? And shall we look upon it as a Charity, he has done us? But they referr'd it all to God and sayd; *What is this, the Lord has done us?* Confessing at the same time, that as a Leaf falls not from the Tree.

*† Quidnam est
hoc quod fecit
nobis Deus?
Genes. 41. 23.*

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Tree without the Permission of God, this cou'd not happen without a most particular disposition of his Providence. When *Jacob* caus'd himself afterwards to be carry'd into *Egypt*, and fell Sick there, *Joseph* brought before him his two Son's; and the Holy Man asking him whose they were, he Answer'd, * *These are the Children, God has given me in this Country*: *Jacob* had made the same Answer before to his Brother *Esau*; and urging him to accept the Presents he offer'd him, sayd: † *Accept this Blessing I have brought you, and which God the Sovereign dispenser of all Good has bestow'd upon me*. He call's his Present a Blessing of God: Because in reality to Bless, and to do Good, are the same thing in God; and he refers all to God without ascribing any the least to himself. When *David* Incens'd against *Nabal* March'd with his Soldiers to Pillage and Sack the House, and *Abigail* met him with Presents to appease him; * *Blessed*, sayd he, *be the Lord God of Israël, who has sent you this Day to meet me, and hinder me from shedding Blood*. As tho' he wou'd have sayd, you are not come of your own accord, but 'tis God has sent you to hinder me from Sinning: 'Tis to him I owe this Favor, and his Name be Bless'd for ever. This was the ordinary Language of these great Patriarch's; and ought also to be our's.

But to Contemplate these Miracles of Providence more particularly, we are only to consider the abovemention'd History of *Joseph*. The Hatred and Envy the relating his Dreams, which presag'd his future greatness, had excited in the Hearts of his Brothers were the cause they resolv'd on his Death; but being dissuaded by the reasons and arguments of *Ruben*, they Sold him for a Slave to some *Ismaelire* Marchants: And the very means they took, to annul the effect of his Dreams, were those which Providence made use of to make him Lord over Them and all *Egypt*: So that when he discover'd himself to his Brothers, and they amaz'd and surpriz'd knew not what to reply: † *Fear not*, sayd he, *do not Trouble and Afflict your selves, for having Sold me into this Country: For 'tis for your good, that God has sent me before you into Egypt. He has sent me here, for your Conservation on Earth, and that you might have Sustenance whereby to Live*. * *This has not happen'd by your Counsels, but by the only Will of God, that I am sent here*. † *Can we*, says he in another

Tom. I.

Scf

place,

* Fili mei sunt quos donavit mihi Deus in hoc loco.
Genes. 48. 9.
† Suicipe benedictionem quam attuli tibi, & quam dedit mihi Deus, tribuens omnia.
Genes. 33. 11.

* Benedictus Dominus Deus Israël, qui misit hodie te in occursum meum, ne irem ad sanguinem.
1 Reg. 25. 32.
† 33.

Genes. 37.

† Nolite pavere, nec vobis durum esse videatur quod vendidistis me in his regionibus: Pro salute enim vestra misit me Deus ante vos in Egyptum. Præmisitque me Deus ut reserventur mihi super terram, & eas ad vivendum habere possitis.
Genes. 45. 5.
* Non vestro consilio, sed Dei voluntate huc missus sum.
Genes. 45. 8.
† Num Dei

possumus resistere voluntati? Vos cogitatis de me malum: Sed Deus vertit illud in bonum, ut exaltaret me, sicut in præsentiarum cernitis, & salvos faceret multos populos.
Genes. 50. 19. 6. 20.

* Consilium meum stabit, & omnis voluntas mea fiet.
Isa. 45. 10.

Chrysost. hom. 63. sup. Genes. Genes. 40. 23.

place, resist the Will of God? You had a bad design against me, but God has turn'd it to the best, to raise me to this degree of Dignity wherein you now behold me; for the Preservation of many People. Who then is there, that considering this, will not have Confidence in God? Who will fear the Evil designs of Men, and Unfortunate accidents of this World? Since we see nothing happens without the Unchangeable Order of his Providence, which adjusts all things to their ends; and which turns to our Good and our Glory, those very means the World made use of to Persecute and Destroy us. * *What I have determin'd*, says our Lord to the Prophet *Isay*, *shall remain firm and immovable; and my Will shall be executed in all things.* Act you as you please; nevertheless the Will of God must be perform'd: And he will easily turn to his Designs, all what ever you do to Frustrate 'em.

Saint *Chrysostom* to this matter makes a reflection upon another particular passage of the same Story. The Interpretation *Joseph* gave the Dream of *Pharao's* Cup-bearer having had it's effect by the re-establishment of this Officer in his former Dignity; two Years past without any remembrance of *Joseph*, who had most earnestly desir'd he would be mindful of him. But do you think, says the Saint, this forgetfulness was only an effect of Chance, or any Ingratitude in the Cup-bearer? Not at all; it was an effect of the Divine Disposition, which would expect a more proper season and a more favorable conjuncture, to free *Joseph* out of Prison with more Splendor and Glory. For supposing the Cup-bearer had remembr'd him, he might perhaps have found means to get him out in some obscure manner, and without being known what he was. But because God would not have him come out in that manner, and had a design to deliver him at that time to his Honor, he permitted the Cup-bearer to forget him for two whole Years, till the time of *Pharao's* Dreams arriv'd; and that then the King should make him come forth gloriously out of Prison, to be Install'd afterwards in the Command of all *Egypt*. God, add's the great Saint, is a most prudent Artificer, who know's perfectly well how long time the Gold is to be in the Fire, and when it must be took out.

We have in the second Book of *King's* another History, where the Divine Providence is perspicuously relucient even in the most minute things. God having signify'd to *Samuel*, Him

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Him whom he had chosen to Reign over *Israel*; † To morrow, sayd he, at this very same Hour, I will send to you a Man of the Tribe of Benjamin; and you shall Consecrate him King over the People of *Israel*. But let's see in what manner he sent this Man, who was *Saul*: The Asses of *Cis*, *Saul's* Father, had stray'd from home; and *Cis* Commanded his Son to seek and bring 'em back. *Saul* takes a Servant with him: Who both seek every where, but to no purpose; and *Saul* about to return, left his Father shou'd be in pain for his absence, the Servant who accompany'd him, sayd: There was a Man of God in the next City, who cou'd inform him of what he sought. They go to find this Man, who was *Samuël*, and being arriv'd in his sight; * Behold, says our Lord, the Man I spoke to you of; 'tis he shall Rule over my People. O incomprehensible depth of the Judgments of God! *Cis* sends *Saul* to find the Asses that had broke out of their bounds, and God sends *Samuël* to Consecrate him King. How far was *Saul* and his Father from ever imagining he went to be Anointed King? It is the same with most part of the projects Parents design their Children: They are often far from the Ends God proposes himself; but notwithstanding he directs things so to the execution of his Orders, that even such things as seem to have the least relation to the effect in hand, serve to accomplish his Designs. For it was not by Chance that the Asses of *Cis* were lost; nor that *Cis* sent *Saul* to seek 'em; nor that they cou'd not be found; nor that the Servant who was with *Saul*, advis'd him to consult the Prophet. All this was decreed in this manner by Providence, which serv'd it self of these means to send *Saul* to *Samuël*, and make *Samuël* Anoint him King, as God had Order'd. Perhaps your Parents send you for no other end to a Colledge or University, but for your advancement in Learning, and that afterwards you might be able to fill up some Office, or possess some Benefice. But God sent you there with another intent; and made use of your Parents, to draw you to him and make you enter into Religion. When Saint *Austin* left *Rome* to go to *Millan*, where *Symmachus* the Governor sent him; both He and the Governor thought it was only to Teach Rhetorick: But they were both deceiv'd; God, who had other designs, sent him to *Millan*, there to be Converted by Saint *Ambrose*.

† Hac ipsa hora quæ nunc est, cras mittam virum ad te de terra Benjamin, & unges eum ducem super populum meum *Israel*.

1 Reg. 9. 16.

* Ecce vir quem dixeram tibi: Ipse dominabitur populo meo. *Ibid. vers. 17.*

SSf 2

Let

Let us consider a little the different sorts of Vocations, and their so many particular means, and even those sometimes so apparently remote; by which God has drawn an infinity of Persons to Religion. 'Tis a thing that will appear very surprizing; for we shall oftentimes see that unless something or other had happen'd, and had it not been for some Trifle, or some Affair of no Moment or Consideration, we shou'd never have been Religious: And these very things notwithstanding how small and inconsiderable soever they seem in themselves, were the Preparations and Instruments God had resolv'd on always, whereby to move you to enter Religion. Let us take notice of this in short: 'Tis a Reflection which may prove very advantagious to some Persons, who imagine with themselves their Vocation comes not from God, because it has been manag'd by things of this Nature. Which is nothing but a meer Deceit and dangerous Illusion of the Devil your Enemy; who envious of the State you are in, raises all these thoughts in you, the better to molest and disquiet your thoughts. For in as much as relates to God, 'tis his custom and way of proceeding to use these means to effect his own Ends: That is, for his own greater Glory, and our greater Good; and of this we have abundance of Examples in the Saints Lives. God's Intent then stop's not at what appears to you at that present, and he sends not you more then *Saul* to seek the Asses; † *For has God any care of the Oxen?* But his Pleasure is that by this indirect way you come to Reign with *Saul*: since, * *To serve God is to Reign.*

† Numquid de
bobus cura est
Deo?
1 Cor. 9. 9.
* Servire Deo,
regnare est.

When *Samuel* went in the Name of God to Reprimand *Saul* severely for his Disobedience, in not destroying the *Amalecites* as God had order'd him; *Saul* acknowledging his fault, and seeing the Prophet upon the point of departing, wou'd have retain'd him by laying hold of his Cloke, to desire him he wou'd Intercede to God for him; and in the strife a piece of *Samuel's* Cloke was rent, and remain'd in *Saul's* Hand. Who wou'd have thought but this might have happen'd by pure Accident; and that the Cloke was torn as being old and rotten, or that *Saul* had pull'd too hard? Notwithstanding it happen'd not but by a peculiar Ordination and Disposition of Providence; to signify that God had depriv'd *Saul* of his Kingdom, for this his Sin. Wherefore *Samuel* seeing his

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his Cloke rent, † *Understand by this, sayd he, that God has cut off and separated the Kingdom of Israël from you, and has Transferr'd it over to your Neighbor, who is a better Man than you are.*

† Scidit Dominus regnum Israël à te hodie, & tradidit illud proximo tuo meliori te.
1 Reg. 15. 28.
1 Reg. 23. 26.

In the same Book of King's 'tis related, that *Saul* had once surrounded *David* and his followers, as it were in a Circle; so that *David* quite despair'd of making his escape. Whilst he was in this Extremity, there came a Courier to *Saul*, who told him the *Philistian's* were enter'd with Fire and Sword into his Dominions, Pillaging and Destroying all in their way. *Saul* hereupon inforc'd to put a stop to what was of greater moment and concern, left off prosecuting his enterprize; and *David* by this means escap'd. The Irruption of the *Philistian's* was not Casual and by meer Chance; but the effecting those Measures God had taken, so to set *David* at Liberty.

Another time the Princes and Nobility of the *Philistian's* dealt so with their King *Achis*, that he commanded *David*, who had took Refuge some time before in his Court, and was then in the Army with him, to return to the place assign'd him for his Retirement. *Achis* indeed had a great esteem of *David's* Valour and Courage; and for that reason brought him along in the Expedition he undertook against *Saul*. * *But David did not please the Nobles.* The accusations then brought against him were not a pure effect of their Jealousie and ill Will, and had not only the end they propos'd themselves: It was an Ordination of the Divine Providence; which dispos'd things for other ends, than those of Men. For *David* at his return, found that the *Amalecites* taking advantage of the *Philistian's* absence, had pour'd themselves into the Country with Sword in Hand; and taking *Siceleg* the place of *David's* Retirement, had lead away Captive all the Inhabitants: † *From the least to the biggest.* And amongst the rest even two of his Wives, and then set Fire to the Town. He follow'd 'em with what Men he had, overtook and Defeated 'em, and deliver'd all the Prisoners, making himself Master of all the Spoils and Prey they had carry'd away. So that had not the Nobles and Courtiers of *Achis* forc'd him out of their Army; he had never been in a possibility of executing all those Achievements: And it was for this end the Divine Providence which had thus Decreed from all Eternity, directed their Counsel to the effecting

* Sed Satrapis non places.
1 Reg. 29. 6.

† A minimo usque ad magnū.
1 Reg. 30. 2.

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what it had before projected; altho they at the same time had another design of the Matter.

We see also throu'out the whole History of *Esther*, this particular Providence of God is very perspicuous and evident even in the most minute things. What means did not God use in delivering the *Jews* from the Cruel and Bloody Sentence of King *Assuerus*: And what strange and unheard of ways did he not take, to make *Vasthi* fall into Disgrace; and raise *Esther* to the Throne, in her place? To the end that being her self a *Jew*, she might undertake the Patronage, and plead the cause of her Nation. That *Mardocheus* shou'd come to discover the Conspiracy layd by two Eunuchs against the Kings Person? That sometime after the King not being able to Sleep in the Night, shou'd call for the Annals of his Reign; and causing 'em to be Read before him, shou'd wonderfully light upon the place wherein was Register'd the service *Mardocheus* had done him on this occasion: All this seem'd but a pure Accident; and nevertheless it happen'd not but by the special Order of Providence, which by a most hidden way, and a manner surpassing the Capacity of Man, dispos'd thus of all these different means of saving his People from the danger they were in. So when *Esther* declar'd to *Mardocheus*, she durst not venture to go to the King, without his sending for her: * *Who know's*, sayd *Mardocheus*, *but you were rais'd to the Throne, for the Help and Protection of your People in this Occasion.*

* Quis novit
utrum idcirco
ad regnum ve-
neris, ut in tali
tempore para-
zeris?
Esther. 4. 14.

S. Clement in
libro recogniti-
onum.

Ecclesiastical Histories are full of the like Examples, which teaches us to refer all to God, and receive all as sent us from his Hand, for our greater good and advantage: And Saint *Clement* recounts of himself to this purpose a very remarkable passage. He says, that having been Converted to the Faith by Saint *Barnaby*, at the time, that *Simon Magus* was most vigorously oppos'd by the Doctrine and Miracles of Saint *Peter*; he went to this Prince of the Apostles, gave him an account of his Conversion, and desir'd to be more amply Instructed by him, in matters of Faith. Saint *Peter* told him, he came very opportunely, since the Day following was the very time assign'd for a Publick Dispute between him and *Simon Magus*; and that then he might hear what he desir'd: It happen'd at that very moment, there came two

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of *Simon Magus's* Disciples, who told *Saint Peter* they were sent to him by their Master to acquaint him, there had some urgent business fell out, and that their Master desir'd, the Dispute might be put off for three Days. *Saint Peter* Answer'd, he was content; and when they were gone, seeing this deferring the Dispute, had somewhat troubl'd *Saint Clement*, he ask'd him: *What's the matter with you, my Son, that makes you Melancholy?* I assure you, Father, answer'd *Saint Clement*, I am mightily concern'd, this Dispute is deferr'd; and cou'd heartily wish it wou'd have been to Morrow. The Saint at this, taking an opportunity, of Discourfing to him of a Submission to Providence, told him: Amongst the *Gentils* indeed, when things succeeded not according to their desires, there may be found disquiet of Mind and Vexation; but for Us, who are perswaded and convinc'd, that all things are Regulated and Govern'd by God himself, there ought to be more Content of Mind and Resignation. Know that this has not thus happen'd but for your greater Good: For suppose the Dispute were to have been to Morrow; you wou'd not have comprehended it so well: But after three Days space you will be more capable to conceive it; for in this time I shall make it my business to Instruct you so, as to make you profit hereby.

I will conclude with the means God took to send *Saint Francis Xavier* to the *East-Indies*; and without all doubt 'tis a thing worth our serious Consideration; and wherein the Divine Providence Signaliz'd it self most wonderfully. *Saint Ignatius* had Nam'd for this Mission the Fathers, *Simon Rodriguez*, and *Nicholas Bobadilla*; and altho the former, who was then at *Rome*, had a Quartan Ague, he prepar'd himself notwithstanding, to Embark himself for *Portugal*, with *Don Pedro Mascarenas* the Embassador, who was upon the point of returning. *Bobadilla* was sent for, who presently departed from *Calabria* to *Rome*; and came so Tir'd and Haras'd with the Fatigue of his Journy, and so incommoded in one of his Legg's, that the Embassador just departing, and not able to stay till *Bobadilla* cou'd be Cur'd, and unwilling to go without the other Father that was Nam'd for the *Indies*; it was thought fit in the place of *Bobadilla*, to Substitute *Saint Francis Xavier*, who Embark'd immediately, and set to Sea with the Embassador. If we consider these things

Humanly

In vita S. Ignatii l. 2. c. 16.

Humanly speaking, this Substituting of Saint *Xavier* at so short a warning, might seem to have been done by Chance; but however it fell not out so; it was an effecting the Orders of Providence, which had from Eternity design'd Saint *Francis Xavier* an Apostle of the *Indies*. Moreover, when he and Father *Simon Rodriguez* were arriv'd in *Portugal*, they made so plentiful a Harvest of Souls, that they had almost been stopp'd there; and the Determination came to this, that one of 'em was to remain, the other to prosecute his Journey. See here the design in a manner broke off, and the affair reduc'd to a new uncertainty: But in respect of God, there was nothing uncertain: Saint *Xavier* at last was pitch'd upon and sent for the *Indies*; it being the Will of God who had thus Order'd it, for the good of innumerable Souls, and his own greater Honor and Glory. Men therefore may project and propose to themselves what they please, they may use what means they will to compass their Designs: God notwithstanding can turn all to his own Ends, and perform what conduces most to his Glory, and our Advancement. All these Examples, and such also as experience Daily furnishes us with, may serve, by the help of Prayer and Meditation, to Imprint in our Hearts a filial Confidence in God: Nor must we break off this Holy Exercise, tho' we find we are not intirely convinc'd of this Sentiment. The more we Resign our selves into the Hands of God, the more secure we are; and on the contrary, without this Confidence all things will seem troublesome, and make you lose Courage; and till you have intirely purchas'd it, you will never find a solid Peace, nor a true Content and Repose. Let us then compleat this absolute Resignation of our selves into the Hands of God, with a full Confidence. † *Let us commit our cares to our Lord, and cast 'em upon him, and he will Nourish us: * And since he takes care of us, let us cast all our troubles and sollicitudes into his Bosom.* What, O Lord; you have Lov'd me so tenderly, that for the Love of me, you Deliver'd your self into the Hands of the Executioners, to be Handl'd and Treated at their Pleasure. What great business is it then for me, to give up my self absolutely into your Merciful Hands, to be dispos'd of as you shall judge fit; since I am certain, you will do nothing but what's for my good? Let's accept of the offer made by our Saviour

JESUS

† *facta super
Dominum cu-
ram tuam, &
ipse te enu-
triet.*

Psal. 54. 23.

* *Omnem sol-
licitudinem
vestram projici-
entes in
eum, quoniam
ipsum cura est de
vobis.*

† *Pet. 5. 7.*

JESUS CHRIST to Saint Catherine of Siena. He bestow'd upon her many Signal Graces and Favors, and amongst the rest appearing upon a time to her, *My Daughter*, sayd he, *think of Me, and I will always think on you.* What a happy Compact? What a blessed exchange of Thoughts? And what an Immense gain for our Souls. Nevertheless, God makes the same Compact with all the World: Forget your selves, forget the Care and Solitude of what belongs to you, and lay aside all your own Designs. And the more you cast off the remembrance of your selves, to think and Meditate of God, and place all your Confidence in him, the more care will he have of you. Who wou'd not accept so profitable a Condition? 'Tis the same the Spouse made to her Beloved: † *I think not, says she, but of my Beloved; and all his Thoughts are also of Me.*

† Ego dilecto meo, & ad me conversio ejus.
Cant. 7. 10.

CHAP. XII.

How profitable is it to joyn Prayer with this Exercise, of Conformity: And how we are to descend to things in Particular, till we arrive to the third degree of Conformity.

Rusbrochius a Man very Learn'd, and excellently well vers'd in Spirituality, relates the passage of a Holy Virgin, who giving an account to her Director, who was a great Servant of God, of the method she us'd in Prayer, told him, she was accusom'd to make her Meditation upon the Passion of our Lord JESUS CHRIST: And the Fruit she drew thence, was to have a Knowledge of her self, of her own Faults, and her Vicious Inclinations; and above all to have a great Compassion and Sorrow for the Sufferings of the Son of God. The Director answer'd her,

Rusbroch. in fine operum suorum.

Tom. I.

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what she sayd was very good, but that any one might without attaining any great Perfection, be extreemly touch'd with the Sufferings of JESUS CHRIST, even as amongst Men, the very Sentiments of Nature make 'em have Compassion on the Afflictions and Calamities of their Neighbor. But, the Holy Virgin, who desir'd to know the Opinion of her Confessor, thereby to regulate her way of proceeding, demanded, if a continual Lamenting her Sin's, were not a profitable Devotion? Yes, my Daughter reply'd the Confessor: But still that is not what is the most Perfect; because naturally what is Evil in it self, causes in us a Dissatisfaction and Regret. Would it then be, answer'd she, a perfect Devotion to exercise our selves in Meditating of the Pains of the Damnd, and the Glory of the Blessed? Nor is that, reply'd he, what is the most Sublime in Perfection: For Nature it self abhor's all that causes it any Grief or Pain, and is always inclin'd to that which affords it Joy and Content. At last seeing she cou'd get no other Answer from her Director, she departed in Tears and very much troubl'd, she cou'd not understand; to what she shou'd more particularly apply her self in her Meditations, to render 'em more acceptable to God. A while after as she was still in the same Affliction, there appear'd to her a Young Child, of a most Amiable Beauty and Complexion; to whom, after she had discover'd the cause of her Affliction, and that she cou'd find no One capable of giving her any Comfort; nor so, sayd the Child; for I both can and will Comfort you. Go seek your Spiritual Father, and tell him that true and real Devotion consists in an intire Renunciation of ones self, and an absolute Resignation into the Hands of God, by a strict Union with him in Love, and a perfect Conformity in all things to his Divine Will. The Holy Woman abundantly satisfi'd with this, told it her Director; who answer'd, that very thing in reality was the Essential Point, to which she ought most particularly to apply her self in Meditation: Because in this consists true Charity, and Love of God, and consequently all our Advancement and Perfection.

Blessus tell's us of another Saint, who was Instructed by God himself, that in reciting our Lords Prayer, she shou'd insist particularly upon these words: * *Your Will be done on Earth, as it is in Heaven.* And 'tis recounted

Blos c. 11. mon.
Spiritual.
 * Fiat voluntas tua sicut in Cælo & in terra.
Matth. 6. 10.

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of Saint *Gertrude* that by Divine Inspiration, she recited in one Day these words of our Saviour in the Garden, three hundred sixty five times: † *Not my Will, but yours be done*: And that afterwards she knew it was extremely acceptable to God. Let us imitate these examples, and apply our selves particularly to this Exercise in our Prayers and Meditations.

† Non mea voluntas, sed tua fiat.
Lm. 11. 41.

But that we practise it with facility and profit, we must presuppose two things: The first is, that this Exercise is chiefly necessary in time of Adversities, and when we are in difficult circumstances, and such as are more repugnant to the Dictates of Nature: For in these occasions we stand in need of a more solid Vertue; and 'tis then the Love we bear God, shew's it self after a more special manner then at other times. As the Affection a King has for his Subjects, is more manifestly shewn in time of Peace, by the Gifts and Recompences he makes 'em; and the Zeal and Solitude the Soldiers have for their King is demonstrated in time of War, by Fighting and Sacrificing their Lives in his Service: So the Love and Tenderneſs the Sovereign King of King's has for us, is most apparent in time of Graces and Consolations: And the excess of Love and Affection we bear him, is chiefly evidenc'd in time of Aridities and Tribulations. 'Tis a common thing, says Father *Avila*, with all People to thank God for Favors and Comforts receiv'd: But 'tis proper only to the Just, to pay thanks and acknowledgements for Afflictions and Adversities. The thanks they then return are as a Melodious Harmony in his Ears; and one acknowledgement made him then from the bottom of their Heart, is more grateful to him, then an infinity of others return'd in time of Prosperity. So do's not the Holy Scripture compare the Just Man to a Carbuncle? As the Carbuncle casts forth more Ray's of Light in the Night than in the Day; so the Vertue of the Just Man and the true Servant of God, is more Resplendent in Sufferings and Crosses, than in Comforts and Prosperities. 'Tis for this intire Resignation in time of Afflictions, that the Holy Scripture praises very particularly the Vertue of *Toby*, when it says of him, that amongst other Calamities which befell him; being depriv'd of his Sight, * *He did not Murmur nor Repine against our Lord; but remaining Constant in the Fear of our Lord, he continu'd to Bless his Holy Name*

Tom. 2. Epist.
fol. 20.

Ecd. 32. 7.

* Non est contristatus contra Deum, sed immobilis in Dei timore permansit, agens gratias Deo omnibus diebus vite sue.
Tob. 2. 14.

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† Ut in cunctis idem sis, tam in prosperis, quam in adversis, sicut manus quæ eadem est, & cum in pal-mum extenditur, & cum in pugnum contrahitur.

Aug. Serm. 4. ad Fratres in Erem.

* Nechilariorem quisquam, nec tristitorem Socratem vidit. Aequalis fuit in tanta inæqualitate fortune. Cic. l. 3. Tuscul.

all the remainder of his Life. It was what Job had done before, amidst all the misfortunes and sufferances it pleas'd God to send him: † And see here, says Saint Austin, *What we must endeavour to Imitate: Resolve with your self, to be ever the same as well in Adversity as Prosperity; as a Hand is always the same whether it be open or shut:* For the Servant of God ought always to be the same Interiorly in his Soul, altho Exteriorly he seems to be touch'd with Afflictions. * Socrates, is sayd, to have never been either more Merry or Melancholy at one time than another: And amidst all his changes of Fortune, he kept himself constantly in an equal Temper to the last Moment of his Life. It will not seem any great Work, if we who are Christians and Religious, propose to gain so much over our selves by the assistance of Grace, what this Heathen attain'd to by the only help of Reason.

In the second place we must understand, 'tis not enough to conform our selves to God's Holy Will in General: For this indeterminate sort of Conformity, which is apply'd to nothing in particular, is no very hard business; and in the bottom is there scarce any one who do's not say, he wishes the Will of God accomplish'd in all things? The good and the bad use herein the same Language, and say Daily alike to God, *Your Will be done on Earth as 'tis in Heaven.* But we must come to somewhat more than this, we must proceed to particulars, we must descend to each part of that which wou'd give us any dissatisfaction, in case it shou'd happen; and continue constantly herein, till we have surpas'd the difficulty, and till we find no more Enemies to overcome. Infine, we must encounter whatever occurr's, and not lay down our Arm's, till we have throu'ly vanquish'd all that can any ways oppose our Union and absolute Conformity with the Will of God.

But this is not yet sufficient; we must pass on still farther, and never stop till we arrive to conceive Interiorly an immense Joy in our selves, to behold the Will of God accomplish'd in us, even by the means of Sufferings and Injuries: And this is the third Degree of Conformity. For in this Vertue as well as in others, there are several degrees, which may all be reduc'd to three; according to the distinction of those, the Saints put down in the Vertue of Patience. The first Degree is, when we are far
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from desiring or taking a Pleasure in Misfortunes that befall us, but on the contrary we avoid and shun 'em, as far as we are able: Yet we wou'd rather suffer and undergo them, then incur any Sin in avoiding 'em: And this is the lowest degree, and what precisely is an indispensable obligation. So that supposing we are sensibly touch'd with any mischances or accidents; that we groan and sigh in our Sickness, that we cry out in the violence of our Pain; that we mourn and lament at the Death of our Parents or Friends: We may notwithstanding all this have a Conformity with the Divine Will. The second Degree is, when altho of our selves we have no Inclinations to desire Pains and Afflictions, nevertheless when they happen, we receive and undergo 'em most willingly, because we know the Will of God is thereby Executed: And in what this degree surpasses the former, is, that it makes us in some manner love Afflictions for God's sake, and that we are willing to Suffer 'em not only with Patience, in as much as we are oblig'd thereto under a Sin, but also with a sort of Joy, in as much as we are convinc'd it is a thing very pleasing to God. The first Degree, makes us suffer things with Patience: The second, makes us undergo them with a prompt and chearful disposition of Mind, towards what God Ordains: But the third, and most perfect degree of all, is, when out of an Excess of Love towards God, we do not only suffer and accept willingly all the Afflictions and Pains he sends; but we even prevent him by our desires, and rejoyce when they happen; because we know they happen not but by the Adorable Decree of his Holy Will. So the Apostles after they had been publicly beaten with Whip's, *† Went out of the Assembly of the Jews, Rejoycing that they were thought fit to be treated Ignominiously for the Name of JESUS CHRIST:* And what made Saint Paul say: * *He was Replenish'd with Comfort, and Abounded with Joy, amidst his Pains and Sufferings.* The same Apostle praises the Hebrews upon the same account when in his Epistle to them, he says: *† You have receiv'd with Joy, the loss of your Goods; knowing you have in store far better, and more solid Riches.* Let's make it our endeavour to become by God's Holy Grace, so, as to receive with Joy and Satisfaction whatever Misfortune happens; and as Saint James says in his first

Canonical

† Ibant gaudentes a conspectu Concilii, quoniam digni habiti sunt pro Nominis Jesu contumeliam pati.

Act. 5. 41. * Repletus sum consolatione, superabundo gaudio in omni tribulatione nostra.

† Et rapinam bonorum vestrorum cum gaudio suscepistis, cognoscetes vos habere meliorem, & manentem substantiam.

† 1. ad Cor. 7. 4. 44 Hebr. 10. 34.

* Omne gaudium existimato, fratres mei, cum in tentationibus variis incideritis.
Jac. 1. 2.

† Si mens in Deum forti intentione dirigatur, quid sibi in hac vita amarum sit, dulce existimat, omne quod attingit, requiem putat, transire & per mortem appetit; ut obtinere plenius vitam possit.
Greg. lib. 7.
Mor. c. 7.

* Dilectus meus mihi, & ego illi.
Cant. 2. 16.

Canonical Epistle: * Look upon all the different Afflictions, which befall you, my Brethren, as a great subject of Joy and Consolation. We ought to find so great a Satisfaction in whatever proceeds from the Divine Will, as hereby to sweeten all the bitterness of this Life, and make whatsoever is hard and difficult, easie and delightful. † If our Hearts are fix'd on God, says Saint Gregory, whatever is Bitter and Afflicting in this Life, becomes Sweet and Pleasant to them: They find their Repose and Tranquillity in Pains and Afflictions, and desire Death with Impatience, to obtain their Joy and Felicity in the Life to come.

Saint Catherine of Siena, in a Dialogue she compos'd of Christian Perfection, says, amongst many other things her Divine Beloved Taught her, one was, that she ought to shut her self up in the Divine Will, as in a most assur'd Retreat, and Live there as a Pearl in the Shell, or a Bee in the Hive, without ever coming forth upon any occasion. That in the beginning perhaps she wou'd find the place very narrow, but afterwards it wou'd be larger; and without once coming forth, she might walk there as in the Habitations of the Blessed; and obtain in a small time, what out of that Retirement she wou'd not be able to compass in a long term of Years. Let us make use of this in such a manner, as to make it our continual Practise. * My Beloved to me, and I to him. These few Words may easily administer sufficient matter for our whole Lives: Wherefore we ought to have them perpetually in our Mouths and Hearts.

C H A P. XIII.

Of the Conformity a Religious Person shou'd have, to go and Live in what Part of the World Obedience shall assign him.

TO the End we may draw more Fruit out of this Exercise of Resignation to the Will of God, and put in practise what we have sayd; we will lay down some Principal Points, wherein we may Exercise our selves: And after having Treated of those, which appertain more particularly to our Constitutions, since in this 'tis more fit a Religious shou'd shew in a special manner his Vertue and Submission, we will proceed at last to some in General, which concern every one. Nevertheless, what we say here, may be apply'd to any one in the like occasions, according to their State and Profession. In the seventh Part of our Constitutions, Saint *Ignatius* speaking of Missions which are the chief end of our Institute, says, that those of the SOCIETY, ought to have such an indifference of Mind for whatever place Obedience shall allot 'em, as to be equally prepar'd, and ready to go and live in what ever part of the World Obedience shall send 'em; amongst Christians or Infidels, amongst Catholick's or Heretick's. Wherefore the Profess'd Religious of our SOCIETY, make a fourth Solemn Vow of Obedience to the Pope, whereby they Promise to go where he shall please without Delay, Excuse or Repugnance; on Foot, or Horseback; with, or without Money for their Charges, and living in their Journey on Alm's, as the Pope shall Judge it most expedient: The End propos'd in Establishing this Vow, says Saint *Ignatius*, is to be the better able by this means to find out what is the Will of God. So that as the first Fathers of the SOCIETY, were of different Nations, and knew not in what part of the World they shou'd be most acceptable

*1. p. Const. c. 1.
§. 1.*

*P. r. Exam. §.
1. 5. p. Const.
c. 3. §. 3. c.
p. 6. c. 2. §. 13.
c. p. 7. c. 1.
§. 3.*

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to God, whether amongst Christians or Infidels; they judg'd it fit, for taking away all grounds of mistakes, in following their own Choice, to make a fourth Vow in the Hands of CHRIST'S VICAR, to be distributed throu'out the World, as he shou'd judge it most conducing to his Service, and the greater Glory of God. Wherefore, says he, no Religious of the SOCIETY, is to use any means whereby he may go or stay in this place more than another; but must have such an Indifference herein, that not respecting any thing but the greater Service and Glory of God, he leaves himself wholly in the Hands of the Superior who holds his Place.

Lib. 5. c. 4.
ejus Vita.

To shew how far our Holy Institutor wou'd have this our Indifference extend it self of going to any place of the World, where Obedience shall call us, it will be sufficient to assign this following Example. Father *Laynez* having once signify'd to him, he had a desire of going to the *Indies*, there to procure the Salvation of those Infidels, who for want of Evangelical Laborers to assist 'em, ran to their Perdition in the blindness of Idolatry: And I, reply'd the Saint, find not any desire or inclination in my self that way. Father *Laynez* demanding of him the reason: 'Tis sayd the Saint, for that having made a Vow of Obedience to the Pope, to the end he may send us at his pleasure, to whatever place he shall look upon to God's Service, we ought to retain this absolute indifference, without inclining more to one side than the other: And for my self, if I thought I had any inclination for the *Indies*, I wou'd endeavour to oppose it with all my might; to put my self in the Ballance of a just equality and indifference of Mind, as I ought to be to attain the Perfection of Obedience.

2. p. Conf. c. 2.
lib. L.

We do not bring this to condemn the desires of the *Indian* Mission for they are much to be commended, and very Holy in themselves; and Saint *Ignatius* wou'd have all Superiors rejoyce, when they find any of those in their charge who have such a desire, because 'tis ordinarily the mark and assurance of a Vocation from God, and a means whereby things are done with more Facility and Satisfaction. But we wou'd shew by this what an indifference Saint *Ignatius* recommends to us, in Living in all sorts of Places and Impleys; since he wou'd not have us retain any settl'd propension, for even a thing
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So Important to God's Service, and of so great a difficulty in it self; lest hereby we destroy in our selves that indifference, we ought always to have for whatever Obedience designs us.

Hence follow some consequences, which shew more evidently what we here speak of. First, if the desire any one has of going to the *Indies*, so takes him up as to diminish or hinder his indifference and disposition to whatever Obedience may otherwise injoy him; this sort of desire is absolutely to be condemn'd: For Example, if the desire of going to the *Indies*, or any other Place in the World, makes me uneasy and dissatisf'd in that Place where I am sent; or if it makes me more repid and remiss in the Functions of that Charge impos'd upon me; 'tis certain this desire is Culpable, and comes not from God, because 'tis opposite to his Will and Pleasure. For God cannot be contrary to himself; and the Inspirations of the Holy Ghost are not accompany'd with discontents and troubles; on the contrary they bring all Peace and Tranquillity to the Mind. And this is one of the signs, the Masters of a Spiritual Life give to distinguish those desires which come from God, and those that come from Men.

In the second place, it follows, that he who has an universal disposition, and is equally inclin'd for all places and all things Obedience assign's him, must not trouble and afflict himself if he finds not a particular Inclination for Forraign Missions. For this disposition of Mind is not less good than the other; on the contrary, 'tis rather better, since that wherein Saint *Ignatius* wou'd have us be in the SOCIETY, is, that we are not byass'd by any particular Inclination to one thing more than another, and that we be as the Tongue of a Ballance without inclining to either side. He had once a thought of sending Father *Natalis* upon some Mission; but in consideration that things were to be done with all Sweetness imaginable, he wou'd first see if his Inclination tended that way. Father *Natalis* Answer'd him by Writing, that he had no other Inclination, than to have no Inclination to any thing at all. And this was it, our Holy Founder esteem'd the greatest thing in a Religious, and most consistent with Reason. So that whoever is carry'd with an affection to any particular thing, seems to be ty'd and

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wedded to that thing only; but he, who is equally and indifferently dispos'd to whatsoever is Injoyn'd, comprehends all things in general; and as God looks upon the Heart, and esteems the Will for the Deed; so in respect of God, 'tis the same as tho' he had perform'd all in General.

For the better understanding this Point, I say, if either throu' Tepidity or Puffanimity of Mind, any one feels not a desire of going to the *Indies*, if it be for fear of losing those Commodities and Satisfactions he finds in the place he is in, or because he apprehends such Fatigues and Dangers, as are frequent in such Missions; then 'tis an Imperfection and Self-love. But supposing it be not any tepidity that hinders this desire in him, nor any backwardness in being willing to undergo all things for the Love of God, and good of Soul's; that he is only uncertain whether it be the Will of God, and the same time finds himself equally dispos'd to whatever he understands to be his Holy Will, and is wholly prepar'd either to go to the *Indies* or to *England*, with as much or more Joy than if he had ardently desir'd it; because he is assur'd 'tis not his own Will, but the Will of God which he fulfill's; in this case, there's no doubt but such an one may be in the best disposition possible. So we see Superiors freely make choice of such as they know have this universal and equal disposition.

But to come to our Principal Point, Saint *Ignatius* wilhes we all had so great an Indifference and Renunciation; to remain and live as well in one place as another, that even the consideration of our Health shou'd not have that force upon us, as to make us alter our Sentiment. He says in the third Part of the Constitutions: 'Tis our Vocation and our Institute to go to all Places, where we shall be Judg'd more profitable to God's Service, and the good of our Neighbor. Yet however, supposing 'tis found by experience that the Air of such a Climate, agrees not with the Temper of such a Religious, and that he enjoy's not his Health: The Superior upon this must consider, if it be necessary to send him to some other place, where he may have his Health better, and imploy himself with more Fruit in the Service of God, and Profit of Souls. † *Notwithstanding*, says he, 'tis not for the *Indispos'd Person* to petition his removal, or shew in himself any

† Non tamen
erit ipse in-
firmi huius-
modi mutati-
onem postu-

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any such Inclination; but he must commit this affair totally and absolutely to his Superior: What is here demanded of us, is not I assure you any mean thing; for it must be a great Abnegation of our selves, when we see our Health call'd in Question, and that 'tis Daily in a decaying Condition, to be able not only to refrain from desiring change of Air, but even abstain from shewing any propensity that way. So that for as much as relates to the Mission, amongst Heathens or Heretick's; 'tis allow'd any one to propose his Thoughts and Desires, provided it be with an Intire Resignation of himself into the Hands of his Superiors: But in Point of Health to be recover'd by change of place; 'tis not permitted either to demand this change; or to shew any desire therein. All that can be done is, when we are in such a Condition, and we find we are no more able to satisfy the Obligations and Duties of our Charge, to signify it to the Superior; and 'tis what our Rules prescribe. But after this, the Subject has no more to do; and 'tis the Superiors business to see, if it be necessary to send him any where else, to recover strength, and do the SOCIETY more Service; or altho' he be wholly unprofitable where he is; if it be not more expedient, and to the greater Glory of God, for him to remain there. However, 'tis not for the Subject to Judge; but for the Superior, who Governs in the Place of God; and to whom the Inferior ought so far to deliver the disposal of himself, as to be assur'd whatever the Superior orders touching his concerns, is that which is most for God's Service, and his own good. How many Persons are there who live in Countries Remote from their own, and in such as agree not with their Health and Constitution, and this only to drive on a Lively-hood? How many pass the Seas, as to *Constantinople*, into *Africk*, to the *Indies*, and for an inconsiderable gain, run the risque not only of their Health, but of Life it self? What great wonder then, if we who are Religious, shou'd perform for the Love of God, and by Obedience, what Men of the World Daily do out of a Principle of some inconsiderable Lucre, and Temporal Interest. Suppose then you shou'd chance to think the Indisposition caus'd in you by the place you live in, makes you unserviceable, and that in another place, you cou'd bestow your Labors with Fruit for the Service of God; remember the same time, for

lare, nec animi propensionem ad eam ostendere, sed Superioris curæ id relinquitur.

all this 'tis better you remain, thò unprofitable where you are, in submitting your self to the Will of God, than to perform great things in following your own Inclination and Desires: And Conform your self herein to the Divine Will, which requires this of you, for Reasons best known to it self, and which ought not to be manifested to you.

r. p. lib. 7.
c. 5.

We Read in the Chronicles of Saint *Francis*, that Blessed Brother *Giles*, having obtain'd leave of the Saint, to go and reside in what Province, and what Convent of the Order he pleas'd, had scarce enjoy'd four Days in this Liberty, when finding the former Peace and Tranquillity of his Mind disturb'd and troubl'd, he begg'd earnestly of the Saint, to assign him some House for his abode, and not leave it any longer to his own choice: Because this sort of liberty so undetermin'd, and of so great Extent, concurr'd only to molest his repose of Spirit, and disquiet his content of Mind. Good and True Religious, find not any Peace or Satisfaction of Mind, in doing their own Will, and set not their Affection upon one place more than another; but look upon that place where Obedience sends 'em as the best; because they know 'tis that which the Divine Will has allotted 'em; in the which they place all their content and satisfaction.

CHAP.

C H A P. XIV.

*Of the Indifference a Religious Person is to have
for all Charges and Functions wherein
Obedience Employ's him.*

THE Indifference and Resignation we here speak of, must extend it self also to all those Employ's and Offices, which Obedience shall injoyne us. 'Tis easie to know the number, and the Functions, which every one may run over with himself, one after another till he feel's an equal disposition of Mind for 'em all. As to such Offices as are more Humble and Contemptible, and wherein consequently there's a greater Repugnance; our Constitutions, will have us apply our selves; to such with all promptitude and readines, when Obedience call's. There's never more need of Resignation, than in these sorts of Employ's; because our Natural Pride gives us an Aversion to 'em, and so there's more Vertue and Perfection in readily Subjecting our selves to them for the Love of God, than to desire such Offices as are of greater Note, and more Honorable. If a Person shou'd oblige himself to any great Lord for all his Life, to be willing to Serve him in the lowest and basest Offices of his Family, if there were need; he wou'd shew doubtless in this, a greater Zeal and Affection for his Service, than if he wou'd only ingage himself in the more worthy Employ's, which carry along with 'em in some manner, their Recompence. And the more capacitated he wou'd be for those higher Posts, the more Affection wou'd he shew in employing himself in these Servile Occupations. 'Tis the very same in Religion: If you offer up your self to Serve God only in the quality of a Preacher, or Master of Divinity, you wou'd not do any great thing; nor wou'd you testifie any great sign of Zeal and Fervor for his Service; since these Employ's carry a sufficient

C. 4. Pr. 5. 23.
reg. 13. summa.

ficient Recommendation to be desir'd for themselves. But supposing you offer your self for your whole Life to his Service, in the lowest and vilest Ministeries and Charges, which are most opposite to the Pride of our Nature, and most repugnant to our Senses; then it is you give a signal token of the desire you have for his Service: And the greater your Talents are for high and sublime Offices, the greater and more acceptable is the proof of your Love. This very one thing might suffice, to oblige us always to desire those Charges which are more mean and abject; since in the House of God there are Charges and Offices of that Nature. 'Tis ordinarily sayd; there are no mean Persons about a King; because in what quality soever they serve him, there's some Honor annex'd. How much greater then is it to serve God in what manner soever; *Since to Serve him, is to Reign with him.*

*In regul. fus.
dispul. per. 7.*

Saint Basil endeavouring to excite us to love Servile and Humble Offices, brings the Example of our Saviour JESUS CHRIST, who exercis'd himself not once only in Washing the Feet of his Apostles, but throu'out his whole Life, in Obeying his Blessed Mother and Saint Joseph, in all things they enjoyn'd him. For altho' the Holy Scripture mentions nothing concerning him from the Age of Twelve Years to Thirty, only that *He was Subjected to them*, 'tis nevertheless inferr'd thence, and from their extream Poverty, that he doubtless Submitted himself to divers Servile Imploys. † *Let not then a Christian*, says Saint Austin, *think it beneath him, to do what JESUS CHRIST himself has done before him.* Since the Son of God disdain'd not for the Love of us to Exercise himself in the most Humble and Abject Offices; let us not look upon it below us, to Exercise our selves in the same for his Love, altho' it were for the durance of Life.

** Et erat subditus illis.
Luc. 2. 51.*

*† Ne dedignetur facere Christianus, quod fecit Christus.
Aug. Tract. 18. sup. Joann. in illud: Si ergo ego lavi, &c.*

But to come yet nearer our matter, I say, one of the chief Motives which thou'd oblige us to embrace most willingly what is impos'd upon us by Obedience, is, that we rest assur'd, this Imploy is absolutely that which God exacts at the present of us. For as we sayd before, it ought to be a Subject of great Joy and Comfort to us in all our Occupations prescrib'd by Obedience, to rest Convinced that 'tis the Will of God we then perform. Nothing afford's our Soul more content than this thought: God will have me at present do this; 'tis his Holy Will; we must

must not make any farther doubt, and must desire nothing more, since nothing can be better than the performing his Divine Will. Those who consider things of this Nature, are not at all solicitous when they are commanded one thing rather than another, or whether they are design'd for any mean Employ, or one of more note, since both are alike acceptable to them.

Saint *Hierom* recount's an example very fit for our purpose. He says, that visiting upon an occasion the Religious of the Desert, he saw one who by the Superiors order bore upon his Shoulders twice a Day, a great Stone for the space of a League, to no other end, then that his Superior, who had another design in the thing, wou'd teach him and others by his Example, to Obey with Submission, and Mortifie their own Judgment. He had at that time spent eight Years in this Practise: And to those, says this same Saint, who know not the Price and Merit of Obedience, and whose Pride and Self-conceit hinder'd 'em from attaining the Purity and Simplicity of this Vertue, it seem'd but a Childish business; many ask'd him how he cou'd tolerate this Subjection; and even I my self desirous to know what were his Thoughts and Sentiments, during the time of this Employ, propos'd some Questions to him concerning it. He Answer'd me, that when he finish'd his Labor, he felt such a joy and satisfaction in himself, as tho' he had perform'd the most important and honorable thing that cou'd be injoyn'd him: And this Answer made such an impression in me, that from thenceforth I began to Live as a true Religious Person ought. In fine, 'tis the part of a good and true Religious, not to make difficulty in that which appears most despicable in the Exterior, and to imagine in performing it we perform the Will of God: And those who have this esteem of whatever Obedience assign's 'em, make great progress in Vertue; because they nourish themselves with what's more pure. The performance of the Divine Will which they make their Daily Food, is that * *Far of* *Corn, wherewith they are satiated.*

But I imagine some one will Object, that to perform the Will of God in all things is indeed a great Perfection; and in reality, what Office soever I am assign'd, I am always ready to undertake it: Nevertheless I cou'd wish it were in some Nobler and more Considerable a Post. This is to Err in the very Principles themselves; because in the

In Reg. Monach.
c. 12.

* Et adipe frumenti satiat, te.
Psal. 147. 14.

the bottom 'tis nothing else but to desire God shou'd do your Will, and not that you apply your self to his. 'Tis not for you to prescribe Conditions to God, and to desire him to grant you what you judge most agreeable; but must admit with Blind Obedience those he shall please to impose upon you, and conform your self intirely to all he requires of you. † *He, O Lord, says Saint Austin, serves you as he ought, who desires not that you injoy him what he pleases; but who makes it his business to desire, and accomodate himself to what you injoy.* And the Holy Abbot Nilus writing upon Prayer: * *Do not Pray, says he, that what you desire may be done; but rather Pray as you are Taught to Pray, that the Will of God be accomplish'd in you.*

Let us reflect upon this: 'Tis a very profitable Point, and may be apply'd to any Affliction whatever befall's us. 'Tis not for us, 'tis for God only to choose, how and in what we ought to Suffer. Nor is it for you to choose, what kind of Temptation you wou'd have; nor to say, I cou'd have born it with ease had it been any other; but for this, I am in no wise able to support it. The pains we suffer, wou'd not be pains if they were such as depended upon our choice; and if you desire intirely to please God, you ought to intreat him, that he wou'd guide and govern you as he pleases, and not as you please. If he assign's you what is most repugnant, and what you have the greatest difficulty to undergo; and nevertheless, you admit of it, and support it with a perfect Resignation; then 'tis, you shew your self a true Imitator of JESUS CHRIST, who desir'd not that his own Will, but the Will of his Eternal Father might be perform'd. We cannot say we have a real Conformity to God's Will, unless we commit our selves totally into his Hands, that he may dispose of us as he shall think fit, when and how he shall think fit, without any the least opposition on our side, or any exception.

Blosius relates of Saint Gertrude, that being upon a time in Prayer, for one who underwent with great Impatience, the Sufferings and Temptations it pleas'd God to send her; our Lord Answer'd; go and tell her you Pray for, that since the Kingdom of Heaven is not to be Purchas'd but by Sufferings, and those which I have sent her are not to her liking, she may choose such as are more to her desire. The Holy Virgin understood clearly by these words, and by the manner wherewith our Saviour utter'd 'em, that

† Optimus
minister tuus
est, qui non
magis intuetur
hoc à te audi-
re, quod ipse
voluerit, sed
potius hoc
velle quod à
te audierit.
Aug. lib. 10.
Confess. c. 26.
* Non ores,
ut fiant quæ
fieri velis, sed
potius ora si-
cut orare didi-
cisti, ut fiat
voluntas Dei
in me.
Nil. c. 29. de
orat.

Luc. 22. 42.

c. 10. Mon.
Siv.

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that 'tis a dangerous sort of Impatience to desire our choice in Sufferings, and those as we please; and to say we cannot tolerate those sent from God; and that they are not conducing to our good. For all must be convinc'd, what comes from God, is precisely what is most for our Advantage; and so we are to receive 'em with Patience, by an absolute Conforming our selves to the Divine Will. To apply this more particularly to our present Subject; as 'tis not for us to choose what Pains and Temptations we ought to suffer, but must receive as from the Hand of God, whatever he designs us; and be assur'd the same time, what he designs us, is for our greater good: So in like manner, 'tis not for us to make choice of what Charge or Office we wou'd undertake; but must accept as from the Hand of God, the Charge assign'd us by Obedience; and be throu'ly convinc'd, 'tis that in reality which is most conducing to our good and profit.

We may add here another Point, which appertains to a Consummated Perfection: 'Tis to Resign our selves to the Will of God, with such a Confidence and Assurance, as not to have the least Curiosity of knowing what it shall please him to do with us. As 'tis the greatest sign of confidence a Master can put in his Servant, to rely so far upon him, as to deliver up to him the charge of all he has, without taking account of any thing himself: † See, says Joseph, *my Prince has intrusted all he has so in my care, that he knows not what he has himself*: So 'tis a Proof, of a great Confidence in God, not to be desirous of knowing in what manner he designs to dispose of us. I am in good Hands and that's sufficient: * *My Destiny O Lord, is in your Hands*. By this I live in Peace and Assurance, nor do I desire to understand more.

As to those Persons who are Ambitious of Posts and Employ's, more Honorable than those they are in, imagining they cou'd do God greater Service, and be more conducing to the good of Souls; they deceive themselves mightily; in believing these desires take their rise from the Zeal they have of God's Glory, and the Profit of their Neighbor. They are Sentiments that proceed from their Ambition, out of a desire of being Esteem'd and Honor'd, from the Love of their own Conveniences and private Commodities, and because the Employ they seek after, is either of greater Dignity, or more conformable to their own Inclinations, than

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that

*Blas. c. 15. mon.
Bisita.*

† Ecce Dominus meus, omnibus mihi traditis, ignorat quid habeat in domo sua. Genes. 39. 8.

* In manibus tuis sortes mea. Psal. 30. 16.

that they at present are in. Were you in the World and had no dependance of any other, you might use liberty, in changing one thing for another, in regard of it's greater conveniency and good, because you cou'd not undergo the charge of both. But 'tis not the same in Religion; we cannot leave one Function to undertake another; both must be perform'd; every one his share: And supposing you manage the higher Employ; another must take upon him the lower. But were you truly Humble, you wou'd make it your business, to have any one besides your self in the higher Offices; because you wou'd believe any other wou'd discharge himself better therein, than you cou'd; and there wou'd be less danger of being carry'd away with Sentiments of Pride, and Thoughts of Vain-Glory.

*Lib. Exert.
Orit.*

Saint *Ignatius* has deliver'd us a profitable Instruction, and very fit for the matter we here speak of, and several others of the like Nature, in establishing for the grounds of Election in such things as depend on our Choice. He says there are three degrees of Humility; the most Perfect of which is always, being plac'd in two occasions of equally serving God, to choose wherein we judge there is more Abnegation of our selves, and more Subject of Contempt; the better to Imitate *JESUS CHRIST*, who for the Love of us, wou'd subject himself to the Scorn and Contempt of Men. Another advantage we may yet draw hence, is, that in these vile and lowest Functions, there is less of Self-interest found, than in others; and so we have less occasions of seeking our selves, and less expos'd to Temptations of Vain-Glory. In these lower Offices we Exercise the same time the Vertues of Charity and Humility; and particularly Humility, since 'tis in these things where Humility is conserv'd. But in higher and more important Charges we only practise Charity, with some danger of Humility; and this shou'd suffice, not only to hinder us from aspiring to higher things, but shou'd also give us matter of fear and apprehension.

C H A P.

CHAP. XV.

*Of the Conformity we ought to have to the Will
of God; in the Distribution of Natural
Gifts and Talents.*

WE must all be content with those Talents and Parts we have receiv'd from God, without Murmuring or Repining, if others are of a greater Capacity or Ability than we are. All Persons stand in need of this Instruction: For altho' several seem to surpass in some things; they have notwithstanding their Defects, which counterpoise these advantages, and give 'em an occasion of necessarily making use of the Moderation and Conformity we here speak of. Wherefore 'tis our business to take a caution herein; and the rather, for that the Devil makes his chief Attack on this side, against most Persons. You are for Example in the course of your Studies; and supposing in occasions of Disputes and Publick Appearances, you find others Signalize themselves more, and come off with more Credit and Applause than you do; you will presently be apt to conceive in your self a secret sort of Envy, which tho' it has not force upon you as to Afflict and Torment your self at your Neighbors good, yet it may cause in you a shame, and contristate you to see others have the Precedence, and you fall short, which may discourage and discontent you; and which infine, may at last work so far upon you, as to give you a Temptation of quitting your Studies, and sometimes even Religion it self; as in reality this Temptation had made some do, because they had not layd good Foundations of Humility. Some imagine they shall become more eminent in their Studies, and arrive to a great Name and Reputation; when the following success answers not their expectations, and makes 'em conceive such a shame

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and confusion, as the Devil laying hold of the occasion offer'd, fail's not to Suggest to them, unless they quit Religion they will never be free from the shame and confusion they have incur'd.

*Hist. Ord. Pra-
dicat. 1. p. 1.
3. c. 45.*

This sort of Temptation is not of any new standing: And we Read in the Chronicles of Saint *Dominick*, somewhat of the like Example of *Albertus Magnus*, who was Master to Saint *Thomas of Aquin*. This *Albertus*, as the History relates, had from his very Infancy been a great Client of the Blessed Virgin, recited Daily some Prayers in her Honor; and by her Intercession had been receiv'd at the Age of Sixteen, into the Order of Saint *Dominick*. His Wit at that time was none of the clearest, but on the contrary, it was dull and not at all fit for to carry him on in his Studies: Insomuch, as that amongst so many of his School-fellows who made very notable Improvements, seeing himself so backward, he became out of conceit with himself, and to such a degree discourag'd, that giving way to the Temptation, he resolv'd to forsake his Habit; and had certainly done it, had he not in this trouble and discontent of Mind, receiv'd Comfort from a Miraculous Vision. One Night in his Sleep, he fancy'd he had reard a Ladder at the Wall of the Monastery, to make his escape; and as he mounted, he beheld on the top of the Wall four Venerable Matrons, of which one seem'd to be the Chief. Having now approach'd nigh 'em, one of the four gave him a violent push, and threw him down to the Bottom. He got up again, and was treated by another in the same manner: And being now ready to try the third time, one of 'em demanded, what he intended, and upon what account he resolv'd to leave the Order. He Answer'd, in the Confusion he then was, because his Companions Daily made so great an Improvement in their Studies, and he saw all his Application and Industry to little purpose, and that it was shame made him leave Religion. Whereupon the Matron shewing him the Blessed Virgin; Behold here present, sayd she, the Mother of God, and Queen of Heaven, whose Servants we only are; recommend your self to Her, and we will also joyn our Petitions with yours, that she will please to obtain of her Son, those necessary qualities and helps for your profit and success in your Studies. Having sayd this, she Presented him to the Blessed Virgin, who receiving him with

with a tender Affection, ask'd what he desir'd: Who told her it was, to make a considerable Improvement in Philosophy, wherein he had spent some time without any Success. The Blessed Virgin Exhorted him to take Courage, and continue his Studies; and that he shou'd become a very able and famous Man. But to let you know, 'tis to me you owe this Favor, and not to your own Capacity and Parts; I here foretell you, upon a certain time whilst you are in the publick Chair, you shall forget on a sudden all you knew before. He was extreemly comforted at this Vision; and after that time became so Eminent not only in Philosophy but in Divinity also, and in Holy Scripture, as is sufficiently attested and evidenc'd by his Writings left to Posterity. Three Years before his Death, as he Taught publicly at *Cullen*, he lost the Memory of all he knew before to that degree, as not to retain one Notion of all he had formerly Learnt: And it may be thought, God permitted it to fall out so, in punishment of his want of Conformity to his Holy Will, in the dispensation of those Talents he had receiv'd. When remembering the Vision he heretofore had, whilst he design'd to leave the Order, he related the whole matter to his Auditors, took leave of 'em, and retir'd himself to his Monastery, where he employ'd the rest of his Life in Prayer and Contemplation.

But lest we fall into the like circumstances, we must necessarily take some precaution, and the precaution we stand most in need of, is a profound Humility. 'Tis for want of Humility, that we content not our selves with those few Qualities and Talents we have; 'tis for this cause we cannot suffer our selves to pass for the less Qualifi'd, and less Capacitated amongst our Companions. But suppose by reason of your want of Capacity, you are forc'd to break off your Studies, and at the same time you see others advanc'd in the highest and most sublime Sciences, and become great Divines, or famous Preachers? In this you must have a great stock of Humility and Resignation: Nor must you have less at the end of your Studies, when you see your self not capable for those Employ's which are assign'd others; and that you have no Parts or Talents, either for the Chair in Publick School's, or any Exterior Function abroad, or the management of business at home. Those who have not been brought up in their Studies, are not to stand less upon their Guard; for they may come
to

to have strange Thoughts and Motions within themselves, and be troubl'd; the one, for that he knows not Latin; another, that he is not Priest; and a third, that he has not sufficient Knowledge and Science, to operate in the Conversion of Soul's: And these Temptations may come to work so upon 'em, and prove so strong and violent, as to make them lose the esteem of their Vocation, as it sometimes happens, and run 'em even into danger of their Salvation.

What we discourse of here belongs to all in general; and each Person in particular may apply it to his own State and Condition, according to the circumstances he is in: Since every one is to Conform himself to the Will of God, to rest contented with those Gifts and Parts God has given him, and the condition he has plac'd him in; and not to desire and seek after any other thing, but what God pleases. Saint *Austin* upon this passage of the Psalmist: † *Incline my Heart to the practise of your Commandments, and not to Avarice*, says, that *Avarice*, by which Name we understand all sorts of Irregular Desires, has been the occasion of all our mischief. It was that which cast our first Parents out of the possession of that happy State they before possess'd, and robb'd 'em of those great Advantages they enjoy'd: Because they wou'd be more than what God had made them, and seek'd after more than what God had bestow'd upon 'em. * *You shall become*, says the Serpent, *as God's, having the Knowledge of Good and Evil*. This was the bait and allurement he made use of to delude them, and work their destruction; and we have Inherited this their desire of becoming God's, that is, their folly, or rather their madness, in striving to be greater than what we really are. This Enemy of ours found so good success by this Argument against our first Parents, as to make use of the same even to this Day against us; in persuading and pushing us on, in as much as he is able, to desire to be more and greater than what God wou'd have us be; and not to rest satisfi'd with the Talents God has given us, or in that Condition he has plac'd us. 'Tis for this, says Saint *Austin*, the Royal Prophet ask's of God, that he will give him a Heart wholly disinterested, and a Heart which is faithfully inclin'd to all that shall please the Divine Will, and what is intirely void of Self-satisfaction, and proper Interest. For by this word *Avarice*, as we sayd before, he understands not only desire of Riches, but also of Honors, of Glory,

† Inclina cor meum in testimonia tua, & non in avaritiam. Psal. 118. 36.

* Eritis sicut Dii, scientes bonum & malum. Genes. 3. 5.

Glory, of Pleasures, and Universally of all manner of desires; and 'tis in this Sense the Apostle takes it, saying, † *Covetousness, or Avarice, is the Root of all Evil.*

† Radix enim omnium malorum est cupiditas. 1 ad Tim. 6. 10.

In case notwithstanding we had no other Motive of contenting our selves, with those Talents God has conferr'd upon us, and that State and Condition wherein he has plac'd us, but purely that of the Divine Will: This very one Motive might suffice, to oblige us to a perfect Conformity with the Ordinations of his Providence. * *All those things, says Saint Paul, are the work of one and the same Spirit, which gives and allot's each one his share as it pleases:* The Apostle in this place makes use of the Metaphor of a Man's Body; of which we have spoken in another place, treating of the Union which ought to be amongst Religious Persons: And he says, that as in the Body of a Man, God has plac'd the Members as he pleas'd; and the Feet have not Murmur'd because they were not the Head; nor the Hands, because they were not the Eyes: So in the Body of the Church (the same may also be sayd of that of Religion) God has plac'd and rang'd the Faithful, as he pleas'd. 'Tis not by pure Chance that some are posted in one Charge, some in another; but 'tis by a special Order of his Providence. So that if it please God you shou'd be the Feet, by what right wou'd you aspire to be the Head? And if he wou'd have you be the Hands, by what Title wou'd you endeavour to be the Eyes? O how Profound are the Judgements of God, how Incomprehensible are they! † *And what Man is there who can Penetrate into the Secret Design's of God?* All things, O Lord, come from you; and consequently there's reason we praise you in all: You know what's most proper and expedient for each one, and why you confer more upon one than another; and 'tis not for us to search into the Reason. For who knows what wou'd become of us, had we receiv'd more Knowledge and Capacity? How do you know suppose you had been some great Preacher, and had been follow'd and esteem'd, but this had prov'd your utter Ruin; as many others, whose Pride and Vanity has Precipitated 'em into their final Perdition? The Persons of great Learning and Parts, are soonest carry'd away with a desire of being known and esteem'd. If with the little Capacity and Knowledge you have, and that mean Science, and perhaps less than mean, you are arriv'd to that Presumption, as

* Hæc autem omnia operatur unus atque idem spiritus, dividens singulis prout vult. 1 Cor. 12. 11.

† Quis enim hominum poterit scire consilium Dei? Sap. 9. 15.

Imit. Christ. lib. 3. c. 22.

to

* Por su mal
nacieron las
alas a la hor-
miga.

to compare and even prefer your self before others, and look upon it an injury done you, not to be pitch'd upon for the most Honorable Functions; what would you do, if in reality you were Master of these rare Qualities, and those so Sublime and Extraordinary Talents and Endowments? * *Wings are not granted the Ant*, as the saying is, *but for her Ruin*: And perhaps these great Parts, would not have been conferr'd upon you, but for yours. If we seriously reflect upon these things as we shou'd do, and not look upon 'em with a byas'd Intention, we shou'd find sufficient reason of rendring thanks to God all our Life time, for having plac'd us in this State of Subjection and Humility, and given us an indifferent stock of Talents and Qualities; and might say with the Pious

Tbom. & Kemp.

*A Kempis: Lord, I look upon it as a most Signal Favor and Happines, not to have receiv'd a great many things, which might have gain'd the applause and esteem of Men. The Saints knew very well, the danger which accompany'd these great Gifts and Advantages; and so, they not only abstain'd from desiring, but even stood in fear and apprehension of 'em, by reason of the danger that accompany'd 'em, lest they shou'd be carry'd away by Vain-Glory in the possession of 'em: And become by these means more acceptable to God, who makes a greater esteem of an Humble Heart in his Servants, then of high and aspiring Inclinations. Were we but well Convinc'd, that all things except the only accomplishment of God's Holy Will, were but a pure Vanity; and cou'd but persuade our selves so far, as to repose and place our Satisfaction and Content in that of God; we shou'd find nothing besides, worth our desiring or seeking after. If you with those mean Talents you have, and your small and limited Science, can find wherewith to be more pleasing to God, why do you trouble your self in seeking after what you have not? Had you any reason on your side, it wou'd be, for that you cou'd desire to please God in a higher Nature: But if on the contrary it pleases him more, that you remain in your ignorance and meanness of knowledge, as certainly it must be that which pleases him most; since 'tis he who disposes of his Gifts as he thinks best; why are you so concern'd? Wherefore do you endeavour to be what God never design'd you for, and what is not convenient you shou'd be? The Great and Magnificent Sacrifices of *Saul*, were no wise grateful to God;*

* Reg. 11. 19.

God; because they were not conformable to his Holy Will: And those great and aspiring desires you conceive in your self, will be as little pleasing to him; since our Spiritual Advancement consists not, in being Learn'd Divines, or able Preachers, nor to receive great Lights and Helps, great Talents, and great Imploy's; but it consists in performing the Will of God, in giving a Faithful and Just account of what he has committed to our Charge, of making a good Improvement of that Talent he has been pleas'd to intrust us with: 'Tis to this only point we are to direct our course; since 'tis only this, God demands of us.

For the better clearing this Point, we may bring a Comparison very fit to our purpose; which is in representing the different States and Conditions of Men, by the different Persons of Actors in a Comedy, upon a Stage. An Actor deserves not his Praise from the Person he Sustains, but from the naturally performing his Part: So that if he who Acts the Peasant, Represents him better, than he who Acts the Emperor, he will be certainly more applauded and esteem'd. 'Tis the same with us in respect of God: What he regards in us during this Life, which properly speaking is but a long Comedy, and God grant to some of us it never proves a Tragedy, is not the Person we bear in Religion, one a Superior, another a Preacher, this a Porter, that a Sacristan; but only how each one comes off with his Credit, in the Office he manages. If the Inferior acquits himself better of his Duty, and Acts his Part more to the Life, than the Superior, he shall be more esteem'd in the Sight of God, and receive a greater Recompence and Glory. That Actor perhaps, who succeeded ill in the Part of a King, had he Represented the Shepherd, might have gain'd more Honor, and been look'd upon as the Chief. So you may fail in Exhibiting the Person of a Preacher, or Superior, and have good Success in that of an Infirmarian, or Spiritual Father. God know's very well how to dispense his Parts to his Actors, what is most proper for 'em; and Distributes his Talents, † *To every one according to his Capacity.* Wherefore we are not to desire this Part or Person to Exhibit, this or that Talent to manage, but what we already have; Our chief affair is to Represent

Unicuique
secundum pro-
priam virtu-
tem.
Matth. 25, 15.

Tom. I.

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to the Life, the Person we have undertook; and give a good account of the Talent we are Intrusted withal: For so we shall Please God the more, and receive from him a greater Merit and Recompence.

CHAP. XVI.

Of the Conformity we are to have to the Will of God, in time of Sicknes.

AS Health is a Gift of God, so is Sicknes also: And God sends it us, for our Trial and Correction, the better to make us sensible of our Weaknes, to disabuse us of those thoughts we conceiv'd of our selves, to cut us off from the Love of Terrene things, and the Pleasures of our Senses; to beat down the Efforts, and diminish the Insurrections of our greatest Enemy our own Flesh; to put us in mind we are here in a place of Exile, and that Heaven is our real Country and abode; and infine, for our several other Profits and Advantages, which we may obtain by receiving it as a Present from his Hand. * *A great Sicknes makes an Understanding Soul.* For this it was an Ancient Father of the Desert, sayd to one of his Disciples, who was Sick. My Son be not troubl'd at this Sicknes; on the contrary give God thanks: For 'tis a Fire which Purges all your Rust, if you are Iron; and Purifies you if you are Gold. 'Tis a sign of a great Piety and Perfect Vertue, to thank God for all the Infirmities he pleases to send us.

* Infirmities
gravis sobriam
facit animam.
Ecclesi. 31. 2.

Survius refert
in ejus vita.

We Read in the Life of Saint Clare, that she lay Sick for Twenty-eight Years continually, of several grievous Infirmities; and instead of murmuring or making her complaints, she constantly gave God thanks. Above all she was reduc'd to such a condition in her last Sicknes, as to lie Seventeen whole Days without being able to raise the
least

least thing; and her Confessor endeavouring to Comfort and Exhort her to undergo so long a Martyrdom with Patience; the Answer'd, since by the means of the great Saint *Francis*, she had come to know the Grace of JESUS CHRIST her Saviour; she found no difficulty in her Infirmities, nothing insupportable in her Sufferings, nothing hard and painful in the practise of Penance. The Life of Saint *Lidwina*, is also a most wonderful Example in this Point, and very proper for the comfort and encouragement of Persons in their Sickness. This Holy Virgin lay Sick for Thirty-eight Years, in unspeakable Pains and Tortures; she was Bed-ridden for Thirty, without ever all this while once able to put her Foot upon the Ground: And supported all these Afflictions with that Patience and Humility, as to Merit thereby that God shew'd her Daily some notable sign of his favor and kindness.

*Spring Tem. 7.
fol. 277.*

But because in these occasions, we are sometimes mov'd with certain particular Reasons, which under pretence and appearance of good, put an impediment to our intire Resignation to the Divine Will; we will endeavour to Answer and Satisfie all at Large. First, some one may Object, in regard of my self in particular, for as much as it regards my self, I shou'd be wholly indifferent whether I were visited with Sickness, or enjoy'd my Health; but what troubles me most, is, that I imagine my self a burthen to Religion, and a charge to the House I live in. To this I Answer, hereby you Tax and Condemn the Superior's want of Charity and Submission to the Will of God; and must believe it their Duty to Conform themselves with as much Patience to God's Holy Will, as 'tis your own; and to accept of all things, as coming from his Hand; and consequently if it be his Pleasure, to imploy them for some space of time in providing for your necessities, and taking care of you, 'tis but what he requires of 'em: And as you bear Patiently the Crosses and Afflictions he sends you, so they are to accept of a share and part assign'd 'em.

But I see clearly, you will say, and am satisfi'd with the great Charity and Tendernefs of Persons in the SOCIETY: What I now find difficulty in, is, when I consider, if God gave me Health, I cou'd either proceed in my own Improvement, I cou'd Preach with Fruit and Success, or Assist my Neighbor in the knowledge of his Duty, or Imploy my time in the Direction of Souls; and all this while I must lie a Bed,

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and

*Lib. de Cate-
chiz. rudib.
c. 14.*

and be hinder'd by Sickneſs. Saint *Auſtin* ſolves this doubt very clearly: How do you know, ſays he, whether 'tis expedient or not, to obtain what we deſire? Let's think on this, in all the deſigns we frame to our ſelves; and then, if they ſucceed, we may rejoyce; not becauſe we have attain'd to what we deſir'd, but what has been the Will of God? But on the contrary, in caſe our deſigns ſucceed not to our expectation; we are not therefore to Afflict and Contritſtate our ſelves, ſo as to loſe the Peace and Tranquillity of our Mind:

† *Æquus eſt ut nos ejus, quam ut ille noſtram ſequatur voluntatem. Nemo melius ordinat quid agat, niſi qui paratior eſt non agere quod divi- nâ poteſtate prohibetur, quam cupidi- or agere quod humanâ cogitatione meditatur. Id. ubi ſuprà.*

† *For 'tis more reaſonable we Comply with, and Accommodate our ſelves to the Will of God, than that he Accommodates himſelf to ours.* Inſine, as this Great Saint concludes, *No one can ever be better regulated in his Actions, than he who is more diſpos'd, not to perform, what the Divine Power hinders him to Effect, than to what he finds himſelf inclin'd by Human Reaſon to Project and Deſign.* We muſt therefore have ſuch an Indifference of Mind to whatſoever we take in Hand, that, ſuppoſing it pleaſes not God to bring it to the end we propoſe to our ſelves, we remain always ready and prepar'd to exerciſe an intire Conformity with his Holy Will: So that ſuppoſing we are prevented by Sickneſs or ſome other Impediment, and cannot compaſs our Intentions; we are not therefore to trouble or diſquiet our thoughts; how profitable ſoever, and conducing this our deſign might have been to the Service of God, and good of Souls. Father *Avila*, Writing to a certain Prieſt that lay Sick, advis'd him not to conſider what he wou'd do were he in good Health, but how acceptable he wou'd be to God in taking his Sickneſs Patiently: And provided you ſeek only the Will of God, as I queſtion not but you do, what matter is it whether you are Sick or Well; ſince this Divine Will, whence proceeds all our good, is equally accompliſh'd?

*M. Avila Tom.
2. Epiſt.*

* *Sicut Domini placuit, ita factum eſt: Sit nomen Domini benedictum. Job. 1. 21.*

† *Perſectius eſt adverſa tollerare patienter, quam bonis operibus inſudare. Ben. de Grad. viſ. c. 24.*

Saint *Chryſoſtom* affirm's, *Job* Merited more by theſe Words. * *As it pleas'd our Lord, ſo it has happen'd: Blessed be the Name of our Lord*; and by his Submiſſion to the Divine Will in his Afflictions and Sufferings, than by all the Actions he perform'd in his Health and Proſperity. You will Merit alſo more, and become more grateful to God, in Conforming your ſelf wholly to his Will in time of Sickneſs, than in all you can do in perfect Health. Saint *Bonaventure* is of the ſame Opinion: † *There's more Perfection, ſays he, in ſupporting Adverſities with Patience, than in ſeriously applying our ſelves to Good Works*: For God ſtands not in need either of you

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or me to produce in his Church the Fruit he desires. *I have said to our Lord you are my God, since you stand not in need of what I have.* 'Tis he who Preaches to you at present by means of you Sickneſs, and who Teaches you Patience and Submission. Let him go on without Interruption; he knows what is convenient for you, and you are ignorant of it your ſelf. Were we to deſire Health upon any account, it wou'd be to imploy it in ſerving and pleaſing him; but if he wou'd rather have us viſited with Sickneſs, and if it were more pleaſing to him, in ſuffering Patiently all the pains of a troubleſome Diſeaſe, his Holy Will be done. 'Tis what is more for my Profit and Advantage, and what may be moſt convenient for me. God permitted the Apoſtle of Nations Saint Paul to lie in Priſon two whole Years, at a time wherein the Primitive Church had ſo great need of Perſons to Preach the Goſpel. Do not look upon it much if God detains you as it were in Priſon, by a Sickneſs of two Months or two Years, or even of your whole Life, if it be his Pleaſure; ſince you are not ſo neceſſary to his Church, as this Great Apoſtle.

There are alſo ſome other Perſons, who having continual Infirmities, which hinder 'em from following the Diſtribution of time, and occupations of the Community, and forc'd to admit of Particularities in ſeveral things, are very ſenſibly Mortifi'd thereat. For they imagine to themſelves either they are not true Religious as the reſt are, ſince they perform not the Functions requiſite; or at leſt, that theſe Particularities may be of ill Edification; and this chiefly, if the Diſeaſe they undergo appears not ſo great or conſiderable in the Exterior, and only known to God and themſelves, when all People ſee 'em diſpens'd with their Rules. To this I Answer, they have a very juſt and laudable Reaſon, for what they imagine: Yet nevertheleſs, they are to take care that none of theſe conſiderations any way diminith the Conformity they ought to have to the Divine Will in their Afflictions: On the contrary, they ought hence to take an occaſion of increaſing their Merit; whether it be in an abſolute Reſignation of themſelves to God in all the Diſpoſitions he is pleas'd to ſend 'em theſe Afflictions; or whether it be in an ardent deſire of being able to perform with exactneſs and punctuality, all the Exerciſes of Religion, and feeling in themſelves an extream Sorrow in not being able to be preſent thereat, as others are. In this manner, beſides the Merit they purchaſe on one ſide, in ſupporting their

* Dixi Domi-
no: Deus me-
us es tu, quo-
niam bono-
rum meorum
non eges.
Pſal. 115. 2.

Act. 23. 30.

their Infirmary with Patience and Resignation; they Merit on the other side as much, if not more than those who are in Health, and Live in the Regular practise of all their Observances.

*Aug. Serm. 72.
de Tempore.*

Saint *Austin* Preaching on the Obligation all Christians have of Fasting during the time of Lent, and coming to speak of those who by reason of their Indisposition in Health were exempted from this duty, says of 'em, since they are not able to Fast, 'tis sufficient they Sigh and Lament in their Hearts, to see others Fast, and they themselves at the same time constrain'd to Eat. A couragious and Valiant Soldier being carry'd off Wounded in the Engagement, is more concern'd that he cannot any longer shew some notable piece of Service to his Prince in the Battle, than that he suffers the pain of his Wounds, and is to undergo the operations of the Chirurgeon. This ought to be the case of a True and Perfect Religious Person, when he is detain'd by Sickness, and hinder'd from performing the Exercises and Rules of the Order and Community: This hinderance ought to be a more sensible Affliction to him, then the Distemper. But after all, neither this Impediment, nor whatever accident besides shou'd ever hinder us from maintaining an intire Conformity in our Hearts to the Divine Will, during our Sickness; but on the contrary we are to receive it as coming from his Hand, and as sent us, for his greater Glory, and our greater Profit and Advantage.

Saint *Hierom* reports of Holy Abbot *John* the *Egyptian*; who being upon a time very much Importun'd by a certain Religious, to Cure him of a Feaver wherewith he was Afflicted: † *You desire*, sayd the Abbot, *to be freed from a thing which is very necessary for you: For as the Body is cleans'd from Sweat and Noisome Evaporations by Sope, and other such Deterstive Oyntments; so is the Soul Purifi'd, and Cleans'd from all it's Defects, by Corporal Infirmities, and Afflictions.*

† Rem tibi
necessarian
cupis abicere:
Ut enim cor-
pora nitro,
vel aliis hujus-
modi linimen-
tis abluuntur
a fordibus;
Ita animæ,
languoribus
aliisque hujus-
modi castiga-
tionibus puri-
ficantur.
*Hier. in vitis
Ras.*

C H A P. XVII.

That during our Sickness, we are not to Repose our Trust and Hope in the Assistance and Knowledge of Physicians; but in God alone: And that we are to Conform our selves to his Will, not only as to the Sickness in general, but also to every and each Particular Painful circumstance that accompanies it.

WHAT we have already sayd concerning our Sickness in general; must also be understood concerning every circumstance during the same, in particular. Saint Basil, upon this Point gives a very profitable Instruction. He says, we are so to apply our selves to Physicians and Remedies, as not to place therein all our Hopes and Confidence; as King Asa did, who was reprimanded by the Holy Scripture: * *For that in his Sickness he had not Recourse to our Lord; and Confided more in the Science of Physicians:* We must not attribute to them the good or bad success of Remedies, but to God only; who gives 'em what Operation he thinks best: And in case you are destitute of Physicians and Remedies, you are not, says this Holy Father, to Despair therefore of your Recovery. When our Saviour convers'd upon Earth, he Cur'd the Sick, sometimes by his Will only; as when he Heal'd the Leper, saying, † *'Tis my Will, be Cur'd.* sometimes he apply'd some certain things, as when he made Clay with his Spittle, and Anointed the Eyes of the Blind Man, Commanding him to Wash 'em in the Pond of Siloë: At other times he left 'em in their Diseases, and wou'd not Cure

*Bas. in Recul.
Fugiu dispensa-
tis. disp. 55.*

* Nec in infirmitate sua quæsit Dominum, sed magis in Medicorum arte confusus est.
2. Paral. 16. 12.

† Volo, mandare.
Matth. 8. 3.

Joan. 9. 6.

Cure them, whatever Expences they had been at in Physicians and Remedies. God do's the very same; sometimes he conferr's Health, without any help of Remedies or Physicians; sometimes he Operates by the means of things apply'd; and at other times he Frustrates all the Consults of Physicians, and makes their Remedies successles; to Teach us thereby, that we are not to put our Confidence but in him alone. King *Ezechias* ascrib'd not his Cure to the Plaister of Figg's apply'd to him by the Prophet *Isay*; but to God only. You are to ascribe your Cure in like manner, not to the care and diligence of the Physicians, or the efficaciousness of Remedies, but to the Goodness of God, who has Power to Cure all sorts of Diseases: * *For 'tis not Herb's or Fomentations which wrought the Cure, says the Wife-man, but, O Lord 'tis your Word which has the Vertue to Heal all Diseases.* But if on the contrary you recover not your Health, you are not therefore to lay the fault on the Physicians or their Remedies; but must reflect all comes from God, and 'tis his pleasure you shall not recover of this Disease.

When it likewise happens, that either the Physician understands not your Distemper, or has not us'd that diligence he ought; or the Infirmarian has not had that care of you, you are to ascribe the cause to the sole Will of God. And so you are not to say, 'twas throu' their defect you relaps'd into your Feaver; but you must be convinc'd, God made use of 'em to occasion your relapse; and must look upon it as order'd expressly by him. For altho, in as much as regards those who have the care of you, these things may be defective in themselves and even culpable; nevertheless in respect of God who permits 'em so to fall out, and with whom nothing happens by pure chance, 'tis an effect of his Providence which has determin'd it after that manner. 'Twas not by meer casualty that Old *Toby* Slept under the Swallow's Nest, and the Dung which fell into his Eyes struck him Blind; but 'twas by an unalterable Ordination of the Divine Will; † *The Lord, says the Holy Scripture, permitted this Temptation to befall him; to the end Posterity might have an Example of Patience, as it had in the Person of Job.* And the Angel himself speaking to *Toby* after his Cure, sayd; * *Because you were acceptable to God, 'twas requisite you should be prov'd by Temptation.*

4 Reg. 20. 7.

* Etenim neque herba, neque malagma sanavit eos, sed tuus Dominus, scimus, qui sanat omnia.
Sep. 16. 12.

† Hanc autem tentationem permittit Dominus evenire illi, ut posterius daretur exemplum patientie, sicut & Sancti Job.
Job. 2. 12.
* Quia acceptus eras Domino, necesse fuit, ut tentatio probaret te.
Job. 12. 13.

'Tis

'Tis recounted in the Lives of the Holy Fathers, that Abbot Stephen falling Sick, the Brother Infirmarian wou'd needs make him a little Cake; and by a mistake, instead of making it with Sweet Oyl, he pour'd in the Oyl of Linseed, which is of an extream bitter tast. Having prepar'd it, he offer'd it the Holy Abbot; who perceiving by the tast what had happen'd, he nevertheless Eat some part thereof without taking the least notice. The Brother another time made him a second Cake in the same manner; and seeing the Holy Abbot after he had tasted it, Eat no more; being very urgent with him to Eat, took a piece himself, thereby to excite him and shew him the way; but he had scarce put it in his Mouth, when perceiving the bitterness, he was very sensibly troubl'd and afflicted thereat, calling himself a Poysoner, and that he had Poyson'd the Abbot. Torment not your self my Son, sayd the Holy Man; if it had not been God's Will, you shou'd have mistaken one Pot for another, this had not happen'd. We have several other Examples of Saints, who submitted themselves with wonderful Patience and Resignation to all the Physicians prescriptions, and remedies; altho they were contrary to the Nature of the Distemper. And 'tis in this manner we are to consider the defects of the Physicians, and negligence of Infirmarians, and those who have care of us, without complaining of those, or casting the fault upon these, if any accidents befall us.

Our Vertue never appears more than in these sorts of Trial's; and a Religious Man in his Sicknes Edifies the whole Community; when he receives all things as coming from the Hand of God, with an equal Disposition and Tranquillity of Mind, and forgetting in a manner himself, delivers up himself to be intirely govern'd and manag'd by his Superiors, and such as have charge of him in his Infirmary. You confide in your Superior, says Saint Basil, in things appertaining to your Soul; and why not also in things that regard your Body? You put into his Hands the care of your Salvation; and why do you not commit to him the care of your Health? Our Rules permit, and even command us in our Sicknes, not to be solicitous for our Body; and since they discharge us of that trouble, we shou'd most willingly imbrace so profitable a permission, and so advantageous a command. But on the contrary, that Religious Person extreamly disedifies a Community, when he assumes

Derail. d. 8. 9.

Basil. in Regul. fustius disp. reg. 48.

3. p. Conf. c. 2; lit. G.

Tom. I.

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to himself an over great care of his Body during his Sickness; when he takes not Patiently what is order'd him, nor after the manner 'tis order'd; and fails not to complain, and sometimes even murmur, if all things be not done as he desires.

Cassian says very well, that the Indisposition of the Body, is no wise Prejudicial to the good Disposition of the Soul; but on the contrary, is very much conducing; provided it be receiv'd as it ought. But take care, says he, lest the Infirmary of the Body go's so far as to Infect the Soul; and it will certainly communicate it self, and give occasion to the Superior of being more concern'd at your Spiritual than at your Corporal Disease, if you carry your self so in your Sickness, as to take an occasion of doing nothing but your own Will, and according to your own Inclinations, and cast off all Tractableness and Obedience. We do not cease to be Religious, by being Sick; and we must not think we are exempt from our Obligations, when we are Indispos'd in Health; and that then we have nothing to do but think of our Health and Convenience; and that we are for that time dispens'd with making Progress in our Spiritual Advancement. A Sick Person, says *Saint Ignatius*, ought to endeavour by shewing great Humility and Patience, to Edifie his Brethren no less in time of Sickness, than in that of Health: *Saint Chrysostom* upon these Words of the Psalmist, † O Lord you have cover'd us with your good Will, as it were with a Buckler; says, * This Life is a perpetual Warfare, where we are always to be in readiness of giving Battle: And add's, as well Sick Persons, as those who are in Health, are equally oblig'd in the Engagement: And the most proper time for this Combat is in the time of Sickness, when our Soul is Assaulted on all sides with Pains and Afflictions, when 'tis Seiz'd with Grief, and the Devil Incites us each Moment to vent forth some complaining Words, and lash out into some Impatient Expressions. 'Tis then chiefly we are to give more evident proofs of our Vertue. In our very Bed, says *Seneca*, amidst the Torments and Pains of a violent Disease, we have as great an opportunity of exercising our Courage in Suffering, as in the Field of Battle in Fighting. The main part of our Force consists in rather undergoing with Constancy, than making a vigorous Attack: Which the Wise Man signifies in these words: † A Patient Man is better than the Man of Courage; and he who has a Command over himself, Excell's him who takes Cities by Force.

C H A P.

Lib. 5. de In-
fir. remiss. c. 7.

Reg. 50. sum.

† Domine, ut
scuto bonæ
voluntatis co-
ronasti nos.
Psalm. 5. 13.

* Et ægroti &
fani: Morbi
enim tempore,
huius maxime
pugnæ tempus
est, quando do-
lores undique
conturbant a-
nimam, quan-
do ad eam dia-
bolus incitans
ut acerbum
aliquid ver-
bum dicamus.
Chrys. in illa
verba. Psalm. 5.

† Melior est
paciens viro
forti, & qui
dominatur a-
nimo suo, ex-
pugnator ur-
bium.
Prov. 16. 32.

C H A P. XVIII.

*What has been sayd in the Precedent Chapter
is confirm'd by Examples.*

BLOSIUS in the Life of Saint Gertrude, recount's how our Saviour upon a time appearing to her, and telling her he left both Health and Sickneſs to her free Diſpoſition, to make her choice of either which pleas'd her beſt: *What I deſire, O Lord, ſayd ſhe, is, that you have no reſpect to my deſire and choice, but that you effect and accompliſh what is moſt to your greater Honour and Glory.*

Blas. c. 11. moſt Spirit.

A certain Perſon who had a particular Devotion to Saint Thomas of Canterbury, falling Sick made a Pilgrimage to the Saint's Tomb, that by his Interceſſion God wou'd Cure him of his Infirmary. He obtain'd his Petition, and being upon his Journey home in perfect Health, he began ſeriously to Meditate and conſider, whether perhaps he had not done himſelf an injury in deſiring to be Cur'd of his Diſeaſe, ſince he was not certain but it might have been for his greater good, to have remain'd ſtill therein. This thought had ſo great an Influence upon him, that he return'd again to the Sepulcher of the Saint, and there earneſtly deſir'd he wou'd demand of God, what was moſt proper for him and conducing to his good. It pleas'd God to caſt him again into the ſame Infirmary, which he receiv'd with a ſenſible Joy and Comfort, underſtanding thereby it was that which was moſt advantageous and convenient for him.

Marul. l. 5. c. 4. Jac. de Voragine.

We Read in the Life of Saint Vedastus Biſhop of Arras, an Example ſomewhat the ſame, of a Blind Man who being preſent at the Tranſlation of this Saint's Relick's, was very deſirous of recovering his Sight, that he might ſee them: His Petition was granted, he ſaw what he deſir'd, and preſently put himſelf in Prayer to God, that if the Sight he newly had obtain'd were not for his greater good, he

Surin.

might become Blind again; and having finish'd his Prayer, he became depriv'd of it as before.

Hieron. Epist.
ad Cassr. cccum.

Saint *Athanasius* having sent for Saint *Anthony* to *Alexandria*, there to help and assist him in Confuting and Extirpating the Heresies which were spread abroad in that place; a Learn'd Man who was Blind, call'd *Didimus*, conferr'd with the Holy Abbot concerning several passages of Scripture. After the Conference ended, Saint *Anthony* demanded of him if he look'd not upon it a sensible Affliction to be Blind? *Didimus* having some difficulty to own it, at first made no Answer: But being press'd even to the third time, he Confess'd at last Ingeniously, the loss of his Sight was a very sensible Mortification to him. I am amaz'd, sayd the Saint, that so Prudent and Learn'd a Man as you, shou'd be so concern'd and troubl'd at the loss of a thing, which is common to Flies and Ant's; and rejoyce not in possessing what the Apostles only, and most Eminent Saint's have Merited.

Chron. Ord. Prae-
dic. 1. p. 1. 6.
c. 49.

We find in the History of the Order of Saint *Dominick*, that this great Saint being then at *Rome*, was accusom'd sometimes to Visit a Holy Person, who falling Sick of a most dangerous Distemper, had retir'd to the Gate of Saint *John Lateran*, and there immur'd her self in a Tower between four Wall's. This Holy Woman was call'd *Bona*; and her Life was so conformable to her Name, that being instructed by the Sovereign Master of all, she had learnt amidst the most sharp pang's and torments of her Sicknes, and now almost reduc'd to the point of Death, to conserve a perpetual Joy and Tranquillity of Mind. Her Disease was a Cancer, that Eat away and Consum'd her Breast, which was so Putrifi'd and Corrupted that it was almost turn'd into Worm's, which were bred there in great abundance; and yet she underwent this Cross with so much Patience, as to render it a continual Subject of her comfort and thanksgiving. Saint *Dominick* seeing amidst her grievous Torments, she still retain'd so much Vertue and Resignation, had so tender an Affection, and so ardent a Charity and Love for her, as to go very frequently to hear her Confession, and Administer to her the Blessed Sacrament. One Day after having Confess'd and Communicated her, he had a great desire to see her Noisom and Painful Soar, the very sight of which was enough to breed horror in the Spectators; and at last with much difficulty obtain'd his

his Petition. When she had open'd her Breast, and he beheld on one side the Loathsomness, the Corruption and Worms; on the other the Patience and Content of Mind, wherewith the Holy Woman suffer'd this Infirmary, he found himself touch'd with an extream Compassion; and preferring the Noisomness of the Disease, before all the Riches of this World, he earnestly intreated she wou'd bestow one of those Worms upon him, to keep as a precious Relick. Which she wou'd by no means consent to, before he had promis'd to restore it her again; because she took so great a Pleasure in seeing these Worms Eat, and Consume her in a manner alive, that when any of 'em chanc'd to drop to the Ground, she presently took it up again with great care, and replac'd in the hole it had fell from. Upon these terms she at last gave him one; which he scarce had receiv'd into his Hand, when on a sudden it was chang'd into a Rich Pearl of an inestimable Value. The other Religious who were present with the Saint, astonish'd at the passage wou'd needs have him keep it; the Sick Person the same time desir'd back her Worm, demanding of him back her Pearl; which the Saint restor'd, and immediately it was chang'd into it's former shape, and restor'd by the Holy Woman to the place it had been taken from, and where it had been Ingender'd and Nourish'd for so long a time. Whereupon Saint *Dominick* Praying for her, and giving her his Blessing departed. And as he was descending the Tower, all the Loathsome Impostume and Corruption of the Holy Womans Breast together with the Worm's fell off, and the Flesh closing by degrees, she was intirely heal'd in few Days, and Testifi'd to the World the Wonders and Miracles, God had wrought in her by the means of his Servant Saint *Dominick*.

It is recounted in the same History, of a certain Religious call'd Brother *Reginald*, who being as yet a Secular Man, came to Saint *Dominick* to desire the Habit of the Order; and at the very time he was to have been receiv'd, fell Sick of a Feaver, which the Physicians judg'd Mortal. The Saint very solicitous for the Sick Persons recovery, offer'd up frequent Prayers for this effect; and as well the one as the other, invok'd incessantly the assistance of the Blessed Virgin, with great Fervor and Devotion. One Day whilst they were both in Prayer for this Intention, the Queen of Angels all Resplendent with Rays of Glory, and

l. p. l. r. c. 83.

and accompany'd with two other Virgins, which appear'd to be Saint *Cecily* and Saint *Catherine*, enter'd the Sick Man's Chamber, and drawing nigh to his Bed ask'd of him, *What he desir'd at her Hands? I am come to know,* sayd she, *what 'tis you wou'd have me do for you; tell me, and I will grant it.* The Sick Person somewhat surpriz'd at so strange an Apparition, and seiz'd with fear and respect, knew not what to do or say: But one of the Saints that were with the Glorious Virgin, soon freed him of the perplexity he was in, bidding him ask nothing in particular, and put himself intirely in the Hands of the Mother of God, who knew what was necessary for him better than he himself. He imbrac'd this prudent advice; and addressing himself to the Blessed Virgin, sayd; *I demand nothing; I have no other Will but only your's, and I deliver up all I have to your disposal.* Whereupon the Blessed Virgin taking the Oyl the other two Saints had brought with 'em, Anointed him after the manner of *Extream-Uction*: And the very Touch of her Sacred Hand's had such a Vertue, that the Sick Man found himself wholly Cur'd in an instant, and in as perfect Health, as thô he had never had the least fit of a Fever. But what's yet more, is, that this benefit conferr'd upon his Body, communicating it self even to his Soul, left therein such an impression of Purity, as from that very Moment, he never found in himself at any time or in any place, or occasion, the least Motion or Inclination to the contrary.

*Hist. Eccl. p. 2.
lib. 6, c. 2.*

The Church History relates, that amongst the many Great and Eminent Persons who Flourish'd in the Fourth Age, there was a certain Religious Man nam'd *Benjamin*, who had receiv'd of God the Grace of Curing Diseases by the only Imposition of Hand's, or Praying for the Disease'd party, and an Anointing 'em with some Oyl that had been Bless'd. Notwithstanding this Talent in Curing others, he fell Sick himself of a Dropsie, whereby his Body became swell'd up to that degree that he cou'd no longer enter the Door of his Cell. After passing eight Month's in this condition, he Dy'd; and having all the time of his Sickness heal'd all sorts of Infirmities in others, yet never complain'd he cou'd not heal himself. He also endeavour'd to comfort such as were Sick of the same Distemper; and desir'd they wou'd Pray to to God for his Soul, and not concern themselves

Selves for his Body; For, sayd he, when I was in good Health, it profited and avail'd me little or nothing at all.

We Read in the Book call'd the *Spiritual Meadow*, of a certain Religious, call'd *Barnaby*; who having by chance run a Splinter of Wood into his Foot, wou'd not for some time either pull it out himself, or permit others to ease him of it: To the end, sayd he, I may have something to suffer for the Love of God. He frequently sayd to those who came to Visit him; By how much the Exterior Man is Mortifi'd and Weaken'd by Sufferings, by so much the Interior is Inabl'd and Corroborated.

Prat. Spirit.
C. 10.

'Tis recorded in the Life of Saint *Pachomius* of a Religious Person nam'd *Zachens*, who falling Sick of an Epilepsie, or the Falling sickness, never abated any thing of his accustomed Abstinence; which was never to Eat more then a piece of Bread with a little Salt, and never to dispense with the time of Quire, and all the other Obligations of his fellow Religious. All the spare time he cou'd find, was took up in making Mat's, Basket's and Cords: And by reason the Rushes he us'd, were rough and hard, his Hands were gall'd and cut in several places; so that the Blood issu'd forth Daily. At Night before he betook himself to his rest, he Meditated upon some passage of the Scripture; and then making the sign of the Cross upon all his Body, he repos'd till *Matins*; after which, he remain'd in Prayer and Contemplation till Morning. This was the ordinary distribution of time, and this the Method the Holy Man practis'd in Sicknes, It chanc'd once, that another Religious coming to give him a Visit, and seeing his Hand's all cut, and the Skin off, advis'd him to Anoint 'em with Oyl, assuring him of the ease he wou'd thereby receive. He follow'd his Counsel, and made use of the Remedy; which instead of mitigating, doubl'd his pain: Having represented his suffering to Saint *Pachomius*; and do you think my Son, reply'd the Saint, God sees not our Infirmities, and cannot Heal 'em when he pleases? But if on the contrary he let's us alone, and permits us to suffer; why, do you think, do's he deal so with us, unless he wou'd have us wholly resign'd in putting all the care of our selves, and all our trust and confidence into his Hand's; that having thus afforded us a greater occasion of Merit by sufferings, he may afterwards recompence the small Mortifications and Afflictions he sends us in this Life, with a Celestial

Sm int.

Celestial Crown for Eternity? *Zachens* was so mov'd with these words of the Saint, that he reply'd, *Forgive me, my Dear Father, and Pray to God that he would Pardon in me this over eager desire of being Chr'd, and my little Confidence and Conformity to his Divine Will.* From which time he enter'd upon so rigorous a course of Penance for a fault so little, as to restrain for a Years space, the small sustenance he took before, to only every other Day, weeping and lamenting continually all the time. The Great *Pachomius* was often accusom'd to relate this Example to his Religious, to Instruct 'em how to suffer with Resignation, and have always an intire confidence in God during their sufferings, and also to amend and correct in themselves the least faults and imperfections.

C H A P. XIX.

Of the Conformity we are to have to the Will of God, as well in order to Death as Life.

OUR Conformity to the Will of God, ought to extend it self as well to what appertains to Dying as what appertains to Living. For altho generally speaking this is one of the most difficult Points, in as much as nothing is more terrible, nothing more dreadful than Death; nevertheless, this difficulty is greatly diminish'd and facilitated in Religious People, who have already advanc'd half way, or rather surpass'd almost all the obstacles that occur. First, one of the Motives which makes Worldly Persons have such an apprehension and horror of Death, and tremble at it's approach, is, for that Death deprives 'em of their Riches, of their Honors, their Pleasures, their Divertisements, and all the commodities they enjoy'd in this Life: 'Tis by Death they are separated from their Kindred, their Friends; and some snatch'd away from a Wife they passionately Love, and others from their Children, for whose subsistence and maintenance they have not as yet provided. But a Religious Man is free from all these ties and obligations; and as

he has nothing to part with, so there's nothing to afflict and torment him at that hour. We easily pluck out a Tooth, when we have loosen'd it before-hand from the Gum's; but if we endeavour to pull it out violently without using the means aforesaid, we shall find the pain and torment. It is the same with a Religious Person, who is freed and disingag'd from the things of this Life: He conceives no difficulty in parting with 'em at his Death, because he voluntarily cut's himself off from 'em before-hand; and enters with Merit into Religion: But People of the World in quitting these things only by constraint and necessary, and when they are forc'd, quit 'em consequently with great difficulty and reluctance; and sometimes even without any Merit; since we may justly say they do not so much quit these things, as these things quit Them. Amongst many other advantages we receive by a Religious Life, this certainly is not the least. For Persons of the World, as Saint *Chrysostom* well remark's, having a tie and affection to their Wealth, to their Pleasures and Commodities of this Life, find Death very dreadful. * *O Death, how Bitter is thy Memory to a Man that has Peace in his Riches?* If whilst they Contemplate it but at a distance, it is so terrible; what will it be, when they behold it Present? And if the very thought of it be so affrightful, what will it prove when they come to Experience it? It is not the same with Religious; who as they have heretofore Devested themselves of all things, instead of finding Afflictions and Miseries in Death, they find Comfort and Content. They look upon it as the term of all their Sufferings, and as a passage, whereby they are to go, to receive the Reward and Recompence of all they heretofore forsook for the Love of God.

Another thing that still troubles those of the World at their Death, and makes it more dreadful, is, says Saint *Ambrose*, the bad State of their Conscience, and want of those dispositions requisite to Die Well. A Religious Man is far from being guilty of this, or subject to such a misfortune: All his Life is but a continual preparation for Death; and 'tis for this we find the Example of a great Saint, who being desir'd by the Physicians to prepare himself for Death; *I have done nothing else*, answer'd the Holy Man, *since I took the the Habit of Religion.* This ought to be the Exercise of a Religious; and he cannot any way comply with the obligation of his state and con-

Tom. I.

A a a a

dition,

*Chrys. hom. 14.
sup. epist. 1.
ad Timoth.*

* O mors,
quàm amara
est memoria
tua homini
pacem habenti
in substantiis
suis.
Eclli. 41. r.

*Ambrosius de
bono mortis
ca. 8.*

dition, unless he be always in that disposition, wherein our Saviour JESUS CHRIST, wou'd have him attend his coming. † *Let your Loyn's be girt, and burning Lamp's in your Hand's.* Saint Gregory says, girding the Loyn's, is a sign of Chastity; and burning Lamp's in your Hand's denotes a practise of good Works: And as these are the most perspicuous things in a Religious Life, so a true Religious has no reason of apprehending Death.

We must take notice here of one thing very proper to our present Matter, and which we insinuated heretofore. That one of the chiefest signs of a good Conscience, and that we have made our Peace with God, is, to be intirely Conform'd to his Divine Will in all things touching the hour of our Death, and to attend and expect it, * *As they who expected their Masters return from the Marriage.* On the contrary, 'tis a bad sign when we have not the Conformity and Submission we here speak of, and find a great reluctance and anxiety in Death. A Sheep is led to the Butchery without any resistance; and therefore the Holy Scripture speaking of the Death of our Saviour JESUS CHRIST, says, † *He was led like a Sheep to the Slaughter.* But the Swine which is an unclean Creature makes a most hideous noise when it is to be Kill'd, and struggles with all it's force against the approach of Death. The same difference is found betwixt the Just, who are signifi'd by the Sheep, and the Wicked and Carnal Man, who is design'd by the Swine. A Criminal Condemn'd to Die, and who knows he is not to leave the Prison, unless to be brought to Execution, trembles every time he hears the Prison Door open'd: But he who is declar'd Innocent, finds a joy and comfort when he hears the same Door open'd; because he imagines, 'tis to restore him to his Liberty. In the like manner, a bad Christian when he is brought to his Agony, and feels in his Body the approaching Pangs of Death, is troubl'd and afflicted, and even sometimes runs into despair; because having a Conscience charg'd and guilty, he fancies each Moment he is to be precipitated into Eternal Flames; when he who has his Conscience clear, and sees his end approach, finds in himself a joy and delight, as being persuaded the time of his Deliverance is arriv'd, and his Eternal Repose at Hand. Let us carry our selves therefore after that manner as becomes true Religious; and we shall find, not only any repugnance in Conforming

† Sint lumbi vestri præcincti, & lucernæ ardentes in manibus vestris.
Luc. 12. 35.
Gregor. hom. 13.
in Evangelia.

* Et vos similes hominibus expectantibus Dominum suum, quando revertatur à nuptiis.
Luc. 12. 36.

† Tanquam ovīs ad occisionem ductus est.
Mat. 26. 7.
Mat. 26. 32.

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Conforming our selves to God's Holy Will in what belongs to our last End; but on the contrary, shall have subject of rejoicing when we find it at hand: We shall arrive thereto even by our own wishes and desires, and shall say with the Psalmist, * *Deliver, O Lord, my Soul out of it's Prison.*

Saint Gregory upon these words of Job, *And you shall not fear the Beasts of the Earth*, says, † *The security of a Soul at the Article of Death, is the beginning of a Just Man's recompence.* He begins from that time, to enjoy that Spiritual Peace and Tranquillity, which he is soon after to enjoy for Eternity; and from that time have as it were a taste before-hand of his Felicity: When the Wicked begins from that very Moment to feel the Torments of Hell, by the fear and apprehension whereby he is Tormented; and the Remorse of Conscience which then Tortures him. 'Tis a very laudable Practise, says Saint John Climacus, to expect Death continually: But it belongs only to the Just to desire it each Moment. And Saint Ambrose commends mightily such as are in so Holy a Disposition. 'Tis the same wherein the Ancient Patriarch's were, *When they declar'd themselves as Pilgrim's and Strangers upon the Earth*: For as the Apostle very well takes notice of, * *Those who speak in this manner, shew manifestly they tend to their own Country.* This it was, occasion'd so many sigh's and aspirations in the Royal Prophet, when complaining to God in a most tender and affectionate manner he sayd, † *Miserable Man that I am, why is my Habitation prolong'd?* If then the Ancient Patriarch's of the Old Law us'd this manner of speaking, and were of these sentiments, when as yet the Gates of Heaven were not open, nor cou'd they then enter therein by Death; what may not we at present say, when these Gates are open'd for us in that manner, as at the very moment our Soul is purif'd of it's Faults and Imperfections, it shall be admitted to the Fruition of God, and plac'd in Eternal Felicity.

* Educ de custodia animam meam.
Psal. 141. 8.

Gregor. lib. 6. cap. 16. super illa verba, Et bestias terræ non formidabis.
Job. 5. 22.

† Iustus namque initium retributionis est ipsa plenitudoque in obitu securitas mentis.

Climac. ca. 6.

Ambros. in orat. fun. de obitu Valentinian. Imperat. l. 5. c. 10.

* Constat, quia peregrini & hospites sunt super terram. Qui hæc dicunt, significant se patriam inquirere.
Ad Heb. 11. 13. c. 14.

† Hei mihi, quia incolatus meus prolongatus est!
Psal. 119. 5.

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CHAP.

C H A P. XX.

*Some Reasons why we may Lawfully and Piously
desire Death.*

TO the end we may arrive to a more Perfect Conformity with the Will of God as well in order to Death, as to Life; we will here advance some reasons, for which we may desire Death; and every one may take to himself, and make use of what he likes best, and is most to his purpose. The first reason why we may with all Justice desire Death, is, to be freed from the Miseries of this Mortal Life: * *For Death, says the Wise-man, is to be preferr'd before a Miserable Life.* 'Tis in this nature Persons of the World oftentimes desire Death, and even Petition it of God: And questionless they may do this without a Sin, since the Miseries of this Life are such and so numerous, that they are permitted to desire Death, the better to avoid 'em. The Saints say, one reason why God heap'd upon Men so many Afflictions and Tribulations, is, to hinder 'em from a strict tie and adherence to things of this World; and casting off the love of this Life, which is Transitory and Mortal, that they may convert all their Thoughts and Affections to the Life to come, which is Eternal; † *Where there are no more Sigh's, no Clamors, no Sorrows or Afflictions.* Saint *Austin* says, God out of his boundless Mercy, has order'd this present Life, which is so painful and difficult, shou'd also be short; and that which we expect hereafter, shou'd be Eternal: To the end that this with it's pains and afflictions may pass away speedily, and the joy and happiness of the next continue for Eternity. * *This Life, says Saint Ambrose, is so full of Evils, that Death in comparison of it seems rather a Remedy than a Punishment.* And in case God had ordain'd it as a Penalty, we shou'd have had reason to desire him to grant it us as a Favor, whereby we are freed from

our

* Melior est
mors quam
vita amara.
Ecclesi. 30. 17.

† Neque luctus,
neque clamor,
neque dolor erit ultra.

Apost. 21. 4.
August. Serm.
37. de Sanctis.

* Tantis malis
hæc vita repleta est, ut
comparatione ejus, mors remedium putetur esse, non poena.
Ambros. Serm.
sup. c. 7.
Job. 1. 2.

our crosses and afflictions. 'Tis true indeed, Worldly Persons often offend God in this Point, by their impatience wherewith they receive afflictions, and by their repinings and complaints in demanding it of God: But supposing they desir'd it with a most intire Submission of Mind; and sayd, Lord, if it be your Holy Pleasure, free me from this miserable condition I am in, I have liv'd long enough; without doubt they wou'd not commit any Offence herein.

In the second place, we may desire Death after a more Lawful and more Perfect manner; which is, not to behold the Persecutions of the Church, and the Daily Offences committed against God's Sovereign Majesty. In this Nature it was the Prophet *Elias*; desir'd it, during the Persecution of *Achab* and *Jezabel*: For seeing that both the One and the Other, after having demolish'd the Temples and Altars, and Kill'd the rest of the Prophets, sought also after Him to put him to Death; and that he cou'd not any way prevent so great a Violence, and so horrid Sacrileges, full of Sorrow and Indignation, he betook himself to the Desert; and sitting down under a Tree, † he desir'd to Die, and sayd, *'tis enough O Lord; take away my Life, since I am not better than my Fore-Fathers.* The great *Judas Machabews*, Captain of God's People Animating his Men to Battle, * *It is better, says he, to Die in the Field, than be Spectators of the Miseries of our Country, and the Prophanation of Holy things.* When the City of *Hippo* in *Africa* was Besieg'd by the *Vandals*, who came from *Spain*, and put all to Fire and Sword, without respect of Condition Sex or Age: Saint *Austin*, who was then Bishop of the place, beholding so Lamentable a Desolation, the Town's Ruin'd and Deserted, Churches Pillag'd, and the People wandring without their Prelates and Pastors, ceas'd not to Implore the Mercy of God, by continual Tears and Supplications. One Day assembling together his Clergy, *I have desir'd of our Lord, sayd he, either to free you from the present Calamities, or to give you the Grace to support 'em with Patience and Constancy, or else to take me out of this Life, that I may not be inforc'd to behold so great Miseries and Afflictions; and it has Pleas'd him to grant me the last Petition.* Infine, he fell Sick immediately upon it, and Dy'd of the same Sicknes, in the third Month of the Siege. The like Example is recounted of Saint *Ignatius*, and without doubt 'tis a Perfection proper only

† Petivit animæ suæ ut moreretur, & ait: Sufficit mihi, Domine, tolle animam meam; neque enim melior sum quam patres mei.

3 Reg. 19. 4.
* Melius est mori in bello quam videre mala gentis nostræ & Sanctorum.
1 Mac. 3. 58.

In ejus viâ lib. 4. ca. 16.

to

to Saints, to be so much afflicted and touch'd with the Calamities of the Church, and the Offences Committed against the Divine Majesty, as to desire rather to Die than be Eye witnesses of the same.

'Tis also a very laudable and pious practise, to desire Death, and even beg it of God, that we may no more be in a condition of Offending him. For 'tis certain, as long as we Live, we can never be responsible for our selves, and never out of danger of falling into Mortal Sin; since others who were arriv'd to a higher pitch of Perfection, who had receiv'd greater Talents and Gifts of God, and who were really Saint's, and Saint's in an eminent degree, were subject to fall. This is one of the principal reasons that makes the true Servants of God tremble, and makes them desire with more earnestness to be freed from the Bonds of this Mortal Life. We may also by a Holy Fervor of Zeal, desire we had never been Born, that so we might never have fell into Sin; since Sin is a greater Evil, than never to have been; and it wou'd have been better we never had been Born than to have Sinn'd. With how greater reason may we then wish to Die, not to Sin any more? Our Lord JESUS CHRIST speaking of him who was to Betray him, sayd, † *It were better for that Man, he had never been Born.* And Saint Ambrose Explicating upon this Subject those words of Ecclesiasticus, * *I have preferr'd the condition of the Dead before that of the Living, and have esteem'd him who is not yet Born, more Happy than either;* † *The Dead,* says he, *are preferr'd before the Living; because they have ceas'd to Sin: And he who is not yet Born, is in a better State than he who is Dead; because he has never Sinn'd.* 'Tis therefore a very commendable Exercise, to produce frequently in time of Prayer, these sort of Acts, saying; Lord, let not Sin separate me from you: If I am to be miserable in Offending you for the future, let me rather Die; for I desire not Life, unless it be to employ it in your Service; nor wou'd I Live longer unless I cou'd discharge my self as I ought in your Service, and not fail in acquitting my self in my Duty. This is a very Holy and Advantageous practise; because it comprehends an extream horror of Sin, and great sentiments of Humility, and Love towards God; and herein we prefer the most acceptable Petition to God, we possibly are able. We find in the Life

† Bonum erat ei: si natus non fuisset homo ille.

Matth. 26. 24.

* Et laudavi magis mortuos quam viventes, & feliciorum utroque judicavi qui necdum natus est.

Eccle. 4. 2.

† Mortuus præfertur viventi, quia peccare desit: Mortuo præfertur, qui natus non est, quia peccare nescivit.

Ambros. ser. 18. sup. Psal. 118.

Life of Saint Lewis King of France, that Queen Blanche his Mother was accusom'd to tell him, *She would rather see him Dead, than once have him fall into Mortal Sin;* which Holy desire of her's was so grateful to God, and drew down so great a Blessing upon this Prince, that, as 'tis recorded, he never once Offended God Mortally. Perhaps the same desires may produce in us the like Effects.

But we are not to desire Death only to avoid Mortal Sins: We may desire it even to avoid Venial ones, which are so frequent in us in this Life; and 'tis a very laudable and reasonable Motive: For a true Servant of God ought to be resolutely determin'd, rather to Die than incur a Mortal Sin; nay, even the very telling a Lye, which may be but a Venial one. And 'tis certain, as short a time soever we have to Live, 'tis impossible not to fall into innumerable Venial Sins: * *For the Just Man fall's seven times a Day;* that is to say, frequently: And the longer he Lives, the more numerous will his fallings be. But the Zealous Servants of God stop not here; but proceed so far as to Petition to Die, that they may not be subject to so many Defects, so many Imperfections; so many Temptations and Frailties wherewith Man's Life is Replenish'd. *O Lord what do I Suffer;* says a Holy Religious Man, *when in Prayer and Meditation of Heavenly things, I have a thousand Carnal and Worldly Thoughts, which present themselves to my Imagination in whole Troops.* 'Tis the misfortune of this present Life, never to want Miseries and Afflictions; 'tis beset with Ambushes, and surrounded with Enemies; one Temptation is scarce over when a new one succeeds; and sometimes we have scarce time to overcome one, when we are Assaulted suddenly with several others we foresaw not. How can we be enamour'd with a Life so full of Anguish and Labor, and so obnoxious to Accidents and Calamities? How can we call it a Life, which produces so many kinds of Deaths? A great Saint was accusom'd to say, that were it put to his choice, he would choose Death, as the only means of putting his Soul out of apprehension of ever being capable of Acting any thing contrary to the Love of God. It is a mark of greater Perfection, to desire Death for the avoiding Venial Sins, and such Faults and Imperfections as are of less Moment, than to desire it for the avoiding Mortal.

* Septies enim in die cadet iustus. Prov. 24. 16.

De Imit. Christi. lib. 3. ca. 10.

Mortal. For by desiring it as to Mortal, there may be rather a certain fear of Hell, and more of Self-love than the Love of God: But to Love God with that Fervor and Affection, as not to desire a longer Life, for fear of falling into Venial Sins, and not incur the least Imperfections, is doubtless a very pure Intention and a consummated Vertue.

But some may Object, 'tis for the expiation of my Sins and faults that I desire to Live. To this I answer, that if by living longer we diminish Daily something of the number of our Faults, and add not new ones to the old, this desire wou'd be good: But if instead of cancelling your old Debts, you still add new, and if the more you Live, the more you are to Answer for to God, then this Objection has no place. † Wherefore do we desire Life so earnestly, says Saint Bernard, since the more we Live, the more we Offend God; and the number of our Days increase not, unless to increase our Offences? Saint Hierom speaking of the same Point, What difference do you think, says he, is there betwixt him who Dy's in his Youth, and he who Dy's in Old Age, unless the Old Man being more burden'd with Sins than the Young Man, has a larger account to make to God? 'Tis a very Holy Resolution made by Saint Bernard upon this Subject, when his extream Humility suggested him words fitter to be apply'd to us than him: * I am asham'd of Living, says he, and profit so little; I am affraid of Dying, because I am not Prepar'd: But after all, I had rather Die, and commit my self to the Mercy of God, which is Infinitely Good, than be a Subject of Scandal to my Neighbor, by the Ill Example of my Life. Father Avila affirm's, whosoever finds in himself but an indifferent Disposition to Vertue, ought rather to desire Death, than Life, since he Lives in continual danger, which wou'd cease intirely by Death. † For what is Death, says Saint Ambrose, but the Burial of our Vices, and the Resurrection of our Vertues.

† Cur ergo tantopere vitam istam desideramus, in qua quantum, amplius vivimus, tanto plus peccamus: Quantum, est vita longior, tanto culpa numerosior.
Bern. c. 2. Med.
Hier. Epist. ad Heliod.

* Vivere erubescere, quia parum proficio: Mori timeo, quia non sum paratus. Malo tamen mori, & misericordiz Dei me committere, & commendare, quia benignus & misericors est, quam de malicia conversione alicui scandalum facere.
Bern. de inter. dom. ca. 35.

† Quid est mors, nisi sepultura vitiorum, & virtutum suscitatio? Amb. de bono mortis. c. 4.

The reasons we have here alledg'd of desiring to Die, are Good and Holy; but the most Perfect of all, is, that which made Saint Paul * Desire to be Dissolv'd, and be with CHRIST. What is it you say O great Saint? Why do you desire to be deliver'd from the Prison of your Body?

* Desiderium habens dissolvi, & esse cum Christo.
Ad Phil. 1. 23.

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Body? Is it not perhaps to escape Sufferings and Persecutions of this Life? Not at all; † *For 'tis in Afflictions and Sufferings we place our Glory.* Is it for fear of falling into Sin? Still less: * *For I am certain, you will tell us, neither Death nor Life can ever be able to separate us from the Love of God.* This great Saint was so confirm'd in Grace, that he was assur'd of never losing it; and so he had nothing to fear on that side. But why do you desire Death with so passionate an earnestness? † *To be with JESUS CHRIST, and because I Languish with Love.* He was Sick with Love; he sigh'd after his Beloved; and in the Impatiēce he was in of enjoying the Divine Presence, the least delay seem'd long and tedious.

'Tis in this, Saint Bonaventure establishes the highest degree of the Love of God; and says, there are three of these degrees. The first, is to Love God above all things, so that nothing in the World can have that Power as to make us offend him once Mortally, and violate any one of his Commandments: Which our Saviour gave as a Rule to the Young Man in the Gospel, when he told him; * *If you desire to enter into Life Eternal, keep the Commandments.* And 'tis this which is the general Duty and Obligation of the whole World. The second degree of Charity and the Love of God, is to add the practise of his Counsels, to the observance of his Precept's: And this belongs properly to Religious, who apply themselves not only to what is good, but still aim at what is better, and more perfect, following these words of the Apostle; † *To the end you seek in the Will of God, what Pleases him most, and what is most Perfect.* But the third degree of this Love and Charity, as Saint Bonaventure add's, is, * *To be in such a manner Transported with the Love of God, as not to be able even to Live without him;* to desire earnestly to see your self freed from the Prison of this Mortal Life, and be with JESUS CHRIST; and continually wish to be recall'd from your Banishment, and return into your Native Country; and also to make Daily Aspirations and Petitions, for the Dissolution of this Prison of your Body, which hinders you from enjoying the Sight of God. Whatsoever Persons in this condition can do, says the same Saint, is to undergo their Life with Patience, which is a Burden and an

Tom. I.

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Impediment

† Gloriamur in tribulationibus.

Ad Rom. 5. 3.

* Certus sum enim, quia neque mors, neque vita, poterit nos separare à charitate Christi.

Ad Rom. 8. 38.

et 39.

† Quia amore langueo.

Cant. 2. 5.

De Process. Relig. c. 11. 12. et 13.

* Si vis ad vitam ingredi; serva mandata. Matth. 19. 17.

† Ut probetis quæ sit voluntas Dei bonæ, & beneplacens, & perfecta.

Ad Rom. 12. 2.

* Tanto afsectu ad Deum attingere, quod sine ipso quasi vivere non possis.

Bonav. ubi sup.

Impediment to them, and therefore they desire nothing more than to be freed and set at liberty.

*In ejus vita
lib. 3. ca. 1.*

We Read in the Life of Saint *Ignatius*, that he was Inflam'd with an ardent desire of quitting the Prison of his Body, and wish'd with so great Fervor to enjoy the Sight of God, that as often as he reflected upon Death, he cou'd not refrain pouring forth Tears of Joy, which upon this consideration flow'd in abundance from his Eyes. But, as in the same place of his Life, 'tis very well took notice of, it was not so much out of the consideration of his own felicity, which he hop'd for in the Beatifical Vision, as out of the ardent love wherewith he was Inflam'd for the Humanity of *JESUS CHRIST*. As the Royal Prophet plac'd all his Joy, † *In Contemplating the Joy of our Lord*; and as in the World when we have a real and passionate Love for any one, we take a great satisfaction in seeing him plac'd in an Honorable Post: So this great Saint out of a pure principle, and pure excess of Love, desir'd to behold his dear Master in all the Splendor of his Glory. He desir'd to behold him in it, that he might rejoyce with him, without any regard to his own proper Interest and Felicity; and without question this was the most Perfect and Sublime Act of Love, any Man cou'd produce.

† Ut videam
voluptatem
Domini.
Psal. 26. 4.

When we consider things in the Nature we have here spoken of, the memory of Death will be so far from afflicting and troubling us, as it will even replenish us with joy and satisfaction. Reflect but a little upon what terrifies you; think only that in a short space of time you shall be in Heaven, and that there you shall enjoy a Happiness, which is Superior to Sense, which the Eye has never seen, the Ear not heard, and which infinitely surpasses the reach of Human Understanding: And by this means all our fears and apprehensions will be chang'd into delight and joy. For how is it possible, we shou'd not rejoyce to be call'd out of Banishment, and put an end to our pains and sufferings? How can we not but rejoyce in arriving to the end for which we were Created, in entering upon our Inheritance, and an Inheritance so ample and glorious? It is by Death only we can take Possession of the Inheritance of Heaven. * *When he shall send Sleep to his Beloved, behold then the Inheritance of our Lord.* It is Death then which puts us in Possession,

* Cum dederit dilectis suis somnum: ecce hereditas Domini.
Psal. 126. 2. 3.

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Possession, and 'tis to this end the Wife-man says;
 † *The Just Man Hopes and Confides in Death*: Because
 in reality 'tis Death that opens the passage to Heaven,
 and affords him matter of Comfort during the time of
 his Exile. Saint *Austin* Explicating the words of the Psalmist,
 * *I will make it my business to march on in the
 Pure Way; and will sing, when is it you will come to
 me?* All my endeavour, O Lord, says he, shall be to
 conserve my self without Spot or Blemish during my Life;
 I will have a continual Guard and Custody before my Eyes,
 and will Sing Daily, when is it O Lord you will put a
 term to my Banishment? When will you come and bring
 me to you? † *When shall I come to you, and when
 shall I appear in your Sight?* O how long and tedious
 is the time; and how glad shall I be when I
 hear 'tis arriv'd! * *I rejoyc'd when I heard we shou'd go
 to the House of our Lord; and shou'd enter very soon in-
 to your Gates, O Jerusalem!* Yes O Lord, I imagine my
 self long since in Heaven, and in the Company of the
 Angels, rejoycing in your Divine Presence, and Blessing
 your Holy Name for all Eternity.

† Sperat ju-
 stus in morte
 sua.
Prov. 14. 32.

* psallam, &
 intelligam in
 via immacula-
 ta; quando
 venies ad me.
Psalm. 100. 2.
Aug. Tract. 9.
Sup. epist. Joan.

† Quando ve-
 niam, & ap-
 parebo ante
 faciem Dei?
Psalm. 41. 2.

* Ixtatus
 sum in his, quæ
 dicta sunt
 mihi: In do-
 mum Domini
 ibimus. Stan-
 tes erant pe-
 des nostri, in
 atriis tuis Je-
 rusalem.
Psalm. 121. 1.
 Or 2.

C H A P. XXI.

*What has been sayd in the Precedent Chapter,
 is Confirm'd by Examples.*

SIMON METAPHRASTES in the Life of
 Saint John the Almoner Arch-bishop of Alexandria,
 relates the passage of a Rich and Great Man,
 who having one only Son recommended him to
 the Prayers of this Saint, intreating him very
 urgently to offer 'em up for the Conservation of his Son;
 and gave withal a great quantity of Money into the Holy
 Man's Hands, to be distributed amongst the Poor, for this
 Intention. The Saint perform'd what the other desir'd of
 him; and within a Month the Child chanc'd to Die.
 Whereupon the Father was very sensibly afflicted, imagining

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the Alm's he had given and the Prayers he had obtain'd were of no effect. This coming to the knowledge of the Arch-bishop, he betook himself to Prayer for the distressed Father, desiring of God he wou'd be pleas'd to afford him some Comfort: And some time after, an Angel appear'd by Night to the Father of the Child, and told him the Prayers for his Son were heard; that he Liv'd now in Heaven; and had he remain'd longer upon Earth, he had been perverted, and made himself unworthy of the Eternal Happiness he now possess'd. And he added on, that he ought to be assur'd, nothing happen'd in this Life but by a Just Judgment of God, altho the causes of these his Judgments were above the Capacity of Man's Understanding; and consequently he had done very ill, in permitting himself to be transported with so excessive Grief: That on the contrary he ought to receive with the Spirit of submission and acknowledgement, whatever it pleas'd God to ordain him. This Celestial Vision Comforted intirely the afflicted Father, and encourag'd him to serve God with more Fervor than ever.

Lib. 2, c. 10.

It is recounted in the History of *Thebais*, of a certain Lady who having a great Devotion to Saint *Maurice*, who had been Captain to the *Theban* Legion, receiv'd thereby a most singular Grace and Favor. This Lady had one only Son; who had scarce pass'd his Infancy, when desiring he shou'd be train'd up in Piety from his tender Years, she Consecrated him to God in the Monastery of Saint *Maurice*, according to the custom of those times; as in the time of Saint *Bennet*, several Persons of Quality in *Rome*, and amongst the rest Saint *Maurus* and Saint *Placidus* were plac'd by their Parents in the Monastery of Mount *Cassin*; and many Years after Saint *Thomas* of *Aquin* was sent there by his Mother *Theodora*, and his Brothers the Counts of *Aquin*. This Child being settl'd in the Monastery, was Educated in all Good and Pious Manners, and Instructed in Learning and Religious Discipline; and had for a long time began to keep Quire with the rest, when it pleas'd God to visit him with a violent Feaver, which carry'd him off in a short time. His sorrowful Mother came to the Church, and there in Tears and Grief accompany'd the Corp's of her Son to the Grave; over which she came constantly every Day to lament, intending to renew her Grief, when at time of Divine Office, she might think with her self she shou'd never

never hear the Voice of her Son more: Whilst she thus persisted in this doleful Practise, and gave full scope to her Passion and Tears, by Weeping privately in the Church both Day and Night without intermission; she chanc'd once to be quite overcome with her long Mourning and Afflicting her self, and quite spent and tir'd she lay down to take her repose. When behold Saint *Maurice* appear'd to her, and having demanded why she Wept and Mourn'd for the Death of her Son without using any moderation, or putting an end to her Grief. All the rest of my Life, sayd she, is not sufficient to dry up the source of my Tears, nor afford me the least Comfort in my Sorrows: Wherefore I firmly resolve to lament the Death of my only and dear Child as long as I Live; and my Eyes shall never cease flowing till Death closes 'em, and separates Soul and Body. Woman, answer'd the Saint, trouble not your self, and lament not your Son as Dead; for at present he is with us where he enjoys an Eternal Felicity, and for proof of this Verity, rise next time of Matins and go to the Church; there you shall hear the Voice of your Son who Sings with the Religious: And you shall not have this satisfaction only to Morrow, but also as often as you shall assist at the Divine Office. Comfort your self therefore and put an end to your Tears, since you have much more reason to rejoyce than lament. The afflicted Lady Waking hereupon, and not knowing for certain whether this Apparition were a Dream or not, expected with impatience the hour of Matins, there to solve the doubt, and be satisfi'd in her thoughts. But scarce had she enter'd the Church, when she heard her Son's Voice, who inton'd an Antiphon: At which she was throu'ly convinc'd of what had pass'd, and that he enjoy'd the Glory of the Blessed. Whereupon she banish'd for the future all her Grief, and gave thanks to God; who having Comforted her in this manner, continu'd the same Favor to her till the end of her Life.

We Read in a Grave Author, of a certain Noble Man who being one Day a Hunting, and separated at a great distance from his Retinue and Attendance, who were intent upon their Sport, pursu'd a wild Beast alone into a Wood; and as he was hot in the pursuit, he heard the Voice of a Man, who Sung most Charmingly: Whereat extremely surpriz'd to hear so Ravishing a Voice in a place so deserted, and remote from Human Conversation, and knowing it could
be

*Flor. de Hen-
riq. gran. l. 4.
c. 68.*

be none of his Company, nor any other of the Country thereabout; he was resolv'd to satisfie his Curiosity so far as to make his way to the place, and see what it could be: When breaking throu' the Brakes and Thickets, he perceiv'd a Man in a most wretched and woful condition, wholly disfigur'd with a loathsome Leprosie over all his Body; which had corrupted his Flesh so that it fell from him by pieces on all sides. Altho' he was struck with horror at this sad Spectacle, and surpriz'd for some time; yet overcoming the difficulty, he approach'd the Leper and saluted him very courteously, desiring to know if it was he who had Sung, and how possibly he cou'd have so Melodious a Voice? The Leper answer'd him, it was he who Sung, and the Voice he us'd was his Natural one. But how can you, reply'd the Noble Man, rejoyce in the miserable condition you are in at present. I will tell you answer'd the Leper: Betwixt God and me there is only one separation of a Wall of Clay and Dirt, which is this Body of mine: When this is broken down and remov'd, then shall I enjoy securely the sight of my Saviour: And as I Daily behold it go to ruin, the excess of Joy I conceive thereat makes me Sing, still awaiting the happy hour, wherein it will fall utterly to pieces; and that my Soul once separated from my Body, I may enjoy my God, who is the Living Fountain, and the Inexhaustible Source of all sorts of Happiness.

Cyprian. lib. de mortalit.

Saint *Cyprian* relates the passage of a certain Bishop who falling desperately Sick, desir'd of God, he wou'd please to prolong his Life: When immediately there appear'd to him a Young Man environ'd with a resplendent Light, who spoke to him with a grave and severe Voice: *You fear the Sufferings and Difficulties to which you are Expos'd in the World, and yet you desire not to be quit of 'em; what wou'd you have me do with you?* By which he signifi'd to him abundantly that the repugnance he had of quitting this Life was in no wise acceptable to God: And Saint *Cyprian* add's; that the Angel spoke in these terms to the Bishop, to the end that he having related 'em to others, they might serve for their Instruction.

Surin. tom. 1. fol. 237.

Simon Metaphrastes cited by *Surin*, says of the Holy Abbot *Theodosius*, that this Holy Man well understanding how profitable the frequent Reflection of Death is for a Christian, and endeavouring to Excite his Religious by this means

means to Vertue, order'd 'em one Day to dig a Grave; and assembling the Community who stood round it, see here sayd he, the Grave finish'd: But who amongst us all will be the first whose Funeral Rites will be here perform'd? At which one of the Religious call'd *Basil*, who was Priest, and whose Eminent Vertue has put him in a State of being always prepar'd for Death, stepp'd forth, and falling upon his Knees before him, sayd, *Give me your Blessing, my Father, for if you please, I will be he for whom the Funeral Office shall be here perform'd.* Having urg'd what he propos'd, the Saint granted his Petition, and order'd presently the Prayers and Ceremonies us'd by the Church in the Office of the Dead, to be perform'd. The Office was Sung the first Day, the third, and the ninth: At the end of forty Days, and as soon as ever the Obsequies were totally finish'd, *Basil* who was in perfect Health, without so much as a small Feaver, the least pain of the Head, or any other sign of Sicknes what-soever, pass'd on a sudden from this Life to the other, like one who had fallen into a sweet and easie Sleep; and went to receive the recompence due to his Vertue, and earnest desire he had of being reunited to his Saviour. But that we may more clearly see, how pleasing his Zeal had been to God, the first Miracle was accompany'd with another; for after his Death the Holy Abbot saw him Daily assist at Vespers, and Sing in the Quire with the other Religious. There was no one either saw or heard him, except one other Religious nam'd *Aëtius*; who hearing, but not seeing him, acquainted the Abbot, and ask'd if he heard not *Basil* Singing? I hear him, reply'd the Abbot; and what's yet more, I see him: And if you will, you may see him in the same manner I do. Next Day whilst all the Religious were at their Office in the Quire, the Abbot beheld again *Basil*, who Sung with the rest according to his custom; and pointing his Finger, shew'd him to *Aëtius*; whereupon they both fell to their Prayers, that God wou'd permit *Aëtius* to have a sight of him. *Aëtius* no sooner discern'd him, but ran to imbrace him; but *Basil* disappear'd immediately saying with a loud Voice, insomuch that all present heard him, *Farewel my Fathers and Brothers, farewell; for you will see me no more for the future.*

We Read in the History of the Order of Saint *Austin*, that Young Saint *Columban*, Nephew and Disciple to Saint *Columban* the Abbot, falling Sick; and out of the Holy Confidence

Chron. Ord. S. August. centur. 3.

Confidence he had in God, desiring with all earnestness to Die, there appear'd to him a Young Man all glittering with the Ray's of Glory, who sayd; *Know, that the Prayers of the Abbot, and the Tear's he Daily shed's for your Recovery hinders your passage hence.* The Sick Person complaining in most tender and affectionate terms to his Abbot, and his Eyes bath'd in Tears, sayd to him; *Why do you detain me in a Life so Miserable as this is, and hinder me from enjoying that which is Eternal?* These words so touch'd the Abbot, that he left off Praying for, and Deploing his Nephew, who after he had receiv'd all the Sacraments of the Church and imbrac'd all the Religious, repos'd happily in our Lord.

*Ambro. de fide
resurr.*

Saint *Ambrose* affirm's that the People of *Thrace* were accusom'd to Weep at the Birth of their Friends, and Rejoyce at their Death; esteeming with good reason, says he, those who enter'd the World where there is nothing but Miseries and Affliction, worthy of Compassion; and look upon the condition of those who departed from so miserable an Exile, as happy in being releas'd from so many Evils and Calamities. If the Barbarians who liv'd in the ignorance and obscurity of Paganism, and who had no knowledge of the Glory that attends us after Death, behav'd themselves in this manner; how ought we to comport our selves who are enlighten'd with the Ray's of the true Faith, and know for certain the Happinefs laid up in store for us, provided we depart this Life in the Grace and Favor of God? This made the Wise-man say, † *The hour of our Death is to be preferr'd before that of our Nativity:* And that was the Reason, says Saint *Hierom*, when the Son of God, wou'd depart this World, to return to his Heavenly Father, why he Comforted his Disciples who were troubl'd and afflicted thereat, * *If you truly Lov'd me, you wou'd Rejoyce that I go to my Father:* But when he determin'd to Raise *Lazarus*, he Wept. He Wept not, says the Saint, for *Lazarus* his Death, since he knew he was to be Rais'd to Life again; but he Wept, because he whom he lov'd so affectionately, was to be expos'd anew to the Miseries of this Life, and all the Calamities and Chances of this so Deplorable Exile.

† Melior est
dies mortis
die nativitatis.
*Hieron. Epist.
ad Tarasum.*

* Si diligere-
tis me, gaudere-
tis utique, quia
vado ad Pa-
trem.
Joan. 14. 28.

C H A P. XXII.

Of the Conformity we are to have to the Will of God, in all Publick Calamities.

BUT 'tis not only in what regards our own particular sufferings and afflictions, that we are to be intirely Conform'd to the Will of God; we must also have the same Conformity in publick Calamities and Misfortunes, as in time of Famine, War, Plague, and other the like Scourges of the Divine Vengeance and Chastisements, sent us from Heaven. For this end we must establish as a fundamental Point, the Example of an impartial and just Judge; who seeing himself oblig'd to condemn to Death a Criminal at the Bar, is not any ways hinder'd either by a natural Compassion, or the bonds of Friendship, from pronouncing the fatal Sentence, and resolving he shall Die; because Justice so orders, and the good of the Common-Wealth requires it. In like manner, the compassion we have for others, whom we see lie under the Chastisements of the Divine Justice, is not to hinder us from Conforming our selves to what pleases Almighty God; since we are to look upon 'em as the effects of his Holy Will; which by a secret and hidden Judgment has thus decreed it, for certain ends and advantages, conducing to his greater Glory and Service. For altho' 'tis true, that the Conformity he requires of us to his Holy Will in all these accidents, obliges us not to Love them positively; and that 'tis sufficient we tolerate 'em with Patience, without Murmuring at the Orders of Providence: Nevertheless we must assure our selves, there is more Merit and Perfection, not only in suffering but even loving and imbracing 'em, in as much as they are the Effect of his Will and Justice, and conduce to his greater Glory. Saint *Thomas* holds, that 'tis in this Nature the Blessed in Heaven Conform themselves in all things to the Will of God: And Saint *Anselm*, that the

Tom. I.

C c c c

Will

Bonav. 1. sent.
dist. 48.S. Tho. 2. 2. q.
19. art. 10.
ad. 1.Anselmus lib.
similis, c. 63.

Will of God and our Will shall be Conform'd in Heaven as two Eyes in the same Body, which are govern'd both by the same Motion; so that One cannot look upon any thing, but the Other looks upon it also: And altho both are fix'd upon the same Object, they represent nevertheless but one single Species to the Brain. But as the Conformity of the Blessed to the Will of God, has no regard to any thing but his Holy Pleasure, and what tends to his greater Glory, by the which they are totally directed and design'd; so we cannot attain to a greater Perfection than in imitating the Example of these Saints, in regarding all things as the Execution of the Orders of his Providence, and the performing the Divine Will. We can never be in a better Disposition, than when we only Will what God Will's, and Will it for the same end, and in the same manner as he Will's it.

Possidonius in the Life of Saint *Austin*, says, when the City of *Hippo* of which he was Bishop, was Besieg'd by the *Wandals* who wasted and destroy'd all *Africk*, filling it with Blood and Slaughter, this great Saint Comforted himself with these Words of an Ancient Person: † 'Tis not for a Great Man to think it strange, that Wood and Stone Decay, and Mortals Die. But we may find a more just reason of Conforming our selves, if we consider all as coming from the Hand of God: That 'tis his Holy Will; and altho the cause wherefore he afflicts us lies hidden, yet that it never can be but Just. * *The Judgments of God are an Abyss*, says the Royal Prophet. It wou'd be a great temerity in us with this weak and limited Capacity of ours, to dive into the Secrets and Reasons of God. † *For whoever was there who comprehended the design of God, or who was ever made his Counsellor?* We must Reverence the Judgments of God with a Profound Humility, and confide, that since we are Govern'd by so Infinite a Wisdom as that of his, nothing can befall us which tends not to our greater Good and Profit. Upon this Foundation we are to ground our selves, and rely so far upon his Goodness and Mercy, as to be persuaded he wou'd not permit any such Calamities to befall us were it not to draw thence a greater Good. God conducts to Heaven an infinity of Souls, by the way of Sufferings, which wou'd perish by any other way: How many are there, who in their Crosses and Tribulations turn to God with their whole Heart, and

Die

† Non erit
magnus mag-
num putans
quod cadunt
ligna & lapi-
des, & mori-
untur mortu-
les.

Refert. de S.
Aug. Pessid. in
eius vita.

* Judicia tua
abissus multa.
Psal. 35. 7.

† Quis enim
cognovit sen-
sum Domini?
Aut quis con-
siliarius ejus
fuit?

Ad Rom. 11. 34.

Part. 1. Of Conformity to God's Will. 571

Die in a true Repentance for all their Sins? How many have been Sav'd by this means, who otherwise had been Damn'd? So that what seems to us a Scourge and Chastisement, is oftentimes a great Favor and singular Mercy conferr'd upon us.

In the second Book of *Machabees*, the Author having describ'd the horrid Persecution the *Jews* suffer'd under King *Antiochus*, the Massacres committed without any regard to Age, Sex, or Quality, the Pillaging and Prophanation of the Temple, and the Abominations committed therein by this Impious and Wicked King; he add's: * *And I Conjure those who shall Read this Book, not to be Danted at so many Calamities; but let 'em imagine these befell us for our Chastisement, and not for our Destruction.* The *Leech* sucks the Blood of the Sick Man, says Saint *Gregory*, with intent to glut it self, and draw out, if 'twere in it's power, the very last Drop: But the intention of the Physician is only hereby to take from the Patient the Corrupted Blood, and so recover him. That of God is the very same in the afflictions he sends us: And as that Patient wou'd be guilty of a great folly, who considering more the greediness of the *Leech*, than the good design of the Physician, shou'd hinder the taking away the Corrupted Blood: In like manner when any misfortune or affliction happens to us, whether by the means of others, or by any Creature whatever; we are in this case not to consider those other Persons, or any Creatures, but the Sovereign Physician only, who makes use of 'em as of *Leeches* to purifie our Blood, and restore us to our perfect Health. We must also be convinc'd that he orders us nothing but for our greater Good: And supposing he had no other end herein, than to punish us as his Children in this World, instead of reserving our punishment for the next, he wou'd nevertheless do us a great Favor, and our Obligation wou'd be greater to him.

'Tis related of Saint *Catherine* of *Siena*, that she was once extreemly troubl'd by reason of several Calumnies rais'd against her Honor and Reputation: Our Saviour Appearing to her with a Crown of Gold, all inlay'd with Pearls and Precious Stones in his Right Hand, and in his Left a Crown of Thorns, told her: *Know my Dear Daughter, that of necessity you must be Crown'd with one of these two, some time or other. Wherefore choose which you*

C c c c 2

* Obsecro autem eos, qui hunc librum lecturi sunt, ne abhorrescant propter adversos casus, sed reputent, ea quæ acciderunt, non ad interitum, sed ad correctionem esse generis nostri.
2 Mac. 6. 12.
Greg. lib. 2.
Nur. c. 32.

In ejus vita
p. 2. c. 4.

like

like best, either the Crown of Thorns, in this Transitory Life, and have the other reserv'd for you in the next; or the Crown of Gold at present, and have that of Thorns hereafter. 'Tis a long time O Lord, Answer'd the Holy Virgin, since I have made an intire Renunciation of my own Will, to addict my self wholly to yours; and consequently 'tis not for me to choose: But if notwithstanding you will have me Answer; I desire to choose that which will be most acceptable to you; and the better to Imitate your Example, I accept with my whole Heart, of sufferings. Having sayd this she took the Crown of Thorns from our Saviours Hand, and putting it upon her Head she press'd it down with such force, that from that time she always had a great pain in her Head, caus'd by the Thorns that pierc'd it on all sides.

C H A P. XXIII.

That an inspection into our Sins, and a true Repentance, are the most proper means to help us, in supporting with all Resignation, both General and Particular Afflictions sent us from God.

† Induxisti omnia hæc propter peccata nostra. Peccavimus enim, & inique egimus, recedentes à te. Deliquimus in omnibus, & præcepta tua non audivimus, nec observavimus, nec fecimus sicut præcepisti nobis, ut bene nobis esset: Omnia ergo quæ induxisti super nos, & universa quæ fecisti nobis, in vero iudicio fecisti. Daniel. 3. 23. & seq.

TIS the general Opinion of all Saints, and confirm'd also by frequent passages in Holy Scripture, that publick Calamities ordinarily speaking, are sent from God in punishment of our Sins. † 'Tis upon the account of our Sins; sayd Azarias in the flaming Furnace, that you have heap'd all these Afflictions upon us: For we have Sinn'd, we have done Ill, we have Separated our selves from you; we have Err'd in all points: We have neither Heard, nor Obey'd your Commands; nor have we perform'd what you enjoyn'd us for our Happiness: Wherefore we have justly deserv'd all the Miseries you have sent us; and in general whatever you have done against us, you have done with all Justice. We see

see by this, that God chastises his People and delivers 'em into the Hands of their Enemies, because they offend him: As we Read in several places he freed 'em when they Repented, and were Converted to God from their whole Heart. Wherefore Achior General of the Ammonites, having told Holofernes that God took the Children of Israel to his Protection, but chastis'd 'em if they perform'd not their Duty; added, that before he set upon 'em he shou'd send to know if at that present they had not offended God in any thing; and in case they had, that then he might easily gain the Victory over 'em: But if they had not any way offended God, he might desist from his Enterprize, lest it turn'd to his disgrace and shame; since God, whom no one can oppose, wou'd infallibly Fight in the Cause of his People. When our Saviour Cur'd the Paralytick who had been Sick for the space of twenty eight Years: * See, says he, you are now Cur'd: Sin no more lest a worse thing befall you: And the Holy Doctors observe that these Words of our Saviour, demonstrate this Verity in most particular terms. According then to this Doctrine, one of the means which may assist us in attaining a more intire Conformity to God in all our Adversities as well in general as particular, and supporting 'em with Patience, is presently to enter into our selves, by a reflection upon our Sins, and think how justly we Merit the punishment sent us from God. For according to this, tho' some affliction shou'd befall us we shou'd undergo it with Patience, and shou'd look upon our punishment to be less than we deserve in comparison of our Sins committed.

Saint Bernard and Saint Gregory, handle this matter exceedingly well: † Whosoever has a lively feeling and Sense of his Health in the Interior, says Saint Bernard, will feel little or no Pain in the Exterior. So David was not so mov'd at the Reviling of his Subject, when he saw his own Son up in Arms against him. * My Son, says he, who receiv'd his being from me, seeks to take my Life away: With how much more reason may the Son of Jemini Revile and Curse me? Saint Gregory Writing upon these words of Job. To the end you may know, you have receiv'd a less Punishment from him, than your Sins have Deserv'd, makes use of a Comparison which Explicates very well this Doctrine: As, says he, in Wounds and Impostum's, the greater and more

* Ecce sanus factus es, jam noli peccare, ne deterius tibi aliquid contingat. Joan. 5. 14.

† Culpa vero ipsa si intus sentitur perfecte, utique exterior poenarum, aut nihil sentitur. Bern. Serm. de altit. & bast. cordis.

* Ecce filius meus, qui ingressus est de utero meo, querit anti-mam meam: Quanto magis nunc filius Jemini? 2 Reg. 16. 17. Greg. lib. 10. Moral. in hac verba. Et intelligeres quod multo minora exigeris ab eo, quam meretur iniquitas tua. Job. 11. 6.

more dangerous the Soar is, the more Patiently we endure the Lancing and Searing Iron; so as soon as we have a lively feeling of the Wound caus'd in us by Sin, we easily and willingly admit of the Lancing and Searing of Mortification, of Sufferings, and of Humiliations, made use of by God to dress this Wound and intirely Cure it. For the pain of our chastisement is less perceiv'd when we come to acknowledge our past Fault; says the same Saint. But if you undergo not patiently the afflictions and evils that befall you, 'tis a sign you understand not the danger of your Wound given you by Sin; and so, not understanding the gash made in you, you will never be able to suffer the Operations requisite.

Holy Men and true Servants of God not only receive their pains and afflictions with willingness, but even desire and beg 'em earnestly at the Hand's of God. * *I wish I may obtain my Petition*, says Job, *that he who began wou'd Crush me throu'ly; that he wou'd extend his Hand and Cut me off; and this be my Comfort not to be spar'd in the Sufferings wherewith he Afflicts me!* The Royal Prophet was of the same mind, when he sayd; † *Try me O Lord, and Tempt me: * For I am prepar'd to receive all sorts of Correction. † It is well for me that thou hast Humbl'd me:* The true Servants of God desire ardently, says Saint Gregory, of God to chastise and humble them; and they even afflict and torment themselves when they consider their faults and defects, and see they are not punish'd by God. For then 'tis they fear lest he will reserve them for a more severe correction in the other World; and 'tis to this end Job add's; *And that I may have the Comfort, not to be spar'd in the Sufferings, wherewith he Afflicts me.* Which is as thò he sayd; there are some People God spares in this World, to punish 'em afterwards more severely in the next, but let him not spare me in this manner, that he may spare me for Eternity: I desire he wou'd correct me now like a Charitable Father, that he may not chastise me hereafter like a Rigorous Judge. I shall not murmur, nor shall I even complain, * *Nor will I oppose my self in the least to his Holy Decrees;* but on the contrary I shall find a subject of Comfort in my sufferings: This was Saint *Austins* Sentiment also, when he cry'd out, † *Burn me, O Lord, Cut me, and spare me not in any thing belonging to this Life, to the end you spare me for Eternity.*

'Tis

† Dolor quippe flagelli temperatur, cum culpa cognoscitur.

* Quis det, ut veniat petitio mea, & qui caput, ipse me conterat: Solvat manum suam, & succidat me? & hæc mihi sit consolatio, ut affligens me dolorem non parcat.

Job. 6. 8.

& seq.

† Proba me Domine, & tenta me.

Psal. 25. 2.

* Quoniam ego in flagella paratus sum.

Psal. 37. 18.

† Bonum mihi, quia humiliasti me.

Psal. 118. 71.

Greg. lib. 7.

Mor. c. 7. & 8.

* Nec contrariam sermonibus Sancti.

Job. 6. 10.

† Hic ure, hic seca, hic nihil parcas, ut in æternum parcas.

August.

'Tis an effect of our stupidity to be so little sensible in the Evils of our Souls, and be so solicitous in those of our Body. Since we ought to be more touch'd at our Sins, than any other thing whatsoever; and did we but rightly conceive the Enormity of our Sins; we shou'd look upon the most rigid punishment that cou'd be inflict'd, to be too little; and might say with *Job*; * *I have Sinn'd, I have indeed Offended; and have not as yet receiv'd the Punishment I have Deserv'd.* We ought to have these words always in our Hearts and Mouths; for all we can suffer in this World, is nothing in comparison of what one Mortal Sin deserves. *And so you will come to see you have not receiv'd less Punishment of him, than your Crimes deserv'd:* Whoever seriously reflects that he has offended God, and that consequently he Merits Eternal Damnation; what Affronts, what Injuries, what Contumelies wou'd he not suffer joyfully in Expiation for all the faults committed against the Divine Majesty? † *Permit him, sayd David, to those who wou'd have punish'd Semei for Cursing him, perhaps our Lord will regard my Affliction, and our Lord will render me Good for the present Curses.* Perhaps after his Indignation he may be pleas'd, he may pardon my Offences and have compassion on me; and so I shall be happy, in being thus affronted. 'Tis with the same disposition we are to imbrace whatsoever injuries and affronts happen to us. Let 'em happen freely; perhaps God in consideration of our Patience, will receive our sufferings as a deduction of those pains due to our Sins; and what we esteem as evil, may prove one of the greatest advantages that can befall us. If we only employ'd that time we spend in complaints and resentments of our misfortunes, in entering into our selves, we shou'd please God the more, and shou'd find greater Comforts in our afflictions.

The Saints make use so frequently of this means in the like occasions, and this Practise was so familiar to them, that as we Read of some of 'em, they ascrib'd all the Persecutions and Calamities which befell the Church, to their own Sins; and judging their Offences Merited still a greater punishment, they are my Sins, sayd they, which are the cause of so many War's; they are my Sins which are the cause of so many Plagues and other Calamities sent from God. What may contribute much to the confirming any one in these Sentiments, is, that in reality God Punishes oftentimes

* Peccavi, & verè deliqui, & ut eram dignus, non recepi.
Job. 33. 27.

† Si fortè respiciat Dominus afflictionem meam, & reddat mihi Dominus bonum pro afflictione hac hodierna.
2 Reg. 16. 12.

oftentimes his People for the Sins of one single Person; as we see he did for the Sin of *David*, when he sent a violent Plague upon the *Israëlites*, of which Dy'd three-score and ten thousand Persons in the space of three Days. It may be Answer'd, *David* was King, and God frequently Punishes the Faults of the Prince in the People: But what will they say to the Example of *Achan*, who was only a private Man? And yet nevertheless because he convey'd away secretly some part of the Booty took at *Jericho* contrary to God's Command; God Reveng'd this Transgression upon all the People, in permitting three thousand of the Valiantest and Bravest Men in the whole Army, to turn their Back most shamefully to the Enemy, and hardly make an escape, and not without great loss. It is not then for the Sins of Commanders only, but also for those of every particular Person, that God sometimes extends his punishment upon a whole Multitude: And 'tis in this Sense, the Saints Explicate what is so often repeated in Holy Scripture, that

** God Punish'd the Sins of the Parents upon their Children, to the third and fourth Generation:* For in as much as appertains to the Sin alone, it assures us the Sin of the Father shall not be imputed to the Son, nor the Sin of the Son be imputed to the Father: † *He who shall have Sinn'd shall Die; the Son shall not bear the Iniquity of his Father; and the Father shall not bear the Iniquity of his Son.* But as to the Pain, God proceeds after another manner, he oftentimes chastises the one for the other, and so perhaps for mine and for your Sins, God will chastise a whole Community, and perhaps the whole SOCIETY.

2 Reg. 24. 15.

Jos. 7. 4. 5. & 11.

* Qui reddis iniquitatem patrum filiis, in tertiam & quartam progeniem. Exod. 34. 7.

† Anima quæ peccaverit, ipsa morietur: Filius non portabit iniquitatem Patris, & Pater non portabit iniquitatem Filii. Ex. 18. 20.

* Dominus est: Quod bonum est in oculis suis, faciat.

1 Reg. 3. 13. † Sicut fuerit voluntas in Cælo, sic fiat.

1 Mach. 3. 60. * Obmutui, non aperti os meum, quoniam tu fecisti. Psal. 39. 10.

Let's have always before our Eyes; on one side this Consideration, and on the other the Will of God; and so we shall Conform our selves with ease, to all the afflictions it shall please him to send us. * *He is the Master and Lord, who can do what seems to him best. † As it pleases him in Heaven, so let it be done.* * *I held my Peace; and did not so much as open my Mouth; because it was you, O Lord, who caus'd whatever I Suffer.* This is that we ought to say; this is what ought to be our Comfort in the most difficult adventures. God's Will is such; God ordains it; God has caus'd it; God has sent it; freely; we must receive all things as coming from his Hand's; nor do we want other Motives to make

us

us undergo all things with joy and satisfaction. The Holy Doctors explicating these words of the Psalmist: † *And my Beloved is to me as the Young Unicorn*; take notice God compares himself to the *Unicorn*; because this Animal has it's Horn lower than it's Eyes, and so it sees better how to aim it's stroke; when the *Bull* having his above the Eyes, pushes at random. Moreover, the *Unicorn* Cures with the same Horn, wherewith he gave the Wound: And so in the same manner God strik's not, but with the same Weapons, which serve for our Cure.

† et dilectus
quemadmo-
dum filius uni-
cornium.
Psal. 23. 6.

In fine, this Conformity and this Humble Submission to our punishment, is so grateful to God that sometimes 'tis a means to appease him, and hinder him from inflicting a chastisement. It is recounted in the *Ecclesiastical History* of *Attila* King of the *Hunns*; who overrun and destroy'd so many Provinces, and made himself be call'd, the * *Terror of the World, and Scourge of God*; that approaching the City of *Troyes* in *Champaigne*, *Saint Lupus* who was then Bishop of the Place, went forth to meet him in his Pontifical Habit, accompany'd with all the Clergy; and being come up to him, who are you, sayd he, who Wast and Ruin the whole Earth? *Attila* answer'd, *I am the Scourge of God*: The Holy Bishop having reply'd: *The Scourge of God is Welcome*, commanded the Gates of the City to be open'd him. But as the Soldiers enter'd the City, God *Blinded* 'em so, that they pass'd throu' without the least dammage at all: For altho' *Attila* were indeed the Scourge of God; yet notwithstanding God imploy'd him not as such, against those who receiv'd him as his Scourge, with Readiness and Submission.

* Metus or-
bis, & flagel-
lum Dei.
Nauclerus a.
vol.

D d d d

C H A P.

C H A P. XXIV.

Of the Conformity we are to have with the Will of God, in Aridity and Desolation of Prayer; and what we understand here by the Name of Aridity or Desolation.

IT is not only in Exterior, Natural, and Human things, we are to practise a Perfect Conformity to the Will of God: We must also submit our selves in the same manner in such things, where most are of opinion, there is a Sanctity in desiring 'em Daily more and more: That is in Spiritual and Supernatural things, as in Divine Consolations, and even in Vertues; in the gift of Prayer; in the Interior Peace and Tranquillity of the Soul; and infine, in all the advantages and influences of Grace. But some one will ask, how is it possible, in things of this sort, there shou'd be any Irregular Morion of our own Will, and Self-love; so as to need any Moderation herein? I Answer, there may very well be; and by this we may see how dangerous and subtile Self-love is, and how easily it is found in the most Holy and Pious things. Spiritual Sweetness and Consolations are very profitable to a Soul, because they give it a Loathing and Horror of all Earthly Satisfaction, which are the Bait and Nourishment of Vices, and also because they make us go on with more Alacrity in the Service of God: † *I have run on in the Ways of your Commandments*, says the Psalmist, *when you Dilated my Heart*. As the Heart is shut up and restrain'd by Sorrow, so is it dilated and extended by Joy. And it was for this reason, the Royal Prophet sayd in this Place, that when his Heart was extended with the Joy of Spiritual Consolations, he ran with more force and swiftness in the way of Vertue, and in the Commandments of our Lord. Spiritual Consolations are also very conducing, towards making an intire Renunciation of our

† Viam mandatorum tuorum cucurri, cum dilatasti cor meum.
Psal. 118. 32.

our own Will, a curbing of our Appetites, mortifying our own Flesh, and a supporting with constancy all afflictions which occur. So that when God intends to send us crosses, he is accusom'd to prepare our Souls before Hand, by sweetness and comforts, which fortifie us, and put us in a right disposition to make good use of those afflictions which befall us. So our Saviour comforted his Apostles by his glorious Transfiguration, that they might not be troubl'd afterwards in seeing him Die upon a Cross: And in the like manner we see God ordinarily sends comforts to those who begin to imbrace the way of Vertue, to draw them off totally from all Affections of this World. But when they are once inflam'd with the Divine Love, and their Vertues have lay'd deep Roots within their Hearts, then it is he Exercises 'em in desolations, for their increase in Patience and Humility; and that serving God purely for his own sake, and without any sensible comfort, they may Merit a greater increase of Grace and Glory. Hereby it happen's, many find when they are newly enter'd into Religion, and even before they are enter'd, and have only a desire of entring, that they had many more Consolations, then they have afterwards. And the reason is, for that God treats 'em according to their Age, that is, according to their Age in respect of Vertue. To the end he might break 'em off and separate them from the World, and cause in 'em a disgust and horror of all it's Vanities, he Nourishes 'em with Milk like Children, and with a Spiritual sort of Milk which is more sweet and pleasant than all the sweetness of the World: But when they are advanc'd in Vertue, there's no need of their being treated so delicately, so that he feeds 'em with more solid and substantial Food. 'Tis then for these ends, he afford's Spiritual delights and comforts; and why the Saints advise us in time of Consolation to prepare and arm our selves for Temptation; as in time of Peace we make preparations for War: It being a thing almost infallible, that comforts are a preface of an approaching affliction.

Spiritual Consolations therefore are very profitable if we knew but the right way to make use of 'em: And when it pleases God to bestow 'em upon us, we must receive them with Acts of Gratitude and Thanksgiving. But if any one regards 'em in as much as they are sensible, and desires 'em only for the satisfaction and delight the Soul finds therein;

this desire of his wou'd be Vicious, and appear an effect of Self-love. As we shou'd commit a Sin, if in things necessary for our sustenance of Life, as in Eating, Drinking, Sleeping, we propose no other end but the Pleasure we find therein: So, if in Prayer we have no other Intention but of Consolations and Sweetnesses, it wou'd be a Sin of Spiritual Intemperance. We must not either desire, or receive these sort of things in regard of our own content only, but must look upon 'em as a means which helps us to arrive to those ends we have spoken of. As a Sick Person who has lost his Appetite to all sorts of Meats necessary for him, is glad to find some tast, not only for the Pleasure he has in Eating, but because it excites in him an Appetite, and causes him to take as much Nourishment as suffices for the recovering his Health and Strength: In the same manner a Servant of God ought to wish for Spiritual Consolations, not for the Gust and Delight he finds, but in as much as they are a Spiritual refreshing, which gives him courage and strength to advance in the difficult way of Vertue, and persevere therein with constancy. In this manner Spiritual Consolations are not to be desir'd as they are Consolations, but only for the greater Glory of God, and in as much as they contribute thereunto.

But still I say, that even suppose we desire them not but with this Intention, which is very Laudable and Holy; yet we may commit an excess in these sorts of desires, and find some tincture of Self-love therein. If for Example we desire these Consolations without any Measure, and with a certain Impatience and Importunity, that supposing we receive them not, we are less satisfi'd in the Interior, and less Conform'd to God's Will, and cease not to complain and be out of humor; then I say, this so violent an Affection is nothing else than a disordinate Spiritual Covertnousness. For we must not be bent upon these sorts of griefs, so as in case it pleases God not to send us 'em, we loose the peace of our Soul thereby, and that Conformity we ought to have to the Divine Will: Because this Will is to be preferr'd before all things, and our chiefest importance is to submit our selves intirely to what God pleases.

What I say here of Spiritual Consolations and Delights, I understand also of the gift of Prayer and of the facility we desire therein, of the Interior Peace and Tranquillity of the Soul, and of all other Spiritual advantages. For there may be

be want of Moderation in such things, if they are desir'd with so much impatience and earnestness, that in case of failing in the pursuit, we are discontented and troubl'd, and in no wise Conform our selves to the Will of God. Wherefore by these words of Spiritual Consolations and Delights, we understand not only sensible Pleasure of Devotion, but even the very substance of Prayer, and the gift of being able to Persever therein with all Attention and Recollection of Mind, we cou'd wish or desire. Or rather 'tis chiefly of this we speak at present, and concerning which we design to shew, that we must absolutely Conform our selves to the Divine Will, without being carry'd away with too much earnestness and solicitude. For in as much as belongs to sensible Sweetness and Consolations; there's no one who do's not easily renounce 'em, provided he can but certainly have what is most essential to Prayer, and perceives the Fruit thereof in himself. All know the Essence of Prayer consists not in a tender and sensible Devotion; and that to be depriv'd of this, there's no need of offering our selves any great Violence, or having a Sublime Vertue. But when it happens, that in time of Prayer we find our selves in so great a Desolation, as thò God had retir'd from us, and we felt in effect the Curse wherewith he threatn'd his People when he sayd, * *I will make the Heavens of Iron for you, and the Earth of Brass*: Then it is we stand in need of an extraordinary Vertue and Strength to undergo all this with that Resignation we ought. For the Heavens seem of Iron, and the Earth of Brass to such as are in this condition: They find not only a continual Aridity and Barrenness without the least drop of Water for their comfort, but they are sometimes also Molested with perpetual Distractions, and an infinity of so strange and unheard of Thoughts, that they seem to place themselves in Prayer for no other end, than to be expos'd to all sort of Temptations. If you desire 'em in this case, to think of Death, of JESUS CHRIST Crucifix'd, and tell 'em these are the chief Remedies for Recollection of Mind; they will answer you, they know very well they are a good Remedy, and cou'd they but practise them, they desir'd nothing more: But their Misery is, they are not Masters of their own Imagination; and when they endeavour most to apply themselves to their Points, nothing moves 'em, nor makes any impression upon their Heart. This is what in Spiritual things we call

* Daboque
vobis celum
æsuper sicut
ferrum, & ter-
ram æneam.
Levit. 26. 19.
Exod. 28. 23.

call Desolation or Aridity; and we are to make it our business to Conform our selves to God as well in this, as in all other things.

This is a Point of great consequence, as being the most common subject of complaint, and one of the greatest Mortifications can befall those who are given to Prayer. For understanding on one side, the conduct of their Actions, throughout the Day, and consequently that of their Life, depends upon the manner whereby they perform their Prayer; and that 'tis one of the chief means we have, as well for our own Spiritual Advancement, as the Edification of our Neighbor; and on the other side, imagining themselves far from accomplishing their duty, they fall to Tears and Sighs as tho' God had abandon'd 'em: And seeing whilst they have no success in their undertakings, others make great progress with ease; they fear they have lost God's Grace, since they feel not greater effects of his Presence. Hence arise in 'em other Temptations more dangerous, as for Example, to complain of God for treating 'em in this manner, and an Intention of leaving off their Exercise of Prayer, looking upon themselves as not fit for it since their success is so small. In fine, what add's to their affliction, is, that the Devil represents to them, that it is upon the account of their Sins, God has abandon'd 'em; and there are some who by this consideration are cast into such a dejection of Mind, that they come from their Prayer as from a Torture, and with those Melancholy Thoughts and Humor which is insupportable to themselves, and those they converse with. We will endeavour by the help of God's Grace, to satisfy abundantly all the Complaints and Objections, those who are Molested with this Temptation can possibly frame.

CHAP.

C H A P. XXV.

Wherein are fully Answer'd the Objections and Complaints of those who are troubl'd with Aridities and Desolations in Prayer.

FIRST, I do not here pretend to deny, but that we are to rejoyce when God approaches us; and be sorry when he withdraws himself from us: For 'tis impossible a Soul thou'd not perceive a sensible joy in the Presence of her Beloved, and be sensibly afflicted in his Absence, since by this she is left to Desolations and Temptations. JESUS CHRIST himself was sensibly touch'd to see himself forsaken by his Eternal Father, when on the Cross he cry'd out: † *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* But what I desire is, that we make our profit of this hard Proof and Trial which God sometimes sends his Elect; and that we endeavour to fortifie our Souls, in Conforming our selves to the Divine Will, saying, * *Nevertheless, O Lord, not as I Will, but as you Will.* We must the rather make use of this means, for that Christian Perfection consists neither in the sweetness of Consolations, nor in sublime Prayer; and for that our Advancement is not measur'd thereby, but only according to the Rule of Charity, which is independant of all other things, and consists in a perfect Union and Submission to the Divine Will, as well in adversity and desolation, as in prosperity and comfort. Wherefore upon this account it is, that Spiritual Crosses and Aridities ought to be receiv'd from the Hand of God, as well as Consolations and Favors: And we must thank him equally for both. If it be your Pleasure, O Lord, that I remain in Darknes; Blessed be your Holy Name: If you will have me enjoy the Light; Blessed be your Holy Name: If you confer comforts upon me; Blessed be your Holy Name; and if you will have me suffer afflictions, Blessed be

† Deus meus, Deus meus, ut quid dereliquisti me?
Matth. 27. 45.

* verum tamen non sicut ego volo, sed sicut tu.
Matth. 26. 39.

De Unit. Christi
lib. 3. c. 13.

† In omnibus
gratias agite,
hæc est enim
voluntas Dei
in Christo
Jesu, in omni-
bus vobis
1 Ad Theff. 5
18.

At. Avila. Audi
Eliia. c. 26.

be your Holy Name. 'Tis what the Apostle Counsels us to use upon the like occasions, when Writing to the *Theſſalonians*, he says, † *In all things give God thanks; for this is, what God wou'd have ye all do in JESUS CHRIST.* If this be the Will of God, what can we desire more? I have nothing else to do but please him; my Life is only given me for this end; and how obscure and tedious soever are the path's, by which it pleases him to conduct me, my business is not to desire more plain and easie ways. God leads some throu' pleasant Fields, where there are infinite Delights; 'tis his will I march throu' forlorn and frightful Deserts, where I am depriv'd of all comfort: I wou'd not change the pains and difficulties of my Road, for all the satisfaction and pleasure others find in their's. This is the Language of those whose Eyes are open to discern things, and thus they comfort themselves upon all occasions. O that it but pleas'd God to open our Eyes, says Father *Avila*, we shou'd see more clear than the Day, that there's nothing upon Earth, nor in Heaven which deserves to be desir'd or possess, if the Will of God be not annex'd thereto; and that on the contrary, there's nothing so contemptible, so painful which becomes not of an inestimable value, if joyn'd to the Will of God. It were without comparison much better, to suffer Afflictions, Pains, Aridities and Temptations if it were his Will; than to enjoy all Consolations imaginable, and the most sublime Contemplations if you exclude God's Will.

But some one will say, supposing I knew God's Will were such, and this were it in effect that pleas'd him most; I cou'd Conform my self with ease: And altho I were to pass my whole Life in this manner, I cou'd submit with satisfaction and content; because I know there's nothing in this World more to be desir'd than to please God, and that my Life has been given me for no other end. But on the contrary it seem's to me, that God wou'd have me be more attentive and recollected in Prayer, provided I bring on my part a better Disposition: And what troubles me is, when I imagine those Aridities and Dissatisfactions which hinder me from applying my self proceed only from my Tepidity, and that I do not use my utmost endeavour. For if I cou'd but satisfie my self in this Point, that I had perform'd all on my side, and were but assur'd 'tis not my fault, I shou'd be at rest. This complaint is very well

well form'd; there can be nothing added since it comprehends all that can be alleg'd: So that we will look upon it a great point gain'd, if we give a full and satisfactory Answer; since 'tis a common complaint, and there's not a Soul how Holy and Perfect soever it be, which feels not sometimes these desolations and Spiritual afflictions. Saint Francis and Saint Catherine of Siena were not exempt, altho otherwise they were great Servants of God: And the great Saint Anthony having pass'd whole Nights in Prayer, thought he had been but a Moment; complaining the Sun rise too soon; and was so tormented with infinity of distractions and wandering thoughts, that not being able to repel 'em, he cry'd out, *Lord I desire to be Perfect, but my extravagant Thoughts will not permit me.* Saint Bernard complain'd of the same thing, when he sayd; * *My Heart is dry'd up; 'tis curdled like Milk; 'tis become like parch'd Earth without Water; and 'tis so hardned that I cannot excite it either to Tears or Compunction. I take no more pleasure in Singing the Divine Office; I have no Inclination to Spiritual Reading nor Prayer; nor do I find now those Holy Meditations I was accusom'd to make. Where are now those Spiritual Flames? Where that Tranquillity and Peace of Mind? Where that Content and Repose in the Holy Ghost?* So that the matter we here speak of, concerns in general the whole World, and I hope with God's Grace I shall abundantly satisfy the complaints and objections of all.

I begin then in the first place to grant you that all the distractions and desolations you find in Prayer, and all the difficulty you have therein, proceed from your own Fault; it is requisite also that you persuade your self and in reality acknowledge, that in punishment of your past Sins and your present negligence, God permits you to have no Facility in Prayer, no Attention in it, no Recollection of Spirit, no Tranquillity. Nevertheless, it follow's not from thence that instead of Conforming our self to God's Will, you have any right to complain. Shall I answer you once for all? *I condemn you out of your own Words:* Do not you confess you desire a great punishment of God for your past Sins and Negligences? You own it doubtless: And grant you have several times deserv'd Hell it self; that there cannot be found in the World any punishment great enough for you; that in comparison of what you deserve, whatever you otherwise can suffer, will be an effect of the Divine

Tom. I.

E e e e

Mercy

* Exaruit cor meum, coagulatum est sicut lac, factum est sicut terra sine aqua, nec compungi ad lachrymas, queo, quia tanta est duritia cordis: Non sapit pascimus, non legere libet, non orare delectat, meditationes solitas non invenio. Ubi illa incubatio spiritus? Ubi mentis serenitas, & pax & gaudium in spiritu Sancto? Bern. Serm. 14. sup. Cantica.

† De ore tuo te judico. Luc. 19. 22.

Mercy and Goodness: And infine, that you will receive as a singular favor the chastisements he shall please to send you in this Life, because you will rest assur'd thereby, he will pardon your Sins, and not punish you in the Life to come. This is sufficient, I desire no more: But let's come to the Application of all that has been sayd. All your distractions, all your desolations, your afflictions, your Spiritual dereliction; the Heaven becomes of Iron, and the Earth of Brass; your little or no facility in Prayer, as often as you apply your self to it, and God infine who seems to retire from you, all this I say, is a chastisement sent from God for the expiation of our Sins past, and your Faults present. Do you not find both the one and the other deserve their punishment alike? Yes doubtless you find it so: Questionless you own the punishment but little in consideration of what you deserve, and 'tis equally full of Justice and Mercy: Of Justice, for having so often shut the Gate of your Heart against God, and been Deaf to him when he Knock'd at it by so many Holy Inspirations; and having rejected 'em so often, 'tis but Just, that now he hear's you not; when you call upon him, he Answers not; and instead of opening you the Door, he shuts it upon you. You cannot disagree with me in this; and thus infine the Justice of the punishment you receive is intirely establish'd. Nor will you likewise disown, but that this also, little in respect of what you deserve, and that 'tis full also, of Mercy. Conform your self then to God in the chastisement sent you, and receive it with thanksgiving for having punish'd you with so much Mercy and Sweetness. Have you not own'd you deserv'd Hell? With what Face then dare you pretend to receive Consolations and Favors in your Prayer? To have free access therein to God, to entertain your self familiarly with him, and enjoy a Peace and Tranquillity, which only his Beloved Children enjoy? How dare you complain you have not what you so little deserv'd? Is not this a sign of too much boldness and presumption? Content your self that God suffers you in his House, and permits you to remain in his Presence, 'tis so great a favor, and so considerable a benefit that we can never have too great an esteem of it, nor ever acknowledge it as we ought. Were we really Humble of Heart, we shou'd never open our Mouth to complain, in what manner soever it pleases God to deal with us: And thus all Temptations proceeding from these causes wou'd immediately cease.

C H A P.

CHAP. XXVI.

*How we may convert Aridities and Desolations,
into a good profitable Prayer.*

TIS not not enough that we make no complaint of these Aridities and Desolations; but we must endeavour to profit by them, and to convert 'em to an excellent Prayer. And the first thing that will help us to do this, is, what I have spoken of in the Treatise of Prayer, which is, to address our selves to God, and tell him; Lord, in so much as this Aridity proceeds from my fault or negligence, I am truly sorry, and troubl'd for the cause I have giv'n of it, but in that it is your Holy Will, and a just pain and punishment which my Sins have Merited, I accept it with all my Heart, and do not only submit to this Cross, and embrace it for the present, but even to the end of my Life; giving you infinite thanks for it. This Spirit of Patience, Humility and Resignation to the Will of God, is infinitely more pleasing to him, than those complaints and disquiets, which proceed from the difficulties we find in Prayer, and from the infinity of distractions we meet withal therein. Which of his two Son's do you think a Father wou'd Love best? Him; who is contented with whatsoever he shall bestow upon him, or the other, who is contented with nothing that he gives him, but murmurs and complains continually; and thinks all that he gives him too little in comparison of what he thinks he deserves. 'Tis not to be doubted, but you will say, the first is most pleasing to him. 'Tis the same with us in regard of God: We are all his Children; he who is of a peaceable and complying humor, and conforms himself in all things to the Will of his Heavenly Father, and is content with whatsoever he sends him, how hard and troublesome soever, pleases God far more than the other, who is so hard to be pleas'd, and do's nothing else but

*Treatise 5.
Chap. 19.*

murmur and complain, because what is given him is not to his liking. Moreover, which of the two Beggars do you think makes better use of what is given him, or more excites Charity and Compassion; he who grumbles at the Gate, because he receives not presently an Answer, or because nothing is given him; or the other, who stays patiently at the Door, after he knows they hear him, without farther importunity, and without making any complaint, expects with Patience in the cold and rain to see whether they will bestow any thing upon him? 'Tis very certain, that the Humility of this inspires feelings of pity and compassion; and the Pride of the other, excites motions of anger and indignation. The same thing happens betwixt God and us.

But to the end we may better know the excellency and profit of this kind of Prayer, and how pleasing 'tis to God, I ask, what greater Fruit can be gather'd from Prayer, than that of great Patience in afflictions, of an intire Conformity to the Divine Will, and of an extream Love to God? Is not this what we ought to propose to our selves in Prayer? This being so, when therefore God shall send you dryness and desolation in Prayer, Conform your self to his Will, in this Spiritual dereliction, in which he leaves you, and this will be one of the greatest Acts of Patience and Love of God, which 'tis possible for you to perform. Nothing causes an excess of Love to appear more, than the greatness of pain and labor which we undergo for the sake of the Beloved. But 'tis certain, that the Aridities and Derelictions of which we speak, are the greatest sufferings, most sensible mortifications, and the most painful crosses of the true Servants of God: For all Temporal afflictions that regard our Goods, Health, or Reputation, are nothing comparable to them. So that to Conform our selves in these, intirely to the Will of God by imitating JESUS CHRIST in that Dereliction he found upon the Cross; and to accept purely out of the sole desire of pleasing God, so great a cross as this, during our whole Lives, is certainly one of the greatest Acts of Patience and Love of God, a sort of most sublime and profitable Prayer, and an effect of the most Consummated Perfection. There's so much Verue and Merit herein, that those who thus submit themselves to these afflictions, are styl'd by some the greatest of Martyrs.

Moreover,

Moreover, why do you betake your self to Prayer, but to obtain a profound Humility, and an intire knowledge of your self? How often have you begg'd of God, that he wou'd let you see how miserable a Creature you are? And behold he gives you a sight and knowledge of this by means of these Aridities and Disgusts. Some think the knowledge of themselves consists in having a great sorrow and regret for their Sins, and in bitterly deploring 'em: But they are deceiv'd; for this Compunction is from God, and not from themselves, and consequently 'tis God, not themselves they come to know thereby. That which is purely from your self, is, that hardness of Heart, such an insensibility, as is like a Rock from which a drop of Water cannot proceed, unless God strikes it. 'Tis in this the knowledge of our selves consists, and consequently this is the source of all sorts of happiness, which you may very easily gain amidst those Aridities you complain of; so that if you do but gather this Fruit from your Prayer, your Prayer will become most profitable.

CHAP. XXVII.

*Of some other Reasons that ought to move us to
Comfort and Conform our selves to the
Divine Will, in these Aridities and
Desolations in Prayer.*

THO' for the entertaining our selves so much the more in profound Sentiments of Humility and Confusion, 'tis very good that we shou'd think our Sins to be the cause of those Aridities we suffer, yet we must also think, that they are not always a punishment of our Offences, but sometimes they are a pure effect of the impenetrable Providence of God, who bestows his Favors and Graces, how and to whom he pleases. And as 'tis not convenient that a Body shou'd be compos'd only of the Eyes, Hands, Feet,
or

or Head, which are more Noble Parts that form it, but that there shou'd be different Members; so the same is to be sayd of the Church. So that all those that compose this Mystical Body, ought not to be rais'd to this kind of high Prayer, of which we have spoken in the Fifth Treatise. Yet nevertheless, we are not hereupon to conclude, that those upon whom God confers not this Grace, are unworthy of it; but 'tis because he knows they will be able to reap more profit another way: And therefore he bestows a greater and more signal favor, in bestowing rather another Grace than this upon 'em. There have been very great Saints that have never been able to obtain this Grace, or if they have, they have sayd with Saint Paul: * *Far be it from me to Glory, except in the Crofs of my Lord JESUS CHRIST.*

* Mihi autem
absit gloriari,
nisi in Cruce
Domini nostri
Jesu Christi
Ad Gal. 6. 14.

M. Avila. t. 2.
Epist. fol. 22.

Father *Avila* speaking hereof, says that which cannot but afford us very great comfort. God, says he, sometimes leaves certain persons in an intire privation of all sorts of Spiritual comforts, during many Years together, and sometimes even for their whole Lives. But their Portion in my Opinion is far the better, if they have but so lively a Faith, as not to judge ill of the Ordinations of Providence, and so couragious a Patience, as constantly to support so great and sensible a dereliction. All the World wou'd in this easily Conform themselves to the Will of God, if each one were well perswaded that this state were more for his advantage, than any other. The Saints and Masters of Spirit alledge many Reasons to prove this truth; but I will content my self with the recounting of one of the chief, which Saint *Austin*, Saint *Hierom* and Saint *Gregory*, and generally all those that treat of this matter propole to us.

'Tis that all the World is not capable to conserve Humility amidst the favors of an Elevated Contemplation. We find we have scarce shed a Tear in our Prayer, but we think our selves already come to a high pitch of Spirituality and Contemplation, and dare compare, if not prefer our selves before those who are Perfect. It seems as if Saint Paul himself stood in need of the weight of Temptations, not to let himself be carry'd away with Vanity which hereby might happen unto him: † *For fear*, says he, *that the greatness of my Revelations shou'd puff me up, there was given me a Thorn of my Flesh, the Angel of Satan to Torment me.* God permits the Apostle shou'd be disquieted

† Et ne magnitudo revelationum extollat me, datus est mihi stimulus carnis mee angelus satanz, qui me colaphizet.
2 Cor. 12. 7.

disquieted with a Temptation that humbled him, and made him sensible of his Weakness, for fear his being rapt to the third Heavens, and the greatness of his Revelations shou'd give him any Vain-glory. Of all the ways of a Spiritual Life, that of Contemplation is most Elevated, but 'tis not the most secure; and 'tis for this reason God who has Created us all for the same end, which is the enjoyment of himself, conducts us all by that way which he sees most suitable to each one; perhaps if you found in Prayer that facility, and all those sweetneses you desire, you wou'd thereby be puffed up with Pride; whereas finding nothing therein but Aridities, you may always be kept in Humility, and a Contempt of your self, and therefore this way is far better and more secure for you; but if you desire to go any other way, 'tis because * *You understand not what you ask.*

Saint Gregory Writing upon these words of Job, † *If he comes to me I will see him; and if he goes away from me I will take no notice of his departure*; Man, says he, is become so Blind by his fall, that he neither knows when God approaches, or when he leaves him: But on the contrary, that which he thinks to be a particular favor which may help him as a means to approach nearer unto God, sometimes increaseth his Anger, and causes him to go farther from us; and that which he believes to be a mark of God's Indignation, and which drives us farther from him, is a particular favor that inseparably unites us unto him. For who is there that perceiving himself Elevated to a high degree of sublime Prayer, and receiving every Day in it some new favor, do's not imagine that hereby he continually more and more approaches unto God? Notwithstanding that which often happens from such sorts of favors, is, that they give an occasion of Pride and Presumption, and so the same things that we think shou'd raise us higher and bring us nearer unto God, are those the Devil frequently uses to make us fall into his Snares and Precipices. And when on the contrary we see our selves depriv'd of all Spiritual comfort, and tormented with thoughts either against Purity, or against Faith, we imagine our selves forsaken by God, that he is Angry with us and withdraws himself from us, yet notwithstanding, 'tis then he comes nearest to us; because then we most of all Humble our selves, and have a less Opinion of our own strength; have our recourse

* Nescitis quid petatis. Matth. 20. 22.

Lib. 9. Moral.

† Si venerit ad me, non videbo eum: Si abierit, non intelligam. Job. 9. 11.

unto

unto him with greater fervor, put all our confidence in him, and so streightly unite our selves unto him, that we can never be separated from him. 'Tis not therefore certain that the way you think best, is best for you, but that way which God is pleas'd to lead you, is that which is most convenient and profitable for you.

Moreover, that very sorrow you have upon account you think you perform not your Duty as you ought to do in Prayer, is a subject of comfort; because 'tis a particular Grace of God, and a mark that you Love him: For grief supposes Love, and we have no regret for serving him ill, but when at the same time we desire to serve him well; certainly if you were not troubl'd that you serve him ill, and that you perform not your Prayer and other exercises well, it wou'd in effect be a very ill sign; but to be displeas'd, because you think you perform not your Duty as you ought, is a very good one: Wherefore since the pain you suffer hereby is an effect of the Divine Will, it follows that on the one side this consideration thou'd serve to allay your displeasure, Conforming your self to all that is God's Will; and on the other side you must give him thanks for this, that if there be any Tepidity in your Actions, you have at least at the same time a very great desire to perform em better.

Moreover, as care and assiduity of Attendance in a Princes Court, is a mark of the Courtiers desire and readines to serve him; so if you do nothing else in your Prayer but keep your self diligently in God's Presence, you continually do him Service. * *Blessed is he who gives Ear to me, says the Holy Scripture by the Mouth of the Wise-man, and always wait's at my Gate, and expects till I open to him.* 'Tis very fit both in respect of the greatness of the Infinite Majesty of God, and the vileness of our own condition; as well as in respect of the important affair we have in hand, that we shou'd go often to wait at his Gate; which if he pleases to open, give him thanks; if he opens it not, acknowledge that you do not deserve he shou'd do so; and this will be a very good and profitable kind of Prayer. We must help our selves with these kinds of considerations, and divers others of the like nature, to obtain a Conformity with the Will of God in time of these Aridities which he sends us, in this Spiritual dereliction and desolation in which he leaves us; which we must receive from

* Beatus homo, qui audit me, & qui vigilat ad fores meas quotidie, & observat ad postes ostii mei.
Prov. 8. 34.

from his Hands with thanksgiving, and say with Saint Bartholomew of the Martyrs: † Hail O most bitter bitterness; because how unpleasant soever thou art, yet art replenish'd with all sorts of Grace.

† Salve amaritudo amarissima omnis gratia plena. In suo Compend. c. 26.

CHAP. XXVIII.

That 'tis a very great abuse to leave the exercise of Prayer upon account of the Desolation and Aridities we find therein.

FROM what we have already sayd, it follows, that 'tis a very great illusion to leave our Prayer, or to make less Prayer than ordinary, because we find our selves in the state of Aridity in time of it; and therefore imagine we do nothing but lose our time. This thought is a very dangerous Temptation; that has made not only many Secular Persons leave off the exercise of Prayer; but many Religious also; and tho' it causes not some to leave off intirely this exercise, yet it lessens their affection to it, and hinders 'em from imploying all that time in it, which otherwise they might do. Many begin to give themselves to Prayer with great fervor, and continue to practise the same so long as they find comfort and sweetness in it; but when aridities and distractions molest 'em, then they imagine they make no more Prayer, but commit a fault, by being in God's Presence with so little Attention and Respect; and think they might Serve him better by some other Spiritual exercise, and therefore apply themselves less then ordinary to that of Prayer. The Devil who sees their weakness and inconstancy, takes hold of this occasion, and so endeavours to disquiet 'em in time of Prayer, by all sorts of Thoughts and Temptations, that being at last quite discourag'd, and perswading themselves the time thus spent in Prayer, to be very ill imploy'd; they quite leave it off, and therewith the desire of their Perfection, and

Tom. I.

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* Est amicus
socius mentis;
& non perman-
nebit in die
necessitatis.
Beles. 6. 10.

Exercit. Spirit.
anno. 13.

Palladius in
Hist. Laus.

and sometimes even the care of the Salvation of their Souls. Thus a great many Persons ruin and destroy themselves: * *These are Friends and Guests at our Table, who leave us in time of necessity.* There's no one who would not desire to be happy with God; but the true mark of Love is to desire to suffer with him: 'Tis no very great matter to persevere a long time in Prayer, when we receive sweetness and consolation; the satisfaction alone we find therein, is sufficient to oblige us thereunto: And if we leave off Prayer when we find this wanting, 'tis a sign we Act only for this Motive. But when God sends us desolations, aridities and distractions, 'tis then we shew our selves true Friends of God, and his Faithful Servants, who search not our own interest, but regard only his Holy Will and Pleasure. For this reason we ought at such a time as this to persevere with the Spirit of Humility and Patience, and give the whole time to Prayer, nay even more then is appointed, as Saint Ignatius Counsels us; to the end we may better surmount the Temptation, and testifie our constancy and courage in resisting the Devil.

Palladius recounts of himself, that being shut up in his Cell, the better to give himself to Prayer, Contemplation and other Spiritual Duties, he found himself in so great an Aridity, and was disquieted with such a number of distracted thoughts, that it came into his Mind to leave off his Prayer, being able to make no progress in it. Whereupon he went to find out the great Macarius of Alexandria, whom he acquainted with his Temptation, and ask'd his Counsel what to do in it. When these sorts of thoughts, reply'd the Saint, bid you be gone, and persuade you, that you do but lose you time; Answer 'em, *'Tis for the Love of JESUS CHRIST I keep within the Walls of my Cell.* Which was the same as to advise him to persevere; and let him know that he shou'd draw no other Fruit from this exercise or trial, but to continue in it for the Love of JESUS CHRIST, and this alone was sufficient. We may help our selves with the same Answer, in the like Temptations. For our own satisfaction is not the end we must aim at, or ought to have in Prayer; and 'tis not upon this account we apply our selves to it. That which we are to propose to our selves in Prayer, is, to perform an Action that is pleasing to God, whereby we may in some measure acquit our selves of a part of our Duty to him, as he is our God; and a

part

Part. 1. Of Conformity to God's Will. 595

part of our Obligations we have to him, as our Benefactor: And this being so, tho' in the midst of aridities and distractions, you think you are not able to draw any Fruit out of Prayer, yet do not fail to persevere in it, because 'tis this that pleases him.

We Read of Saint Catherine of Siena, that for many Days together she was depriv'd of all sorts of Spiritual comfort, feeling nothing at all of her wonted fervor, but Dayly tormented with an infinity of impure thoughts, which she was not able to free her self from. Yet nevertheless, the no Day fail'd to make her accustom'd Prayer, in which she persever'd the best she was able, speaking thus to her Self. *Alas, miserable Sinner as you are, do you deserve any comfort? Would it not be a greater happiness then you deserve, to pass your whole Life in darkness and in the desolate afflictions you are in, so you might but be freed from Eternal Damnation? You were not call'd to the Service of God, or undertook it to have Sweetness and Comforts in this Life, but Eternally to enjoy them with him in the next: Take Courage therefore, continue in your Exercises, and persevere with that Fidelity you owe your Sovereign Master.*

Let us imitate these two Examples, and fortifie our selves with the words of Thomas à Kempis. † *Let my Consolation, O Lord, be, to be always willing to want all Human Comfort, and if your Comfort also be wanting in me, let your Will and good liking thus to try me, be to me the greatest of all Comforts.* When we shall become so much Masters over our selves, as thus to unite our satisfaction to the Divine Will; so that it shall even be a joy unto us to have no comfort, if God pleases to deprive us of it; then we shall enjoy so perfect a peace and contentment, that nothing in this World shall be able to take it from us, or give us any trouble.

*Elohus c. 4.
Monit. Spirit.*

† Hæc mihi
sit consolatio,
libenter velle
carere omni
humano solati-
tio. Et si tua
defuerit con-
solatio, sit
mihi tua vo-
luntas & justa
probatio, pro
summo solati-
tio.
*Imit. Christi
lib. 3. cap. 16.*

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CHAP.

C H A P. XXIX.

In which, what has been already sayd, is Confirm'd by divers Examples.

Fifth. Ord. Predic. 1. p. lib. 1. c. 60.

IN the Chronicles of the Order of Saint *Dominick*, 'tis reported of one of the most considerable Persons of this Order, who Liv'd many Years together in Religion in so great purity and innocency of Life, that he was very exemplar, and esteem'd by all, tho' he had never receiv'd the least Spiritual comfort in the exercise of any of his Religious Duties. But when he heard the Religious speak of those favors God did to others, and of those Spiritual sweetneses with which he fill'd 'em, he became so sensibly afflicted, that at last staying one Night in the Church after Matins, being over-whelm'd with grief, he prostrated himself before a Crucifix; where Weeping very bitterly, and almost out of himself, he was mov'd to make this complaint. *O Lord, I have been always perswaded, that you surpass all your Creatures in goodness and liberality: Behold me here prostrate before you, who have Serv'd you so many Tears; and for Love of you, have suffer'd many grievous afflictions, having made an intire Sacrifice of my self unto your Divine Majesty. Had I serv'd a Tyrant for the fourth part of that time I have Serv'd you, he wou'd before this, have given me some mark or testimony of his good Will, either by a kind word, a smile, or a favorable look. But you O Lord, you have not bestow'd upon me even the least of those favors, that you are accusom'd to give to others; and you who are sweetness it self to all the World, are harder and more cruel to me than the greatest Tyrant in the World wou'd be. From whence proceeds this O Lord? And why do you treat me after so cruel a manner? He had scarce pronounc'd these words, when on a sudden he heard so terrible a noise, as if the whole Church were turn'd topsie-turvy; when seiz'd with fear, and turning his Head to see what was the matter, he perceiv'd a Devil behind*

behind him, who holding a Bar of Iron in his Hands, gave him such a blow over his Body, that he fell with his Face upon the ground, without being able to raise himself from it; yet nevertheless he had so much strength and courage left, as to creep to an Altar hard by; where not being able to move by reason of the great pain he felt, he there remain'd stretch'd out as if he had been all over bruis'd and broken in pieces by the force of the blows. The Religious coming afterwards to the Office of Prime, finding him half Dead, carry'd him to the Infirmary, without knowing how or why this strange accident had happen'd to him. He remain'd there for three whole Weeks, suffering most grievous pains, and his Body sent forth so intollerable a stench, that the Infirmarians were scarce able to come near him, to dress or assist him. At the end of three Weeks he began to recover some strength, and as soon as he was able to rise, being desirous to Cure himself intirely of his Pride and Presumption, he went to search a remedy, in the same place where he had committed the fault. Where full of shame and confusion, bath'd all in Tears, he made a very different Prayer from that he made before. Confessing his guilt, that he deserv'd no favor from God, and that he had not receiv'd the punishment he deserv'd. At which time he heard a Voice from Heaven, that sayd to him, *If you desire sweetness and comforts, you must be Humble, you must know your own baseness, and remember that you are more vile and contemptible than the very Dirt or Worm's.* He profited so well by this instruction, and from what had happen'd unto him, that from that time forward he became a most Perfect Religious Man.

We Read another Example very different from the former, in the Life of Saint Ignatius. 'Tis reported that this Saint considering his faults, and Weeping bitterly for them, sayd, he wish'd with all his Heart, God wou'd punish 'em, by depriving him for some time, of all sweetness, and of his Divine consolations, to the end this chastisement might render him more careful and zealous in his Service. But he own'd at the same time, that God had always so great a Mercy and Compassion for him, and treated him with so much sweetness, that the more faults he committed, and the more he thus desir'd to be punish'd for 'em, the more goodness our Lord shew'd towards him, and pour'd down upon him with greater abundance the Treasures of

*In ejus vita,
lib. 5. cap. 1.*

of his infinite liberality. So that he sayd, he thought there was no person in the World in whom two things so opposite were to be found in so great an excess as in himself, first to fall so often into imperfections, and continue so ungrateful to God; the second, to receive so great and continual favors from his Divine Hand.

*Blos. cap. 10.
Men. spir.*

Blosius reports that a Holy Man, to whom our Lord did many favors, and communicated to him great lights in Prayer, begg'd one Day of God out of a great excess of Humility, and out of an ardent desire of pleasing him more; that he wou'd deprive him of those favors he bestow'd upon him; if this wou'd render him more pleasing in his sight. God heard his Prayer, and withdrew from him all his Consolations in such a manner, that for the space of Five Years together, he try'd him with continual Temptations, Aridities and Bitterness. One Day being oppress'd with sorrow, he Wept bitterly, at which time two Angels appear'd and comforted him; but the good Man refusing the Consolation they came to give him, sayd to them, *I desire no Comfort; for the accomplishment of the Will of God in me, is all the Comfort I desire.*

Id. cap. 4.

The same *Blosius* recounts also, that JESUS CHRIST appearing one Day to Saint *Brigit*, who was in a great desolation and affliction of Mind, ask'd her why she was afflicted? And the Saint having answer'd him, that 'twas because she was tormented with an infinity of bad thoughts, that gave her cause to apprehend his just Judgments might fall upon her; 'Tis just, reply'd our Saviour, *that as you have taken pleasure in the Vanities of the World against my Will, so you shou'd also now suffer against your own, many vain and bad thoughts; and as to what concerns my judgments, 'tis good also that you fear 'em; but this must be with moderation, and with a firm confidence in me, who am your God.* For you must hold for a certain truth, that bad thoughts which are resisted and rejected as much as are able, are the Purgatory of a Soul in this World, and a subject of a recompence in Heaven. But if you cannot quite drive them away, be contented that you desire all you can to resist 'em, and then suffer 'em with Patience. But take care also that you do not attribute this resistance to your own strength and forces, and thereby Pride be not the occasion of your fall; because no one can remain constant in Vertue, but so far as he is sustain'd and strengthen'd by the Grace of God.

Taulerus

Taulerus says, that many Persons addressing themselves to him in their Spiritual afflictions; and complaining that they were in a deplorable condition, because they suffer'd continual pain and trouble of Mind; he gave this Answer, that all things went very well with 'em, and that even the very things they complain'd of, was a favor God bestow'd upon 'em. And when they reply'd, they believ'd the contrary, and that this happen'd to them for a punishment of their Sins; whether it be for your Sins or no, reply'd he, yet still believe this cross comes from God, and therefore willingly imbrace it, give him thanks for it, and resign your selves intirely into his Hands. But if they told 'em they found themselves quite consum'd with the aridities and tediousness they felt in Prayer, he answer'd, suffer that with Patience, and thereby you will receive more favors, then if you felt in your selves the transports of a tender and fervent Devotion.

*Tauler. in
Psal. consolat*

A great Servant of God was wont to say, that for Forty Years together, which he had spent in God's Service, and in an application to Prayer, he had never yet receiv'd any sweetness or comfort; yet notwithstanding as often as he made his Prayer, he found afterwards by experience a greater strength and force to acquit himself of his Spiritual Duties, and when he neglected it, he found himself in so weak and languishing a condition, that he was scarce able to undertake any thing that was either good or Vertuous.

CHAP.

C H A P. XXX.

Of the Conformity we ought to have with the Will of God in the participation of all other Vertues and Supernatural Gifts.

THE same submission we ought to have to the Will of God, in what manner soever he treats us in Prayer; we must also have in regard of all other advantages of Grace. 'Tis good to desire Vertue, to be carry'd towards it with fervor, and to use force to our selves to obtain it; but we must govern our selves in this after such a manner, that supposing we arrive not to that height of Perfection we aim at, yet we must not fail to keep our Minds in Peace, and content our selves with what God pleases; Conforming our selves intirely to his Divine Will. If God will not bestow upon you the Purity of an Angel, if he will humble and try you by continual Temptations against Chastity; 'tis better you shou'd humbly submit to his Divine Will, than trouble or disquiet your self, or complain that you are not so Pure as an Angel. If God will not confer upon you so profound an Humility as he gave to Saint Francis, such a Spirit of Meekness as he gave to Moses and David, nor so great and constant a Patience as he gave to Job, and that 'tis his pleasure you shou'd be continually disquieted with Temptations contrary to these Vertues; 'tis good to take occasion hereby to acknowledge your baseness, but you ought not upon this account to lose the Peace of your Mind, and give your self over to grief or complaints, because he is not pleas'd to do you the same favors he has done to great Saints. I do not believe, says Father Avila, that there ever were any Saints so Perfect, as not to desire still greater Perfection; yet this did not at all hinder their Peace of Mind, because 'twas not a desire that proceeded from an insatiable Avarice, but from a thought

thought, with which the Love of God only inspir'd 'em: So, that they were contented with that part which was given 'em, and wou'd have been contented with a less, had God not been so liberal to them; knowing very well, that 'tis a meer illusion of Self-love to desire great gifts upon account to be thereby the better able to render Services to God; and that true Love consists in being satisf'd with what is given us.

This Discourse, as some one may object, seems to tend to the establishing in us so great an Error, as to think we ought not fervorously to desire to be more perfect than we are; but that we ought to leave to God, as well the care of our Soul's, as of our Bodies; which wou'd be to open a gap to all kind of liberty and disorder, to give an occasion of Tepidity, and to hinder us from endeavouring to become Perfect. This Objection deserves to be taken notice of, and mark's out the sole inconvenience that is to be fear'd in the matter we treat of. There's no Doctrine so Holy that may not be abus'd, when we know not how duly to put it in practice; and lest that happen here, as well in regard of Prayer in particular, as to what concerns all Vertues in general, 'tis fit I here shou'd more clearly explicate this Point. Wherefore take notice, that I do not say we ought not Daily to render our selves more Perfect in Vertue, and to imitate the most Perfect; for 'tis for this reason we enter'd into Religion, and without it we can never be good Religious: But what I here say, is, that as in Corporal and Exterior things, we must take such a care as is free from disquiet and solicitude; so also our care in Interior and Spiritual things ought not to disquiet our Peace, or hinder our intire Conformity with the Will of God. When JESUS CHRIST told his Apostles, † *Be not solicitous what you shall Eat or Drink, nor for your Body, wish what you shall be Cloath'd;* what he pretended hereby to forbid, says the Holy Fathers, was only the too great avidity and solicitude for Temporal Commodities; for as to what concerns a reasonable care and labor, we are so far from being forbidden it, that we are even commanded it; nay, 'tis a punishment God has impos'd upon us, as his words to Adam exprefs, * *You shall Eat your Bread in the Sweat of your Brow's;* and 'twou'd be to Tempt God to neglect it. 'Tis the same in Spiritual concerns: We must seek 'em with care, and do all we can to obtain 'em; but if in doing all

Tom. I.

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that

† Ne solliciti
sitis animæ
vestræ quid
manducetis,
neque corpori
vestro quid in-
dumentini.
Matth. 6. 25.

* In sudore
vultus tui ve-
sceris pane
tuo.
Genes. 3. 19.

that ly's in your power, you find you are not able to arrive to the Point of Perfection you aim at, yet you ought not upon this account, even tho' you shou'd find your self to have been defective, to give way to any thoughts of impatience, which wou'd be a greater imperfection than the fault it self, which was the cause thereof. Take care therefore you neglect nothing that is in your power to perform; and if after all your careful endeavours, it happens you fall into some defects, wonder not hereat, nor let this make you lose courage, because we are all prone and subject to fail. We are neither Angels, nor Saints confirm'd in Grace, we are poor weak Men; and God, who knows our weakness and misery, † *Who knows the frail matter of which we are made*, wou'd not have us be discourag'd hereat. But what he requires of us, is, that after we have fallen, we be sorry and confounded, and endeavour presently to rise again; that we beg of him new force and courage, and that we study to conserve both our Interior and Exterior Peace. For 'tis far better you shou'd rise presently with a Holy confidence in his goodness, and that you redouble your courage for his Service, then to permit your Mind to be cast down and discourag'd by believing you Weep for your Sins out of Love for him, and displease him by your disquiet and chagrin, by the languishing manner you serve him, and by a thousand other things that proceed from the same source.

† Quoniam
ipse cognovit
signum
nostrum.
E/sai. 102. 13.

The only thing we are here to be afraid of, is, what I have taken notice of before, lest negligence and tepidity steal hereby into our Minds, and we fail to do what we are able, out of a pretence that God ought first to bestow his Grace upon us, that all things ought to come from his Hands, and that 'tis not in our power to do more than we do. We must make it our care to defend our selves from the same thing concerning what I have spoke of Prayer; and take heed, that throu' the same pretence of idleness and negligence, it becomes not Master over us. But when this entry shall once be well shut, and when on your side you do all you can, 'tis certain the Patience and Humility you shall Exercise in your failings and weakness, will be far more pleasing to God, than the troubles, disquiets, and complaints to which we are too apt to give our selves, because we imagine we make not such progress in Prayer and Vertue as we desire. For the gift of Prayer and Perfection is not a Grace to be obtain'd

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obtain'd by force or by disquieting our selves; 'tis a favor which God bestows, whom, how, and when he pleases. After all, 'tis certain, that those who shall be sav'd shall not be all equal in Vertue; and therefore we ought not to lose courage, if we be not in the ranck of the most Perfect, nor even amongst the middle sort; but we must in all things Conform our selves to the Will of God, and render him thanks, that he has given us hopes throu' his Infinite Mercy we may save our Souls. If we cannot become so Perfect as to commit no voluntary faults, give God thanks at least that he gives us his Grace to know and be sorry for those we commit; and since in the way to Heaven the most high and sublime Path of Vertue are troden by very few; and are too high for us, let us content our self to tread that Path of the knowledge and sorrow for our Sins, which is beaten by a great number of Persons. Each one, says Saint Hieron, offers what he is able to the Temple of God: The one offers Gold, Silver and Precious Stones; the other makes a Present of Linnen, of Purple or Scarlet Cloath; for my part I must content my self in giving some Goat's Skin's, they being the only thing I have to give. Let 'em therefore who are arriv'd to high Perfection, offer their eminent Vertues and sublime Contemplations to Almighty God; as for me, 'tis enough I offer him my baseness, acknowledging my self to be a Sinner, owning my self to be full of faults and imperfections, and presenting my self to his Divine Majesty as one in want of all things. We must take an Interior joy in these thoughts, and give God thanks for 'em who bestow's 'em upon us, for fear if we be not grateful for 'em, he shou'd perhaps take 'em from us.

Hieron. in Pro-
logo Galeato.

Saint Bonaventure, Gerson, and many others, add one thing more, which confirms what I have spoke of. They say, that many by the want of some Vertue they desire, become more Fervorous in God's Service, than they wou'd have been had they enjoy'd it; because by wanting it, they become more Humble, Fervorous, and Careful, forcing and pushing on themselves to great Perfection, by having continual recourse to God. Who perhaps, had they acquir'd the Vertue they aim'd at, wou'd have become Proud thereof, or have grown more Careless and Tepid in his Service; and imagining they wanted nothing, wou'd not have put themselves forward to make a new progress in Perfection. All this gives us

Bonav. Opusc.
de prof. Relig.
l. 1. c. 11.
Gerson. tract.
de Monte con-
templ. Brevib.
de Martyribus
in suis comp.
p. 2. c. 13.
M. Avila-t. 2.
Epist. fol. 32.

G g g 2

sufficiently

sufficiently to understand that on our side we must do what we can, to become Perfect; but when we have done what we are able, we must be contented with what God bestow's upon us, neither afflicting our selves nor complaining because there are several things beyond our reach to obtain; for this, says Father *Avila*, were as if we shou'd be troubl'd because we had not Wings to Fly.

C H A P. XXXI.

*Of the Conformity we are to have to the Will
of God in the Gift's of Glory.*

WE are not only to Conform our selves to the Will of God, in what regards the gift's of Grace, but must also submit in what concern's the gift's of Glory. A true Servant of God ought even in this Life to be so intirely disingag'd from his own private Interest, that the accomplishment of the Divine Will may afford him more joy and satisfaction than his own proper happiness. It is a sign of a consummated Perfection, says a Holy Man, not to seek our own private interest either in little things or in great, in things Temporal, or Eternal; since your Will O Lord, and the desire of your Glory, ought always to be of more force with us, than whatever other motive besides; and we ought to find more comfort and content in this alone, than in all the benefits we have receiv'd or possibly can receive from your Hands.

*Imit. Christi.
l. 3. c. 23.*

This is that which chiefly causes the joy and content of the Blessed. They are more satisfi'd, and rejoyce more at the Will of God fulfill'd in 'em, than at their own reception into Glory: They are so transform'd into God, and so united to his Holy Will, that 'tis not so much for the reflecting upon their own happiness, as out of an effusion of Love for God, they are inamour'd of the felicity they enjoy. Whence it happens, that each and every one of 'em is so satisfi'd with the degree of Glory wherein he is, that he covets
no

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no more, and is not in the least concern'd in anothers being advanc'd before him. For from the moment they enjoy the sight of God, they are so chang'd into him, that they cease to Will by their own proper Sentiments, to Will only by those of God: So that to whatsoever they find the Divine Will inclin'd, they incline their's also to the same end, and place herein their content. This Perfection has been very eminent in some great Saints, as in *Moyse*, and *Saint Paul*; who were so far transported with the Zeal of the Salvation of Souls, and the greater Glory of God, as to forget themselves, and not regard their own happiness. * *Either Pardon this Fault*, says the Guide and Conductor of the People of God, *or if you do not, blot me rather out of the Book of Life, where you have Writ me.* † *I desire*, says the Apostle of the Gentils, *to become my self an Anathema, and separated from Jesus CHRIST, for my Brethren.* And 'tis for this reason *Saint Martin* and other great Saints learnt the way of saying, * *Lord, if I am still any ways necessary to your People, I refuse not any Pains or Labors whatever.* They most willingly preferr'd sufferings and hardship's for the Glory and Service of God, before the Eternal repose and happiness they were in prospect of enjoying: And this is really to perform the Will of God upon Earth, as it is perform'd in Heaven; which is to place all our content in seeing it fulfill'd, and to prefer that of God before any of our own proper interest, and even the possession of Heaven and Earth it self.

Hence we may conceive what Perfection it is which requires this Exercise of Conformity to the Divine Will, since if we are not to consider even the gifts of Grace and Glory, to attend only to the Content and Will of God, how far differingag'd ought we to be to all sorts of Temporal Interest and Human Respects? We may the same time understand by this how far we are from Perfection in having difficulty of Conforming our selves to the Divine Will, in the things we spoke of in the beginning; which are in living in this or that place, in undertaking this or that imploy, in enjoying Health, or suffering Sicknes, in being contemn'd or esteem'd. We say therefore, we are to make a greater account of the Content and Will of God, than of all the advantages of Grace and Glory: And you notwithstanding wed your self to things which are nothing in comparison of these. When we conceive so earnest a desire of the

* Aut dimitte
eis hanc nox-
am, aut si non
facis, dele me
de libro tuo
quem scripsi-
sti.

Exod. 32. 31.
Eccl. 32.

† Optabam e-
go ipse ana-
thema esse a
Christo pro
fratribus meis.

Rom. 9. 3.

* Si adhuc
sum necessari-
us populo
tuo, non re-
cuso laborem.

the accomplishment of God's Will, that out of this sole Principle, and not out of any Motive of Tepidity or want of Courage, we can willingly renounce all preeminence in Happiness, and content our selves with the least share of Glory; 'tis easie to Sacrifice the rest upon the same consideration, having before Sacrific'd a good which infinitely surpasses all other. This is the last endeavour we can make to Conform our selves to the Divine Will. If it pleases God that I Merit at present, and that I possess a less degree of Beatitude than what I shou'd possess, were I to Live yet Twenty or Thirty Years, I wou'd rather desire a fulfilling of the Divine Will, than a higher degree of Glory. And supposing on the contrary 'twere God's Holy Pleasure I shou'd Live yet for a longer time in the Prison of this my Body in pains and sufferings, I prefer even this before the advantage of injoying from this moment an Eternal felicity; because I place all my happiness, and all my Glory in the content of God, and the performance of his Holy Will.

† *You are my Glory, O Lord, and 'tis from you all my Exaltation proceeds.*

† Tu es gloria mea, & exaltans caput meum.
Psal. 3. 4.

Lib. 5. ca. 2.

We find a very remarkable passage, and fit to our matter in hand, in the Life of Saint Ignatius. Being one Day in Company with Father Laynez and some others, what think you, sayd he, what wou'd you do in case God shou'd tell you; If you desire to Die this moment, I will free you from the Prison of this your Body, and place you in the fruition of Eternal happiness: But if you have a mind to Live longer, I assure you of nothing; unless that upon condition you persevere in Vertue, I will bestow upon you your recompence: And if you deviate from the path of Righteousness, I will judge you according to your Works: If then our Saviour shou'd speak thus to you, and you know the same time, that in prolonging your Life some Years, you cou'd perform some worthy piece of Service, which wou'd you choose? As for me, reply'd Father Laynez, I declare I shou'd not doubt a moment in choosing to injoy God, to assure my Eternal happiness, and deliver my self from all danger in an affair of so main an importance as this is. And as to me, reply'd the Saint, I shou'd not be of your Opinion: For if I judg'd that by Living longer upon Earth, I cou'd do God greater Service, I wou'd desire earnestly of him to permit me a longer term of Life for that very end; and herein I shou'd not consider any thing but

but him, without any the least regard of my self, and without any the least respect, either of an infallible assurance of my own Salvation, or danger of not obtaining it. He was notwithstanding fully persuaded in this Point, not only of the certainty of his Salvation, but also by reason he prefer'd the Service of God before the consideration of his own happiness, his recompence in Heaven wou'd be increas'd. For, sayd he, if a Prince saw any of his Subjects deprive himself of the injoyment of those favors offer'd him, out of the pure Motive of performing some great Action in his Service, wou'd he not look upon himself oblig'd to such a Person, and confer upon him afterwards not only the favors and honors he had design'd him, but also add new ones, since his refusal proceeded only from the excess of Love he bore him, and desire of signalizing his Loyalty in his Service? If then we may justly assure our selves, that even the most ingrateful Persons wou'd do the same, what ought we not to believe God wou'd do, who so liberally prevents us with his Holy Grace, and from whom we Daily receive so many benefits? How can we fear he will abandon us, and permit us to fall into a Precipice, since for the Love of him we defer'd the injoying him? It is impossible we shou'd conceive any such Opinion of so good a Master.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXXII.

Of the Conformity and Union with God, by the means of a perfect Love; and the Practise we are to use in this Exercise.

TO the end we may better understand what a Perfection is included in this Exercise of Conformity with the Will of God, and we may clearly shew how far we may proceed in this means; I intend for the concluding this Treatise, to touch in short something of the Exercise acknowledged by the Saints and Masters of a Spiritual Life, for the most sublime of all. This Exercise is that of the Love of God; and without doubt 'tis not amiss to our purpose to speak of it in this place, since one of the principal effects of Love being, according to Saint Denis, to endeavour that those who Love have but one Will in all things; it follows by consequence, the more we Love God, the more we Conform our selves to his Divine Will; and again, the more strict this Conformity is, the more perfect is also our Love. For the better explicating this Point, 'tis requisite we elevate our selves in thought up to Heaven, and there Contemplate the continual occupation of the Blessed, is to Love God, to Conform themselves intirely to his Holy Will, and to have no other Will but his; so as the more we approach this Idea, the greater will our Perfection be in this Exercise. Saint John in his first Canonical Epistle, says, the sight of God makes the Blessed like to him: * *When he shall appear to us in Glory, we shall be like to him, because we shall see him as he is.* And this, because at the same instant they see God, they are so transform'd into him, that their Will becomes one and the same thing with his. Let's then see what's his Will, and what he most of all Loves, that so by knowing what is the Will, and the Love of the Blessed in Heaven, we may also

* Quoniam, eum apparuerit, similes erimus; quoniam videbimus eum sicuti est.
1 Joan. 3. 2.

also know at the same time what Will and Love we ought to have in our selves. The Will and supream Love in God is the Will of his Own Glory, and the Love of his Own Being Sovereignly Perfect, and Sovereignly Amiable: And the Will and Love of the Blessed, is the same thing with the Will and Love of God; so that their Love is a continual Act, by which they are mov'd incessantly, to Will with all their force, that God may be what he is; that he be equally Good, equally Perfect, equally Happy, equally Worthy of Honor and Praise, as he in himself is: And as they see in him, all they can wish may be, they thence feel an inconceivable Joy, to behold him whom they Love so compleat in Perfection, and so replenish'd with all Good. What we see sometimes happen in this Life, may give us some small Idea or Representation of that supream and all Divine Joy which the Blessed receive herein. Consider, what a sensible Joy is that of a Son, who Loving his Father with all Affection and Tenderness, sees him Rich, Wife, Powerful, Honor'd, and Esteem'd of the whole World, and particularly favoris'd by his Prince. There are Children doubtless so Nobly Born as not to find any Joy comparable to that of seeing their Parents so highly esteem'd, and in so sublime a post and degree of Dignity. If then in the World, where the sentiments of Love are so weak, and where all Happiness is so contemptible, this Joy notwithstanding arrives to such a greatness; what must that of the Blessed be in beholding their Sovereign Master, their Creator and their Heavenly Father, into whom they are wholly transform'd by Love, to be infinitely Good, infinitely Holy, infinitely Perfect, and infinitely Powerful; in beholding all things Created to receive their Being and Perfection from his Holy Will only; and that not so much as one Leaf to fall from the Tree without his Permission? 'Tis of this Joy the Apostle speaks when he says; † *Neither Eye has seen, nor Ear heard, nor the Heart of Man been able to conceive, what God has design'd for those who Love him.* This is that * *River of Living Water which Saint John saw, issuing forth from the Throne of God and the Lamb.* † *That River whose impetuous Stream rejoyc'd the City of God:* That River, with which the Blessed continually quench their Thirst, and are inebriated with Divine Love; Blessing God Eternally, and Singing perpetually, * *Bless God, because the Lord our God Omnipotent is enter'd into his Kingdom; let's rejoyce, and exult, and give him the Glory.* They rejoyce at the Glory and Greatness of God. They make themselves Happy incessantly and as 'twere Animating one the other, they all say, † *Blessing, Splendor, Wisdom, Thanksgiving, Honor, Power and Strength be to our God for ever. Amen.*

Tom. I.

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See

† *Oculus non vidit, nec auris audivit, nec in cor hominis ascendit, quæ præparavit Deus iis, qui diligunt illum.*

* *Cor. 2. 9. quæ vitæ, procedentem de sede Dei, & Agni.*

Apoc. 22. 1. Fluminis impetus, iustificat civitatem Dei.

Psal. 41. 5. Alleluia, quoniam regnavit Dominus Deus noster omnipotens; gaudemus, & exultemus, & demus gloriam ei.

Apoc. 19. 6. 7. Benedictio, & claritas, & sapientia, & gratiarum actio, & honor, & virtus, & fortitudo Deo nostro in secula æculorum, Amen. *Apoc. 7. 12.*

See here, to speak according to the weak extent of Human Capacity, what's the continual Exercise and Love of the Blessed in Heaven and how great their Conformity and Union to the Divine Will; and see consequently what we are to endeavour to imitate to our ability; to the end this Will may be perform'd on Earth as it is in Heaven. When God order'd *Moses* to make him a Tabernacle: * *Take notice*, says he, *and make it according to the Model and Pattern shew'd you upon the Mountain*. In this nature it is, that according to the Imitation of what is perform'd upon this high Mountain of Glory, we are to Exercise our selves always in Loving and Willing what the Blessed Love and Will in Heaven; and what God himself Loves and Will's. That is to say, the Grandeur of his Glory, and the Immediacy of his being Sovereignly Perfect, and Sovereignly Happy.

But that all may perform with more facility what we here have layd down, we will shew in short in what the Practise of this Exercise consists. When we are in Prayer, let us elevate our Understanding to the consideration of the Infinite Being of God, his Eternity, his Wildom, his Omnipotence, his Beauty, his Glory, and his Happiness; and the same time form Acts of our Will, by which you may conceive in your self a content and joy, for that God is what he is; for that he is God, for that he has no dependance of any thing but himself, the Immediacy of his own Being, and the Infinite Good he Possesses; for if he stands in need of nothing whatsoever, and all things stand in need of him; he is therefore all Powerful, and all Replenish'd with Goodness, with Sanctity and Glory, and all other Perfections, which are found in him without Number or Limits. Saint *Thomas* and other Divines say, 'tis the greatest and most perfect Act of Love we can produce, and the most sublime Exercise of Conformity we are capable of practising. For there's no more excellent Love of God, than that which God bears himself; which is the Love of his own Glory, and of his Being Sovereignly Perfect; nor a Will more Holy than his. By consequence then, by how much the more the manner whereby we Love God, resembles that whereby he Loves himself, the more is the Perfection of our Love and of our Union and Conformity to the Divine Will. Moreover, if it be true what Philosophy, or rather what Nature it self teaches us, that to Love, is to wish well to the Person we Love; it follow's of necessity the more we wish another well, the more we Love him. But the greatest good we can wish God, is, that which he already possesses, the Immediacy of his Being, of his Goodness, his Wildom, his Omnipotence, and his Glory. For we may well rejoyce when we Love

* Inspice, &
fac secundam
exemplar
quod tibi in
monte mon-
stratum est.
Exod. 25. 40.

S. Th. 11. q. 23.
art. 5. ad 3. &
art. 2.

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any Creature, not only in the gifts it possesses, but also with it possess many more; in as much as all Creatures want many things: But as to God, we cannot desire him any thing he possesses: Because his Immensity including all things, and being Infinite in himself, it is impossible he shoud receive an Addition of Glory, of Power and of Goodness he already has. Wherefore the greatest good we can with him, and by consequence the greatest and perfectest Love we can bear him, is, to rejoyce for the Infinite good he possesses, and a Holy content and satisfaction therein.

The Sacred Humanity of JESUS CHRIST, the Glorious Virgin, all the Saints in Heaven, and all the Quires of Angels rejoyce incessantly in beholding God, so replenish'd with all Perfections and Good; and never cease to declare their joy by continual Songs of Gladness and Eternal Praises they give him.

† Blessed are those O Lord, who Live in your Habitations: They shall praise you for Ever and Ever. Let's apply our selves to imitate them, according as the Church teaches us, * In

joyning our Voices and Hearts with their's, and saying with an humble and sincere Confession; Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of Host's, the Heavens and the Earth are full of your Glory. Let's

Exercise our selves continually, at least as oft as we are able, in praising and glorifying God, in rejoycing with him for the Immensity of that great Good he possesses; and so we shall become in some manner like to the Blessed, and to God himself, and shall hereby have the most sublime Love for God, and the most Perfect Conformity to his Divine Will, we are capable of conceiving.

† Beati, qui habitant in domo tua, Domine: in sacula saculorum laudabunt te.

psal. 84. 5.
* Cum quibus & nostras voces, ut admitti jubeat, deprecamur, supplici confessione dicentes: Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus Dominus Deus Sabaoth: Pleni sunt Caeli & Terra gloria tua.

CHAP. XXXIII.

How much this Exercise is recommended to us in Holy Scripture.

THE diligence the Holy Scripture uses in frequently recommending to us this exercise, may also let us see the Merit and Excellency of it, and afford us the same matter to practise it, and imploy our selves more therein. The Psalmist expressly invites us, by these Words, † Rejoyce ye just in our Lord, and conceive a Joy and Gladness; and be Glorify'd in him,

† Exultamine Domino, & exultate justi, & gloriamini omnes recti corde, psal. 31. 12.

* Exultate ju-
sti in Domino.
Psal. 32. 1.

† Delectate in
Domino: &
dabit tibi pe-
titiones cordis
tui. Psal. 36. 4.

* Gaudete in
Domino sem-
per.
Philipp. 4. 4.

† Iterum dico
gaudete.
Ibid.

* Et exulta-
vit spiritus
meus in Deo
salutari meo.
Luc. 1. 47.

† Exultavit in
Spiritu San-
cto.
Luc. 10. 21.

* Cor meum,
& caro mea,
exultaverunt
in Deum vi-
vum.
Psal. 83. 2.

† Anima mea
exultabit in
Domino: &
delectabitur
super salutari
suo. Omnia
ossa mea di-
cent: Domi-
ne, quis simi-
lis tibi?
Psal. 34. 9.

* Venite, ex-
ultemus Do-
mino: jubile-
mus Deo salu-
tari nostro: præ-
occupemus
faciem ejus in
confeffione, &
in Psalmis ju-
bilemus ei.
Quoniam De-
us magnus
Dominus: &
Rex magnus
super omnes
Deos, &c.
Quoniam ipsi-
us est mare,
& ipse fecit
illud: & ari-
dam fundave-
runt manus
ejus.
Psal. 94. 1. &
seq.

† Gloria Patri,
& Filio, &
Spiritus San-
cto: Sicut e-
rat in princi-
pio, & nunc,
& semper, &
in secula sæ-
culorum,
Amen.

* Intra in gau-
dium Domini
tui,
Matth. 25. 21.

him, all ye who have an upright Heart. * Let the Just Exult in our Lord. † Place your joy in our Lord, and he will grant you all the Petitions of your Heart. Or rather, he will grant you all you can desire, and all you stand in need of: For 'tis a sort of Prayer wherein, thò you demand nothing, he hears and grants whatever your Heart can covet or petition. The Apostle Writing to the Philippians, says, * Rejoyce without inter-
mission in our Lord: And imagining it a Point worthy of being inculcated more than once, he immediately add's; † I tell you again rejoyce. It was with such a Holy Joy the Blessed Virgin found her self Replenish'd, when she sayd; * My Soul is Ravish'd with Joy, in God my Saviour. And it was with this sort of Joy wherewith our Lord JESUS CHRIST was Transported, when his Disciples being return'd from the Mission, upon which he had sent 'em, the Gospel says, † He Rejoyc'd in the Holy Ghost. The Royal Prophet affirms, that when he consider'd the Immenity of God's Glory, and how worthy God is, that all the World shou'd rejoyce at the Infinite Good he possesses, the joy he felt in his Soul pass'd even to his Body. * My Heart and my Flesh, says he in one place, are Transported with Joy in the Living God. And in another place taking more particular notice of the superabundance of Joy: † My Soul, says he, shall Rejoyce in our Lord, and shall Delight it self in my Saviour: All my Bones shall say, O Lord, who is like to you? In like manner the Church which is Govern'd and Directed by the Holy Ghost, knowing how sublime this sort of the Love of God is, invites us at the beginning of the Canonical Hours, to Love in this Nature, using to this end the Words of David: * Come let's Rejoyce in our Lord; let's Sing forth Hymns to God our Saviour; let's Present our selves in his Sight, by acknowledging the Benefits We have receiv'd from him, and let's Sing Canticles of Praise: For that our God is a great Lord and a great King, above all other God's: Because the Sea is his, and he Created it, and the dry Land his Hand's have Founded. 'Tis also for this very same reason and for the same intent, that at the end of every Psalm, the Church add's always this Verse, † Glory be to the Father, the Son, and Holy Ghost; as 'twas in the Beginning, so World without End, Amen. Hereby we may see what is meant by these Words, * Enter into the Joy of your Lord: Which is to participate in this Nature of the Infinite Joy of God, and to Rejoyce with him for his Glory, his Power, his Wisdom, and all the other Attributes he Possesses.

For the better entertaining our selves in this Spiritual Joy; and the more to incite us to the Love of this Exercise, 'tis very requisite,

requisite, to apply our selves to the consideration of how great the Goodness, the Beauty, and the Glory of God are; which are in themselves such, that we only want the sight thereof to make us Happy: And in case the Damn'd cou'd but have a sight thereof; all their Pain's wou'd cease the same Moment, and Hell wou'd become a Paradise. † *For Eternal Life*, as JESUS CHRIST himself affirms, *consists in the Knowledge of God.* 'Tis this Knowledge, and this Sight which makes the Happiness of the Blessed: And which is not for a Day only or a Year, but for all Eternity: So that without ever being depriv'd of the Sight of God, they shall always find a content and satisfaction, according to the words of Saint John in the *Apocchalyps*: * *And they shall Sing as 'twere a New Song.* This seems to be a sufficient Idea of the Goodness, Beauty, and Infinite Perfection of God; and yet notwithstanding there's more, and a great deal more may be sayd upon this Subject. God is so Beautiful, so Perfect, and so full of Glory and Majesty, that he renders himself happy in Contemplating himself; and that, because he Contemplates and Loves himself. Let's now consider whether we have not sufficient reason to place all our Joy in one only thing, which causes the Eternal Happiness of the Blessed, and which also causes that of God himself; which is by the knowledge he has of his own Being, and the Love he bears himself.

† Hæc est vita æterna, ut cognoscant te solum Deum verum. *Joh. 17. 3.*

* Et cantabant quasi canticum novum. *Apoc. 14. 3.*

C H A P. XXXIV.

How we may still Inlarge upon, and Extend this Exercise.

WE may also inlarge the practise of this Exercise, and extend it farther in descending from the Contemplation of the Divine Nature, to the consideration of the Sacred Humanity of JESUS CHRIST, and exciting our selves thereby to produce the same Acts of Love and Joy. We will consider for this effect, the Excellency and Perfection of this most Holy Humanity; we may well Rejoyce at it's Dignity, in being Elevated and Rais'd to that Honor, as to be United to the

the Divine Person; that it's so replenish'd with Grace and Glory; that 'tis the Instrument of the Divinity, to Sanctifie and Glorifie the Elect; and in general, to operate all those Graces, and distribute all those Supernatural gifts God imparts to Men: And infinite, we will conceive an interior delight in all that concerns the Perfection and Glory of the Soul and Body of JESUS CHRIST. To insist the more hereupon, and to excite in our selves the greatest sentiments of Love and Joy we possibly are able; we may propose to our selves, either the Joy the Blessed Virgin felt on the Day of our Saviours Resurrection, when she beheld Him Triumph most gloriously over Death: Or the Joy wherewith the Holy Scripture affirms the Patriarch Jacob to have been Transported, when 'twas related to him that his Son Joseph Liv'd, and was made Superintendant of all Egypt. The excess of his Joy was so great that, *† Receiving as 'twere a new Life, I am satisfi'd, sayd he, since my Son Joseph is yet alive: I will go, and see him before I Die.*

† Revixit Spiritus ejus, & dixit: Sufficit mihi, si adhuc Joseph, filius meus vivit: Vadam, & videbo illum antequam moriar.
Genes. 45. 27.
☉ 28.

We may also apply this Exercise to what relates to the Glory of the Blessed Virgin, and that of the Saints: And this will be a very laudable Devotion, if we employ therein a part of our Prayer upon the Day of their Feast: For this is to give 'em the greatest Testimony they can receive from us, when we Rejoyce with 'em for the Felicity they possess. Wherefore the Church upon the Feast of the Blessed Virgin's Assumption, proposes to us this Exercise in these Words: * *To Day the Blessed Virgin Mary Mounted the Heavens; Rejoyce, for that she Reigns with JESUS CHRIST for all Eternity.* And upon the Day of the same Feast and several others, the same Church begins the Office of the Mass by inviting us to the same Practise, and exciting us by the Example of the Angels: *† Let's all Rejoyce in our Lord, in Celebrating this Feast in Honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary; at whose Assumption the Angel's Rejoyce and Praise the Son of God.* There's also another advantage by practising this Exercise in respect of the Saints, and chiefly of the Sacred Humanity of JESUS CHRIST: Since hereby we come to Elevate our selves to what regards the Divinity, and make it easie for us: For our Saviour himself Teaches us, that he is the Way and the Gate whereby we must have access to his Eternal Father.

* Hodie Maria Virgo coelos ascendit: gaudete, quia cum Christo regnat in eternum.

† Gaudeamus omnes in Domino, diem Festum Celebrantes sub honore Beate Mariae Virginis, de cujus Assumptione gaudent Angeli, & collaudant Filium Dei.

Joan. 10. 9. ☉
14. 6.

This Exercise has also it's different Degrees, even when we Practise it in Reference to God, as he is God: We may also reduce it more to our manner and capacity, in descending

descending to the consideration of things here below. For altho 'tis true, that God in himself receives no Addition of any thing whatever, because he is Infinite; and that we cannot wish him any Good, he possesses not already; he may nevertheless receive an Exterior Addition, in his Creatures, in as much as they come to know him, to Love and Glorify him the more; and by consequence we may Exercise this sort of Love towards him, in wishing him ardently this kind of Exterior Good. To this End, when in our Prayer we come to consider how Worthy God is of being Lov'd and Serv'd of all his Creatures; we must then apply our selves to desire that all Men present and to come may know him, Love and Glorify him in all things. How happy shou'd we be, O my God, were we able to Convert all the Infidels and Sinners throu'out the whole World; that we cou'd but hinder all Persons from ever Offending you, and make all Obey you, and Study nothing else for the future but to Serve you! † *Hallow'd by thy Name.* * *Let all the Earth Adore you, and Chant forth your Praises. Let it Sing Canticles of Praise to your Holy Name!* We may also entertain our Thoughts in this Exercise; and by representing to our selves a thousand sorts of Services which Creatures can render God, we shall find sufficient matter to dilate our Desires and Wishes thereupon.

Thence each one coming to reflect upon himself, ought to apply his Thoughts to an earnest desire of the accomplishment of his Divine Will; and procure his greater Glory in whatsoever depends upon him: And from henceforth Imitating JESUS CHRIST, † *Who always Perform'd those things as were acceptable to his Eternal Father*, he may form a determinate resolution of imbracing with Joy whatsoever he know's to be according to the Will and Glory of God. For, * *He who says he know's God and nevertheless keep's not his Commandments, is a Liar; and he has not Truth in him. But he who keep's his Words, in this Man the Love of God Perfectly abides.* In like manner, to attain to a real Love of God, and an intire Conformity to his Holy Will, it suffices not that by considering the Infinite Good God Possesses, we turn it into a Subject of Joy, and so with all Creatures Lov'd and Glorify'd him. We must wholly devote our selves, and imploy our whole force to the fulfilling the Divine Will; since we cannot say from our Heart we desire the greater Glory of God, unless we contribute all we are able to the effecting it. 'Tis in this sort of Love our Soul is Ex-

† Sanctificetur nomen tuum.

Matth. 6. 9.
* Omnis terra adoret te, & Psallat tibi: Psalmum dicat nomini tuo. Psal. 65. 4.

† Quia ego, quæ placita sunt ei, facio semper. Joan. 8. 29.

* Qui dicit se nosse Deum, & mandata ejus non custodit, mendax est, & in eo veritas non est. Qui autem servat verbum ejus, verè in hoc charitas Dei perfecta est. 1 Joan. 2. 4. c. 5.

ercis'd,

ercis'd, when in time of Prayer, it conceives a real desire, and a firm resolution of performing the Will of God, in things propos'd to it at that time, and in whatever may afterwards occur; and this Exercise is that we ought more frequently to use in all our Prayers.

We have here open'd a Field large enough to help us in imploying our selves a long time in this Exercise; and have sufficiently Explicated the Perfection included therein, and the profit we may hence receive. There's nothing now remaining but that we lay our Hand to the Work, and begin from this moment to repeat upon Earth, what we are hereafter to represent for Eternity in Heaven. 'Tis here we must begin to inkindle in our selves the Fire of the Love of God: But since this, † *Divine Fire has it's Source in Sion, and it's Furnace in Jerusalem*; 'twill never arrive to the Perfection of an intire inflammation of our selves, till we arrive to the Heavenly *Jerusalem*; that's to say, to the Felicity of Glory.

† Cujus igitur
ignis est in Sion,
& caminus
ejus in Je-
rusalem.
Isa. 31. 9.

The End of the First Part.



THE
PRACTICE
OF
Christian Perfection

Written in Spanish by R^d. Father
ALPHONSUS RODRIGUEZ
of the SOCIETY of JESUS.

Translated into English out of the French Copy
of Mr. *RÉGNIER DES-MARAIS*,
of the Royal Academy of *PARIS*.

THE SECOND PART.



L O N D O N,
Printed by *Thomas Hales*, MDCXCVIII.

THE PRACTICE

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ALFONSO RODRIGUEZ

of the Society of Jesus

Translated into English out of the French Copy
of M^r M^r GUYER, D^r M^r A^r S^r

THE SECOND PART



Printed by Thomas Mason, M^r D^r O^r M^r

ALPHONSUS
RODRIGUEZ
TO THE
READER.

THIS Work be particularly made for the use of Religious Persons, yet 'tis also very proper and useful for all Christians; and this Second Part, is dispos'd after such a manner, as it may be of very great advantage to all Secular Persons, that desire to give themselves intirely to God's Service. For that which they ought first of all to perform, is to mortify and subdue their Hearts, by the
Tom. II. * Mortification

Alphonfus Rodriguez to the Reader.

Mortification of their Passions, by the Subjection of their Senses, (especially their Tongue) and by the humbling of themselves before God, to the end those Virtues and good Works which they have planted in their Souls, may spring up and bring forth such Fruit, as is expected. 'Tis therefore that I here treat, first of Mortification, then of Modesty and Silence, and afterwards of Humility; which are the things, in which a Christian ought most of all to exercise himself, in the beginning of his Conversion. And because the Holy Ghost wou'd have those that enter into Gods Service, *To remain in fear, and prepare themselves for Temptation*, I speak for that reason in the fourth Treatise, of the profit and advantage of Temptations, and of the means how to overcome 'em. In the fifth and sixth Treatise I shew the obstacles that occur in the paths of Virtue, and of how great an advantage it is, to walk always in 'em with joy and liberty. And because

Eccles. 2.
I.

Alphonfus Rodriguez to the Reader.

because nothing can better produce this effect, than the knowledge of the infinite treasure we possess in *Iesus Christ*, I make that the subject of the seventh Treatise; in which I also treat how we are to Meditate on the Mysteries of the Passion, and what Fruit we are to draw from 'em. Lastly, I conclude this Second Part with a Treatise of Sacred Communion; in which I shew what we are to do, towards the preparing of our selves for it, and rendering it profitable to us; all which I endeavour to treat of, as methodically as is possible, that the practise may be more easie; which is the chief aim I had in this whole Work. If the Christian Reader vouchsafes favorably to receive it, I hope, by the assistance of Gods Grace, that 'twill help him to subdue his Passions, to practise Modesty and Moderation in all his Words and Actions, to overcome Temptations, to make his profit of the immense Treasures with which the Passion of *Iesus Christ* has enrich'd the

Alphonfus Rodriguez, to the Reader.

faithful, to Receive his Body and Blood with a Pious Fervor, and to gather and lay up such Fruit as may conduce to his Everlasting Happiness and Salvation.

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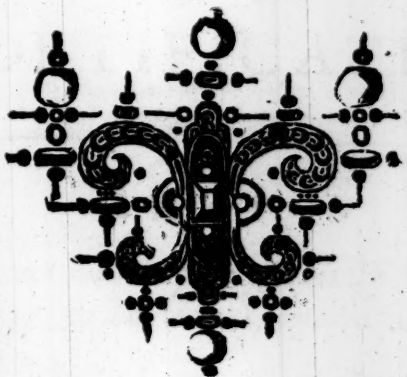
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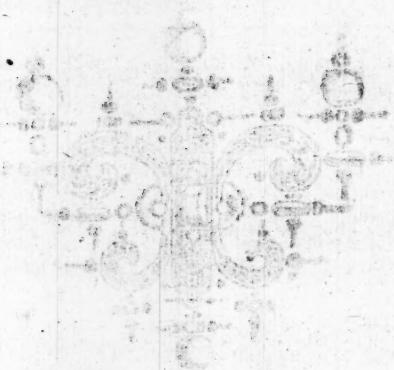
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THE FIRST TREATISE OF MORTIFICATION.

CHAP. I.

*That we must joyn Mortification to
Prayer, to be a help one to another.*

★ **T**IS good to joyn Prayer to Fasting, sayd the Angel Raphael to Tobias, when he made himself known unto him. The Holy Fathers by Fasting commonly understand whatsoever belongs to Penance and Mortification of the Flesh: And accordingly they consider Mortification and Prayer, as the two principal means we have, to advance in Perfection, and therefore ought to be inseparable Companions. Saint Bernard upon the words of the Canticles, † *Who is she that ascends by the Desert as a little Cloud of Smoke, compos'd of the Perfumes that proceed from Myrrhe and Incense?* Says, that Myrrhe and Incense which are the Symbols of Mortification and Prayer, ought always to accompany us; 'tis by these two Wings, we must raise our
Tom. I I. A selves

* Bona est oratio cum ieiunio. Tob. 12. 8.

Ber. Serm. 59. ex parvis in illud: † Quæ est ista quæ ascendit per desertum sicut virgula fumi ex aromati- bus Myrrhæ &c. Thuris? Cass. 3. 6.

selves to a Sovereign degree, and even to the highest pitch of Perfection, whereby we may render our selves a sweet smelling Odour or Perfume before the Throne of God; for the one is scarce of any use or value without the other. For he who only Mortifies his Flesh, without Humbling his Mind by Prayer, becomes Proud; and deserves to have these words of the Royal Prophet apply'd unto him. † *Shall I feed upon the Flesh of Bulls? Or shall I drink the Blood of Goats?* These sorts of Sacrifices that contain nothing but Flesh and Blood, are not at all pleasing unto God. And on the other side he who gives himself to Prayer, and neglects to Mortifie his Flesh, ought to be afraid of our Saviours words in the Gospel. * *Why do you call me Lord, Lord, if you do not what I desire of you?* And also that of the Wise Man in the Proverbs, † *If any one turns his Ears from hearkening to the Law, his Prayer shall be rejected as Execrable.* Your Prayer cannot be pleasing to God, if you perform not his Will.

Saint *Austin* says, that as there were two Altars in the Temple of *Salomon*, the one without, where they cut the Throats of the Victim's they were to Sacrifice; and the other within the Sanctuary, upon which they offer'd Incense to God. So there must also be two Altars in us, the one Interior, to offer to him the Incense of Prayer, conformable to those words of Saint *Matthew*. * *But you when you would Pray, enter into your Cloister, and having shut the Door Pray to your Father in Private;* and the other Exterior, to make a Sacrifice of our selves by Corporal Mortifications. So that Mortification and Prayer may march Hand in Hand together; for if Mortification be a necessary disposition to Prayer, Prayer is also a very useful means to arrive to perfect Mortification.

As to the first Point, that Mortification is a necessary disposition to Prayer, 'tis a Truth that all Saints and Masters of Spirit Teach us. They say, that as we cannot Write upon a Skin of Parchment if it be not well and even shav'd, and all the Flesh taken off, so if the Affections and bad Inclinations of the Flesh be not all Rooted out of our Mind, and if it be not quite disingag'd from 'em, it has not the disposition it ought to have, for our Lord to Write and Imprint upon it, the Characters of his Grace and Wisdom; † *To whom will he give Knowledge?* Says the Prophet *Isay*. *And to whom will he give Understanding?*

But

† Numquid manducabo carnes tauro-rum, aut sanguinem hircorum potabo? *Isai.* 49. 13.

* Quid autem vocatis me Domine, Domine, & non factis quæ dico? *Luc.* 6. 46.
† Qui declinat aures suas ne audiat legem, oratio ejus erit execrabilis. *Prov.* 28. 9.
Serm. 255. de Temp.

* Tu autem cum oraveris, intra in cubiculum tuum, & clauso ostio, ora Patrem tuum in abscondito. *Matth.* 6. 6.

† Quem docebit scientiam? aut quem intelligere fa-

But to such as are Wean'd from Milk and are taken from their Mothers Breasts. That is to say, to those who for his Love deprive themselves, and forsake the pleasures of the World, and the affections and desires of the Flesh, God will find our Hearts free and disingag'd from all things, before he enters into it; he will first find a profound Peace and Tranquillity therein before he makes his entry. * His aboad is establish'd in Peace.

ciet auditum?
Ab lactatō a
lacte, avulsis
ab uberibus.
If. 28. 9.

* Et factus
est in pace lo-
cus ejus.
Isa. 71. 3.

The Pagan Philosophers acknowledg'd this truth, they all agreed that Wisdom consisted in a certain Peace which the Soul enjoy'd, when it's Sensual Appetites were intirely Mortifi'd and Overcome. Then it is that there remains no violent Passions, which by their irregular motions trouble the Peace of the Soul, and obscure the Understanding; as it happens, when they are in Agitation. For 'tis the proper effect of Passion to blind Reason, and to diminish in us the Liberty of Free Will; which is daily seen by experience in a Passionate Man overcome with Choler. It seem's that Passion even deprives him of his Judgment, and renders him quite Mad and Furious. For if you ask him afterwards, why did you say this, or why did you do such and such Actions? He will answer you, because he was out of himself. But when the Passions are calme, the Understanding has also more pure and clear Light to know what is Good, and the Will a more intire Liberty to imbrace it. But this Peace and Tranquillity is that which God wou'd always find in our Hearts, that he may the better pour down his Wisdom, and other gifts upon us. The Mortification of our Passions and irregular Appetites, is the true means to obtain this Peace; and 'twas upon this account that the Prophet *Isay* sayd, † That Peace shall be the Work of Justice.

† Et erit o-
pus justitiæ
pax.
Is. 32. 17.

Saint *Austin* explicates this perfectly well writing upon those words of the Royal Propher, * Justice and Peace have Kiss'd each other, † Wou'd you, says he, that Justice and Peace shou'd imbrace each other? Perform the Works of Justice, and you will infallibly have Peace. If you love not Justice, you will never enjoy Peace: For Peace and Justice are Friends so closely link'd together; so that if you love not Justice, Peace will not love you, and will never come near you. * Peace is not obtain'd but by War. So that if you will

* Justitia &
pax osculatae
sunt.
Isa. 54. 11.
† Fac justitiam, & habebis pacem, ut osculentur se justitia & pax. Si non amaveris justitiam, pacem non habebis, quia dux amicitiae sunt justitia & pax.

ipsae se osculantur ad te. Aug. in illud:

Si amicam justitiam non habueris, non te amabit ipsa pax, nec veniet.

* Pax queritur Bello.

not make War with your self, by Mortifying and constraining your Desires, and by getting the Mastery over your Passions, you will never obtain this Peace, which is so necessary to be able to apply our selves to Prayer.

† Quis te
magis impedit
& molestat,
quam tua im-
mortificata af-
fectio cordis.
De Imit. Chri.
Lib. 1. Cap.
3. §. 3.

† *What is a greater hinderance and trouble unto you, says Thomas à Kempis, than the unmortifi'd Affections of your Heart?* Those irregular Passions and bad Inclinations that you have, are what trouble and hinder you from yielding to Reason. These disquiet you in Prayer, and cause such a noise and disturbance in your Soul, that the sweet Sleep and repose injoy'd in Prayer, is continually disturb'd and interrupted; or to speak more properly, these hinder your Soul from seeking after, or taking this repose. It ordinarily happens, that when one has Eaten too much over Night, he is not able to Sleep, because the crudity and indignation that remains in the Stomach, and the gross Vapours which the Meat sends continually to the Brain, do's so disquiet him, that he can do nothing else but turn from one side to another, without being able to Sleep at all. The same thing happens in Prayer, the irregularity of of Self-love, the desire we have of satisfying our Passions, and of being esteem'd, are so great, that do we what we can they so charge and overcome our Hearts, excite such Vapours in us, and produce such Fancies in our Imagination, that we cannot recollect our selves, nor have our Mind's united unto God. 'Tis to this sense that we are

* Attendite
autem vobis,
ne forte gra-
ventur corda
vestra in cra-
pu'a, & obrie-
tate, & curis
huius vitæ.
Luce. 21. 34.

† Audi hoc
paupercula, &
ebria non à
Vino.
Is. 51. 21.
Joel. 1.

* Animalis
autem homo
non percipit
ea quæ sunt
Spiritus Dei.
1. Cor. 2. 14.

wont to apply these words of our Saviour. * *Take care lest your Hearts be overcharg'd with Gluttony, Drunkenness, or with the cares of this World.* For this passage ought to be understood not only by Drunkenness caus'd by Wine, but of that which is occasion'd by all other things in the World, according to those words of *Isay. † Hearken then Poor Miserable Creature that art Drunk, but not with Wine.* When the Heart is not well Purifi'd by Mortification, there arises from it a thick and obscure Mist or Cloud, that deprives our Soul from the Presence of God. Which Saint *Paul* well expresses when he says. * *That the Sensual or Carnal Man, understand's not what the Spirit of God Teaches.* For those things are Spiritual and he is wholly Carnal; so that to be able to conceive and tast 'em, he must Spiritualise and Purifie himself by Mortification.

We may gather from hence the solution of a doubt that is ordinarily propos'd. Prayer, as some Object, is an entertainment

tainment and familiar conversation with God, and consequently an Exercise full of Joy and Sweetness, according to the Words of the Wise Man: † *His Conversation has no Bitterness, nor has his Company any Tediousness, but brings all Joy and Satisfaction along with it.* What is the reason therefore that Prayer which of it self is replenish'd with so much sweetness, and which on the other side is so profitable and necessary for us, shou'd oftentimes become so hard, that we go to it with a great deal of reluctancy and difficulty; and so few give themselves to this Exercise?

* *'Tis with repugnance and much against our Will's,* says Saint Bonaventure, *that we assist at Spiritual Duties; and like a Dog Chain'd to a Block, we are present at 'em whether we will or no.* The cause of this, is, what I before touch'd. Prayer is not hard of it self, but Mortification is, and since Mortification is a necessary disposition to Prayer, we find Prayer hard, because we want this disposition. The same is easily perceiv'd even in Natural things, for the difficulty do's not consist in the introducing a form into any matter, but in disposing the matter to receive it. Consider for Example, what happens when we cast green Wood upon the Fire. See how active the Fire is in drying up it's Moisture or Greenness, see the thick Smoke that it sends forth, and the time it takes up to dispose it to Burn: But as soon as the Wood has all the dispositions that are necessary, it presently takes Fire, and is easily consum'd. 'Tis the same here: All the difficulty consists, in taking from our Passions their Strength and Greenness; in Mortifying our irregular Appetites, and in intirely withdrawing us from the things of this World. If we can but compass this, the rest will cost us nothing, our Soul will of it self move towards God, and take a great deal of pleasure and delight in Conversing with him. † *Each one takes delight in Conversing with one of his own Humor and Inclination.* But he who apply's himself to the Mortification of his Flesh, do's thereby Spiritualise, and render himself in some measure like unto God; and God reciprocally takes pleasure to Converse and Communicate himself unto him: * *My Delight,* says he by the Wise Man, *are to be, and to Converse with the Son's of Men.* But when the Heart is fill'd with all sorts of Passions; when we are not quite free from Vain-glory; but have some small ties left, pleasing our selves in Worldly Conversation; loving

† Non enim habet amaritudinem conversatio illius, nec tedium convictus illius, sed letitiam & gaudium.
Sap. 8. 16.

* Quasi alligati catuli ad stipitem rententi animo cogimur esse in divinis.
Bon. lib. 1. de prof. relig.
cap. 16.

† Similis finili gaudet.

* Deliciae meae esse cum filiis hominum.
Prov. 8. 31.

loving our own ease and satisfaction; when we are in this disposition, as we are so far from resembling God, that we find it hard to Converse with him, and take no pleasure but in Earthly things, by reason of the likeness we have unto them; † *They are become as Abominable*, says the Prophet *Osee*, *as the things they Love*.

A Holy Father says very well, that as when the Water is troubl'd, we can neither see our selves, nor any thing else in it, so when our Hearts are not pure and free from all Terrene Affections, and are not at quiet and free from a thousand vain Impertinencies, we can never see the Face of God in Prayer, that is, we can never penetrate the depth of his Mysteries, and he will never Communicate himself unto us. * *Blessed are the Pure in Heart, for they shall see God*. Prayer is properly a Spiritual View, of the Works and Mysteries of God: And as to see well with our Corporal Eyes, we must have 'em neat and clean, so to see the Works of God with the Eyes of our Soul, we must have a pure and clean Heart. † *Do you desire to see God?* says Saint *Austin*, *take care first to Purifie your Heart, and cast out of it whatsoever is displeasing to him*.

The Abbot *Isaac*, as *Cassian* reports, explicated this by an excellent comparison. He sayd, that our Soul was like to a Feather that was so very light, that the least Wind rais'd it from the Ground, and made it fly about in the Air, when it was neither wet nor besmear'd with Pitch, nor Glu'd to any thing that held it fast; but if it was wet or Glu'd to something that hinder'd it from rising, 'twas forc'd to remain upon the Ground amongst Dirt and Filth. So if our Soul be pure and free from all things, the least Breath or Whisper of the Holy Ghost in time of Meditation, will raise it even to God himself; but if it be ty'd to Earthly things, if it be Sully'd by it's irregular Passions, it becomes so heavy, that it cannot Elevate it self to Heavenly things, nor have any satisfaction in Prayer. *Moyse*s, says the Abbot *Nilus*, was forbid to approach the burning Bush, till he had pull'd off his Shooes. And how can you think to approach towards God, or come to any Conversation with him, till you have cast away your Passions, and all the ties you have to the things of the World.

† Facti sunt
abominabiles
sicut ea quæ
dilexerunt.
Osee 9. 10.

* Beati munda
corde, quoniam
ipsi Deum
videbunt.
Matth. 5. 8.

† Deum videre
vis? Prius
ergo cogita
de corde mundando,
& quicquid ibi
vides quod
Deo displicet,
tolle.

Aug. Serm. 2.
de Ascensione
Dominici, &
Serm. 175. *de*
Temp.
Cass. Coll. 9.
cap. 4.

Nil. de quat.
cap. 3. in *Bi-*
blotib. S. S.
Patr. rom. 3.

Part. 2. Of Mortification.

7

We have an excellent Example in the fourth Book of Kings, which let's us see what a Calme there ought to be in our Passions, when we apply our selves to Prayer, and to Converse with God. The Holy Scripture recounts, that *Joram* King of *Israel*, *Josophat* King of *Juda*, and the King of *Edom*, marching all three against the King of *Moab*, they wanted Water in the Desert, so that their Army was ready to perish. In this Extremity they Consulted the Prophet *Elias*; and the King of *Israël*, who was an Idolater, sayd to him. * *Why has the Lord assembl'd these three Kings here, to deliver 'em into the Hands of Moab? What is that to you or me,* reply'd the Prophet *Elias, go to your Father's and Mother's Prophets; as the God of Armies Lives, in whose Presence I am, were it not for the respect I bear to Josophat King of Juda, I would have had no regard to you at all, nor would have so much as come into your Presence. Notwithstanding let there be a Musician brought hither.* Thus did the Prophet full of Zeal and Courage reprehend the King of *Israël*, and reproach'd him for his Idolatry. Yet insine, for the sake of *Josophat* who was a Holy and Just King, he resolv'd to let 'em know the favors God design'd to do them in that Interprise. But because the Fervor of his Zeal had a little mov'd and disturb'd him; that he might put himself into a right disposition to Converse with God and receive his Answer, they brought to him a Musician to calme and quiet his Mind by the sweetness of Musick, and when he found it in a quiet calme and repose, he declar'd the wonders that God wou'd work in their favor; sending 'em Water in abundance, and giving 'em Victory over their Enemies. If 'twas necessary that a Prophet, who was Justly and Piously mov'd, shou'd quiet and appease this Agitation of his Mind, before he cou'd speak to God, or receive any Answer from him; how far more necessary is it for us, to calme and quiet our Irregular Passions, thereby to cause him to Communicate himself to us in Prayer?

As to the second Point, that Prayer is an efficacious means to obtain Mortification, I have sufficiently prov'd it in the Treatise of Prayer. Where I shew'd that the Mortification of our selves is properly the Fruit we must draw out of Prayer; and the Saints with Reason suspect that Prayer, which is not accompany'd with Mortification. For as when they work in Iron, 'tis not sufficient to heat
and

* Quid mihi
& tibi est?
Vade ad Pro-
phetas patris
tui, & matris
tux. Vivit
Dominus ex-
ercituum, in
cujus con-
spectu sto,
quod si non
vultum Josa-
phat Regis Ju-
de erubescere-
rem, non at-
tendissem qui-
dem te, nec
respexissem:
Nunc autem
adducite mihi
psalterium.
4 Reg. 3. 13.
14. 15.

The First Treatise Chap. I.

and soften it in the Forge, but it must be beaten with blows of the Hammer; before it receives the form they desire to give to it. So 'tis not sufficient to mollifie and make tender our Heart by the heat of Prayer, but we must also make use of the Hammer of Mortification to fashion and perfect our Soul's, to free it from all Defects, and to imprint in it all those Vertues it stands in need of. That sweetness and quiet we find in the Exercise of Prayer and Divine Love, is, that which ought to soften and render easie the pains we find in Mortification. 'Tis this which ought to encourage us to renounce our selves, and to overcome the Malignity of our Nature. Wherefore let us Pray continually without ceasing, till by the Mercy of God we have acquir'd this Perfect Mortification of our selves, so necessary for us, and which the Scripture and the Saints continually recommend unto us.

*Aug. 9. 9.
Sup. Genes. in
allud:
† Crevit igitur
puer, &
ablactatus est,
fecitque Abra-
ham grande
convivium in
die ablactatio-
nis ejus.
Gen 21. 8.*

Saint *Austin* upon those Words of *Genes*: † *The Child began to grow up, and was taken from his Mothers Breasts, and the Day he was Wean'd, Abraham made a great Feast.* How comes it to pass, says he, that at the Birth of *Isaac*, that so long'd for Infant, that Child of Promise, in whom all Nations were to be Bless'd, they make no signs of Joy? No more than they did at his Circumcision; which notwithstanding was a Ceremony of Solemnity; and that when he was Wean'd, when they forc'd him to Cry and Lament his being taken from the Breast, that then his Father rejoyc'd with his Friends, and made a great Feast for 'em. What is the meaning of this? There must need's be says Saint *Austin* some hidden Mystery contain'd therein. And that the Holy Ghost wou'd have us hereby understand, that we must Spiritually Rejoyce, when any one grows or increases in Vertue, and begins to be more Perfect, and to enter into Man's Estate, and that he remains no longer of the number of those, of whom the Apostle speaks. * *Being still Infants in JESUS CHRIST, I nourish you with Milk, and not with solid Meats.* Wherefore applying this at present to our selves, that which we are hereby to understand, is, that our Superiors who are our Spiritual Fathers, have great Joy and Comfort, not when we are Born in Religion, or first enter into it, nor when they give us a more intire Entrance at the end of our Novitship; but when they find we begin to wean our selves, and leave off being Children,

* Tanquam parvulis in Christo lac vobis potum dedi, non escam.
1 Cor. 3. 1.

Children, and that forsaking the nourishment and trifles, or toies of Infants, we begin to nourish our selves with solid Meats, and carry our selves like Spiritual and Mortifi'd Men.

But Prayer has still another more particular tie to Mortification; for 'tis not only a proper means to arrive to Mortification, but 'tis of it self a very great Mortification: According to those words of the Holy Ghost.

† *The watching which we imploy in Vertuous Reflections, dry up the Body. And frequent Meditation is an Affliction of the Flesh.*

The Holy Scripture teaches us this Truth, in the Wrestling, that happen'd between Jacob and the Angel: Whereby Jacob became Lame. And we see by Experience, that those who are very much giv'n to Prayer and Meditation, are ordinarily exhausted, weak and infirm. 'Tis a kind of a smooth File that makes no noise, but wears out and weakens the Flesh by litle and little, and destroy's the Health. Wherefore, which way soever we take Prayer, it always helps very much to Mortification.

† Vigilia hō-
nestatis labo-
r faciet carnes.
Eccli. 31. 1.
* Frequens
meditatio, car-
nis afflictio
est.
Eccl'es. 12. 12.

C H A P. II.

*In what Mortification do's consist, and how ne-
cessary it is.*

THE better to Examine and Penetrate so difficult a matter, 'tis necessary in the first place, that we shou'd presuppose that our Soul is divided into two Parts: Which by the Divines are call'd the Superior and Inferior; which they ordinarily also distinguish by the Names of Reason, and of the Sensitive Appetite. Before Sin came into the World, Man was in the happy State of Innocency and Original Justice, in which God first Created him; the Interior Part was perfectly Subject and Obedient to the Superior; as a less Noble, is Subject to a more Noble thing; or as a Servant to a Master. † *God made Man Just and Righteous*, says the Scripture, he did not Create him

† Fecit Deus
hominem
rectum.
Eccl'es. 7. 30.

Tom. II.

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so irregular and in so much disorder as we now find our selves to be. The Sensitive Appetite obey'd Reason, without any Pain or Repugnance at all; and Man was of himself carry'd to Love and Serve his Creator, without any hinderance at all. This Subjection also of the Sensitive Appetite to Reason was so great, that then it was not able to excite any disorderly Motion in Man, nor any Temptation, unless he wou'd himself. In this State, we shou'd not have been Subject to Choler, Envy, Gluttony, Impurity, or any other Corrupt Inclination, if that we of our selves, by a determinate Will were not carry'd towards it. But Reason having since Revolted, and turn'd Rebel against God by Sin, the Sensitive Appetite Rebell'd also against Reason; so that whether we will or no, and even against our Will and Consent, it sometimes raises such motions and affections in our Sensitive Appetite, as we our selves Condemn; according to those words of the Apostle. * *I do not that which I wou'd do, but I*

* Non enim quod volo bonum, hoc facio: Sed quod nolo malum, hoc ago.

Ad Rom. 7. 19.
† Corpus quod corrumpitur, aggravat animam.
Sep. 9. 15.

* Hæc est enim poena inobedienti homini reddita in semetipso, ut ei vicissim non obediatur, neque a semetipso.

S. Aug. lib. 1. contra advers. legis & Prophetarum c. 14. Fuit spoliatus gratuitis, & vulneratus in naturalibus.

commit the Evil which I wou'd not. If Man therefore had not Sinn'd, the Body wou'd always have been dispos'd, without any Pain or Contradiction, to do that which the Soul desir'd of it; but at present, † *The Corruption of the Body depresses the Soul.* The Body hinders and keeps it from doing many things, it cou'd and wou'd do. 'Tis like a bad and restive Horse, upon which we have a great Journey to make, who has no good pace at all, but go's very hard, and starts at every thing in his way, and is not only tir'd with doing nothing at all, but oftentimes go's back, is thy and restive, nay, and even lays himself down, when we have the greatest reason to make hast to go forwards to our Journey's end. * *This Punishment was justly due to Man,* says Saint Austin, *for his Disobedience to his Creator, that by God's Just Judgement, his Flesh shou'd also become Disobedient to himself.* And that this Rebellion of his Appetite, thou'd cause in him a continual War. Many Divines are of Venerable Bede's Opinion; *That by Sin, Man was wholly depriv'd of the Gifts of Grace, and also grievously wounded in those of Nature:* For he was not only depriv'd of Original Justice, and of the Supernatural Gifts united thereunto; but he suffer'd a very great alteration and prejudice in the pure Gifts of Nature. His Understanding was obscur'd; his Free Will weaken'd; his Inclination to Good grown slack; and his Propension to Ill become very violent; his Memory diminish'd; his Imagination disquieted, and

and so easily dissipated and distracted, that he is scarce able to make the least Prayer with Attention, but his Imagination presently makes him rove and wander up and down in all Places, and upon all Objects, but where, and upon what, he shou'd fix his Mind. His Senses have quite lost, what was exquisite in 'em; his Flesh remains full of Corruption, and bad Inclinations; and infine, his whole Nature is so chang'd and spoil'd, that what was before very easie to him to perform, is now become in a manner impossible. Before Sin, Man lov'd God better than himself: But since he loves himself better than God; or rather he only loves himself: He has no zeal or fervor but to do his own Will, to satisfie his Irregular Appetites, and to let himself be carry'd away with his Passions, how contrary soever they are both to Reason, and to the Law of God.

Moreover, we must also take notice, that thô Baptism has deliver'd us from Original Sin, which is the cause of all this disorder; yet it has not freed us from the Rebellion of our Natural Appetite against Reason, and even against God; which is call'd by Divines, † *The Fewel or Incentive to Sin*. And 'tis by a Just Judgment, and by an Adorable and Special Providence, that God wou'd have this Rebellion always remain in us, to Punish and Abate our Pride; to the end that the consideration of this our Misery and Baseness, might serve to Humble us in his Presence. In the Creation of Man he heap'd Honor and Dignity upon him, he Adorn'd and Imbellish'd him with his Gifts and Graces: * *But Man being ignorant of his own Worth and Excellency, and becoming Ungrateful to his Creator, deserv'd to be depriv'd of this Excellency, and so to Degenerate as to become like unto Beasts*. He becoming subject to the same Desires and Inclinations that do Violently Transport them. Wherefore God wou'd hereby Humble Man, that he might see and enter into himself, and have no more occasion of being puffed up with Pride: And in effect, if we throu'ly knew our selves, we shou'd see that we are so far from having any thing to be Proud of, that we see every moment innumerable reasons to Humble our selves.

Secondly, we must also suppose another great Truth, which is as necessary as that we last spoke of, which is, the Disorder of our Sensitive Appetite, and the Perverseness of our Carnal Inclinations, which is the greatest

*Ben. lib. 1. de
prof. Relig.
cap. 33.*

† Fomes peccati.

* Homo cum in honore esset, non intellexit: comparatus est jumentis insipientibus, & similis factus est illis.
Psal. 48. 13.

† Unde bella
& lites in vo-
bis? Nónne
ex concupif-
centiis veltis,
quæ militant
in membris
veltis?
Jacob. 4. 1^r

Aristot. lib. 7.
Ethic. cap. 17.

* Sustine, &
abstine.
In Epictet.
man.

obstacle and hinderance we have to Vertue. 'Tis for this reason that ordinarily we say, that our Flesh is our greatest Enemy; because in effect 'tis from this, that all Temptations and all our Imperfections proceed: Wherefore, the Apostle Saint James had reason to say: † *From whence proceed those Wars and Strifes that are in us? Is it not from our Passions, that make War against our Flesh?* Sensuality, Concupiscence, and the Disorder of Self-love, are the causes of all our Domestick Wars, of all Sins, of all Faults, and even of all the Imperfections we commit; and consequently the greatest hinderance we meet withal in the way of Perfection. The Ancient Philosophers, who were Illuminated only by the Light of Natural Reason, knew very well this Truth. Aristotle plac'd all the Difficulty we find in Vertue, in the Moderation of our Cares, Solicitud's, and Pleasures. And Epictatus reduc'd all Philosophy to the short Compendium of these two words. * *Suffer and Abstain.* In effect all Vertue consists in a constant suffering pains and afflictions, and in a prudent Abstinence from Pleasures: Which Experience daily teaches us, for we Sin only to avoid some pain or trouble, or to obtain some pleasure or commodity; or because we cannot overcome our selves to be without it. One Man Sin's out of a desire of Riches, Honors, or Sensual Pleasures; another out of fear of the pain and trouble, he find's in observing the Commandments of God and the Church; by the difficulty he has, to Love his Enemies, to Fast, and to Confess his most hidden and grievous Sins. All Sins therefore proceed from these two Fountains; not only the most grievous, but even the lightest Sins; so that all the Imperfections we fall into in the way of Vertue, proceed from hence.

All this being presuppos'd, there is no difficulty in conceiving, that Mortification helps to repair the disorder of our Passions, that is to say, to suppress our bad Inclinations, and the disorder of Self-love. Saint Hierom explicating those words of JESUS CHRIST: † *If any one will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his Cross and follow me:* says, that he who Renounces himself and takes up his Cross, thô before he was not Chast, yet he will become so; thô he was before Disorderly, he will become Temperate; thô he were before Weak and Fearful, he will become Strong and Courageous. This is truly

† Qui vult
venire post me
abneget semet-
ipsum, & tol-
lat crucem su-
am, & sequatur me.
Luc. 9. 23.
Hieron. ep. ad
Algasian.

truly to Renounce himself, and to become quite another Man than what he was before.

But that which makes us most clearly see the necessity of Mortification, is, as Saint *Basil* takes notice of, that our Saviour first bid's us *Renounce our selves*, and then Commands us, *to follow him*. That is to say, if you do not first Renounce your self, if you do not intirely cast away your own Will, if you do not Mortifie your bad Inclinations, you will meet with a thousand Impediments, and Obstacles, that will hinder you from being able to follow *JESUS CHRIST*. You must therefore first put your self into the way of Mortification; and 'tis for this reason that he has establish'd it, as the Foundation not only of Perfection, but of a Christian Life. This is the Cross we ought always to carry with us, if we will follow *JESUS CHRIST*. 'Tis after this manner, * *We must always carry his Mortification about us, to the end that the Purity of his Life may remain in us.* † *The Life of Man is a continual Warfare upon Earth.* * *For the Flesh*, as Saint *Paul* says, *has it's Desires, contrary to those of the Spirit, and the Spirit has such as are also contrary to those of the Flesh.* Behold here from whence proceeds that continual Warfare we have within our selves: He who knows best how to overcome his *Flesh* and Sensual Appetites, he will become the best and bravest Souldier of *JESUS CHRIST*. Saint *Gregory*, and Saint *Ambrose* say, that in this the true Valour of the Servants of God do's consist: The force and strength of the Body signifies little, and add's nothing unto it; there's no other Courage to be regarded, but that of overcoming the *Flesh*, to stifle our Passions, to condemn the Pleasures of this Life, and Patiently to support the Adversities and Labors thereof. In effect, 'tis a greater thing, say they, to Command and become Masters of our Selves, and Passions, than to Command others: † *A Patient Man*, according to *Salomon*, *is more to be esteem'd than one that is Valiant; and he who is Master of his Choler or Passion, than he who takes Cities by Assault.* The reason that Saint *Ambrose* gives for this Truth, is, * *Because our own bad Inclinations or Domestick Enemies, are far more dangerous than all Extern or Forraign Enemies.* Saint *Joseph* also, says he, gain'd more Glory in Commanding himself, and in resisting the Solicitations of *Putiphar*, than afterwards in Commanding

* Semper mortificationem *JESU* in corpore nostro circumferentes, ut & vita *JESU* manifestetur in corporibus nostris.

2 Cor. 4. 10.
† Militia est vita hominis super terram.

Job. 7. 1.
* Caro concupiscit adversus spiritum, spiritus autem adversus carnem.

Galat. 5. 17.
Greg. lib. 7.
Moral. cap. 8.
Ambros. lib. 3. de Offic. c. 36.

† Melior est Patiens viro forti: & qui dominatur animo suo, expugnator urbium.

Prov. 16. 32.
* Graviiores inimici sunt pravi mores, quam hostes infesti.
Ambros. serm. 87. de Virg. Idem de Patriarcha Joseph. cap. 5. Genes. 30. 7.

*Homil.
de David &
Saul. Tom. 1.
Reg. 14. 18.*

manding all *Egypt*. Saint *Chrysostom* is of the same Opinion, and says, that *David* obtain'd a greater Victory, when he cou'd have Reveng'd himself upon *Saul*, by Killing him in his Tent, and did not, than he did in overcoming *Goliath*. The Trophies of this first Victory, were not rais'd in the Terrestrial, but Cælestial *Jerusalem*. And 'twas upon this account he deserv'd, that not only those Virgins shou'd go before him Singing his Praises, when he return'd Conqueror of *Goliath*, but that all the Quires of Angels in Heaven shou'd rejoyce and admire his Vertue and Courage, in this great Victory over himself.

C H A P. III.

*That one of the greatest Punishments that God
Inflicts upon Man, is to give him up to
his own Desires: And permit him to fol-
low his own Passions.*

THAT we may the better come to a knowledge of the necessity we are in of overcoming our Flesh, and be the more encourag'd to take up Armes against it, 'tis of great Importance, that we shou'd know how great and dangerous an Enemy it is. 'Tis so formidable a one, that the Saints say, that one of the greatest of God's Punishments, whereby he shews his severest Wrath against a Sinner, is when he delivers him into the Hand of this Enemy, and when he abandons him to his Sensual Desires and Appetites, as to so many merciless Executioners: They cite for the proof of this, many passages in the Holy Scripture, and amongst others, that of the Royal Prophet: † *My People have not hearken'd to my Voice; Israël has not joy'n'd it self to me; wherefore I will Abandon 'em to the desires of their Heart, they shall hereafter only follow their own Imaginations and Inventions.* Saint Paul says, that this was the way that God took to Punish the Pride

† Et non au-
divit populus
meus vocem
meam, & Is-
raël non in-
tendit mihi.
Et dimisi eos
secundum de-
sideria cordis
eorum, ibunt
in adinventio-
nibus suis.
Psalm. 80. 12.
© 13.

of the Ancient Philosophers. * *Who knowing God, did not glorifie him as God, and render'd him not the thanks due unto him; but stray'd and alienated themselves from him, by vain Dissipations; and for this reason, says he, God deliver'd 'em up to the Desires of their Hearts, and to Impurity; to the end that abandoning themselves thereunto, they themselves might Dishonor their own Bodies.* The Chastisement which God Inflicted upon 'em, was to deliver 'em up to their own Desires. But we must by the way take notice with Saint *Ambrose*, that when the Holy Scripture says, that God delivers up a Man to his Desires, we must not hereby understand, that God incites him to Evil, or causes any one to fall into Sin; but only that he permits that those bad Desires, we have secretly Conceiv'd in our Heart, to appear Exteriorly in Action and Execution, by the Intigation and Assistance of the Devil.

We may see how grievous and horrible this Chastisement is, by what the Apostle afterwards adds. He shews us in what a manner these Proud Philosophers were treated by this furious Enemy, to whose power God had deliver'd 'em up. And 'tis impossible to express to what an Excess of disorder, they were carry'd by him. He drew them into all sorts of Vices; so far as to make 'em plunge themselves into the most abominable and shameful Sins. † *God deliver'd 'em up, says he, to Infamous Passions.* Miserable therefore are you, if you permit your self to fall into the Hands of so terrible an Enemy, into the Claw's of so cruel and savage a Beast: Do you know how he will treat you? Hear Saint *Ambrose*, * *He, says the Saint, who knows not how to command his Desires, finds himself presently carry'd away with 'em, as by an unruly Horse, who having got the Bit between his Teeth, runs even to Inaccessible Places; and never rests till he fall's with his Rider into some Precipice.* Thus it is, if you do not destroy Concupiscence, if you do not tame and bring it under, it will carry you from one disorder to another, from one vice to another, and will not desist, till it has Precipitated you into most Enormous Crimes, and even into the Abyss of Hell it self. † *Permit not your self to be carry'd away with Concupiscence, says Ecclesiastes, and take care not to follow your own Will; if you give up your self to your Desires to do what they Command, you will become a Laughing Stock and Scorn to your Enemies.* We cannot give the Devils

* Quia cum cognovissent Deum, non sicut Deum glorificaverunt, aut gratias egerunt, sed evanuerunt in cogitationibus suis. Propter quod tradidit illos Deus in desideria cordis eorum, in immunditiam, ut contumelias afficerent corpora inemetipsis. Rom. 1. 21. 24.

† Tradidit illos Deus in passiones ignominiae. Rom. 1. 26.

* Qui domini nescit cupiditibus, is quasi equus raptatur indomitus, volvitur, obteritur, laniatur, affigitur. Amb. lib. 3. de Virgin.

† Post concupiscentias tuas non eas, & a voluntate tua avertere. Si praestes animae tuae concupiscentias ejus, faciet te in gaudium inimicis tuis. Eccl. 18. 30. & 31.

* Domine
Pater & Deus
vitz meæ, au-
fer à me ven-
tris concupis-
centias, &
concupitus
concupiscen-
tiæ ne appre-
hendant me,
& animæ irre-
verenti & in-
fructuæ ne tra-
das me.
Eccî, 23. 4. 6.

Devils, our Enemies, a greater Subject of Joy, than to deliver up our selves to our Passions: For they treat us after so ill a manner, that all the Devils in Hell together, cannot treat us worse: Wherefore Ecclesiastes earnestly begg's of God, that he wou'd hinder this Chastisement from falling upon him. * *Thou O Lord who art my Father, and the God of my Life, drive away from me all unchast and impure thoughts, permit me not to be possess'd by the desires of the Flesh, and give me not over to a shameless and foolish Mind.* Wherefore 'tis with very good reason that the Saints affirm, that God cannot shew a greater mark of his Wrath to a Sinner, than to leave him to his own Will, and to let him have his Liberty of following the Inclinations and Motions of his Passions: 'Tis a very bad sign when a Physician permits his Patient to Eat and Drink whatsoever he has a mind to; 'tis a mark that he quire despair's of his Cure: And that he look's upon him as a Dead Man. God deal's after the same manner with a Sinner, who has provok'd him to Anger; he let's him do whatsoever he will; and what can he do in so desperate a condition as he is in, full of those bad Inclinations and Passions that reign in him, but what is quite contrary to his own good; and what will bring him unto Death? 'Tis very easie hereby to comprehend, how Dep'orable and Miserable the Condition those are in, who place all their Happiness in doing whatsoever they have a mind to.

C H A P.

C H A P. IV.

Of the hatred of our selves, and of the Spirit of Mortification and Penance, it produces.

IF we reflect well upon what has been already sayd, it will be sufficient to give us that Holy hatred and aversion against our selves, which our Saviour JESUS CHRIST desires of us; without which he says we cannot be his Disciples. For what greater reason can we have to hate our Bodies, than the knowledge that 'tis not only one of the greatest Enemies we have: And even the greatest Traitor that we have ever seen; but also a Mortal Enemy, and a Malicious Traitor, who searches continually an occasion of taking away our Lives, nay even to bring our Soul to an Eternal Death, which sustains and bestows all necessities upon it; a Traitor that for a moment of present Pleasure, matters not to offend God, and to precipitate it self for ever into an Abyss of Eternal Miseries. If any one shou'd deliver this message to you, know for certain that one of your Domesticks, who Daily Eat's and Drink's at your Table, has Traitorously design'd to Murder you: What an apprehension and terrour wou'd this strike into you? But if he shou'd add, know moreover, that he hates you after such a manner, that he cares not to be put to Death himself, so he can but Kill you; for he knows very well he shall be taken in the Fact, and put to a cruel Death, but he cares not at all for the loss of his own Life, so he can but destroy yours: With how great a fear wou'd you be seiz'd? Wou'd you not apprehend every moment that he were coming to give you a Mortal Stab? And if you cou'd discover or find out the Traitor, what a hatred wou'd you conceive against him; and what revenge wou'd you not take upon him? But our own Body is this Traitor, that both Eat's, Drink's, and Lies with us, which know's very well that in hurting our Soul, he also hurt's himself, and that he cannot precipi-

Tom. II.

C

tate.

rate that into Hell, without falling thereinto himself. Notwithstanding, out of a desire to do what it has a mind to, tramples all under foot, and considers nothing; see therefore if we have not reason to hate it. How often has this Traitor driv'n you to the brink of Hell? How often has he made you offend the Goodness of God? How many Graces and Favors has he made you loose by rejecting 'em? And how often do's he every Day expose you to the danger of loosing your Eternal Salvation? What Holy indignation ought you not to have against an Enemy that has done you so much harm, and depriv'd you of so much good; and continually exposes you to so great dangers? If we hate the Devil, and look upon him as our greatest Enemy; because of the continual hurt he do's us; how much more ought we to hate our Flesh, which is a more cruel and dangerous Enemy? The Devils are so weak that they are not able to hurt us, if our Flesh did not joyn herself to him, and take party with him to wage continual War against us.

Behold here what it was that mov'd the Saints to have so great a hatred against themselves; from whence there sprung up in 'em, that Spirit of Mortification and Penance; whereby they reveng'd themselves upon this their Enemy, and always kept him in Subjection. They took care not to treat their Body well, nor to give it any ease or pleasure, being persuaded that this was to furnish their Enemy with Weapons against themselves, and to give him new force and vigour against 'em. † *Let us take care,* says Saint *Austin*, *not to permit our Bodies to get Strength, lest it uses it, to make War against our Soul.* But let us rather apply our selves to Discipline and Mortifie it, hereby to hinder it from Rebelling against us: * *For whatsoever breed's up from a Child a Domestick Servant too Delicately, will find him afterwards become too Insolent.*

The Ancient Anchorites apply'd themselves with a great deal of Zeal, to this Exercise of Mortification of the Body; and thought it so necessary to weaken their Bodies, that when they had no other means to do it, they had recourse to great Labors, which they impos'd upon themselves, to extenuate and abate their forces: *Palladius* recounts, that a Holy Anchorite, finding himself extremely tormented with proud and vain thoughts, which he was not able to drive away, resolv'd to take a Basket upon his Back,

† Ne præbeamus vires illicitas corpori nostro, ne committat bellum adversus spiritum nostrum.

August. lib. de salutar. moni.

22, cap. 33.
* Qui delicatè à pueritia nutrit servum suum, postea sentiet eum contumacem.
Prov. 29. 22.

Back, and continually to carry Earth in it from one place to another: And when they ask'd him what he did, † *I Vex him*, says he, *that Vexes me, and revenge my self upon my Enemy*. The same thing is recounted of Saint *Macarius*: And 'tis reported of Saint *Dorotheus*, who Exercis'd great Penance and Austerities, that being one Day ask'd why he so grievously tormented his Body. 'Tis, says he, *because it Torments me*. Saint *Bernard* incens'd with a Holy Choler against his Body, as against his greatest Enemy break's forth into these words. * *Let God arise*, says he, *and let this Arm'd Giant fall at his Feet, yea let him fall, and let this Enemy of God be Crush'd in Pieces, this Self-lover, this Friend of the World, this Slave of the Devil*. What do you think? adds the Saint, *Certainly you will show your selves to be Just and Righteous Judges, and will cry out with me, he is worthy of Death, let him be Hang'd, let him be Crucifi'd*.

'Tis with such a Courage as this, and with such Armes as these, that we ought to fight, and subject our Bodies, for fear they Rebel, and in their Revolt, force the Mind and Reason to take party with 'em. This Victory will gain us another; for having once overcome our Flesh, we shall with a great deal of ease be able to overcome the Devil. Since 'tis by the help of the Flesh, whose Rebellion he Foment's, that he makes War against us; we must therefore wage War against him also, by Mortifying and Macerating our Flesh, thereby hindering it from Revolting against us. Saint *Austin* Writing upon those words of the Apostle. † *For my part I Run, but not at hap-hazard or in vain. I Fight, but not with blows in the Air, but I treat my Body ill, and bring it under Servitude and Subjection*. Takes notice, that this is the true means to Triumph over the Devil. * *Treat your Body ill*, says he, *and you will overcome the Devil, for this is the way, the Apostle assures us, we must fight against him*. When a Captain, in Garrison upon the Frontiers of the *Moors*, hears any Allarum giv'n, if he has a Slave that is a *Moor*, he presently puts him in Chains into a Dungeon, for fear he shou'd Rebel against him, and take party with his Enemies. We must use our Body after the same manner, we must Mortifie it, we must clap it into Chains, for fear, lest at our Enemies approach, he puts himself on their side, and joyn's himself to them.

† Vexo eum
qui me vexat.
Psal. in vita
S. Mat. Alex.

* Exurgat
Deus, cadat
armatus iste,
cadat, & con-
teratur inimi-
cus homo,
contemptor
Dei, amator
sui, amicus
mundi, servus
diaboli. Quid
tibi videtur?
Certè si rectè
sentis mecum,
dices: Reus
est mortis,
crucifigatur,
crucifigatur.
Bern. Serm.
90. de Div.
num. 3.

Aug. in illud.
† Ego igitur
sic curro, non
quasi in incer-
tum: Sic pug-
no, non qua-
si aërem ver-
berans; sed
castigo corpus
meum, & in
servitutem re-
digo.

1 Cor. 9. 26.
& 27.

* Castiga
corpus tuum,
& diabolum
vinces: Hoc
enim modo
Paulus adver-
sus illud docu-
it nos esse pug-
nandum.

C H A P. V.

*That our advancement in Perfection depends upon
Mortification.*

† Tantum
proficies,
quantum tibi
ipse vim intu-
leris.
Imit. Christ.
lib. 3. cap. 23.
Hier. ad illud.
* Nec inve-
nitur in terra
suaviter vive-
trium.
Job. 28. 13.

THE knowledge of this Truth, now propos'd, has caus'd the Masters of Spirit to affirm, that our Advancement in Perfection depends upon Mortification. † *You will not be able to make any Progress in Vertue*, says Thomas à Kempis, *without using Violence to your self.* And Saint Hierom, Explicating that passage in Job, * *That Wisdom is not found in the Land of those that live at Ease and Repose*, that is to say, according to their own Will; for as ordinarily, add's the Saint, we say that Arable-Land rest's, when we let it bear what it will, which is commonly nothing else but Thorns and Thistles; and on the contrary when we make it bear Corn, we say, that it labors; so when a Man lives after his own Will and Fancy, we say he leads an ease and idle Life. But 'tis not in this sort of Land, that is fallow and rest's, in which Wisdom grows, but only in that which is very much Cultivated; in the Land of such as Mortifie themselves, and renounce to their Sensual Appetites. 'Tis this Mortification, this Renouncing of our selves, which the Saints look upon as a Rule and Measure of any ones Spiritual Advancement. Wou'd you therefore know what Progress you have made in Vertue? Examine what you have done to Mortifie your self; what Victory you have gain'd over your Passions; what disposition you are in order to Patience and Humility; whether you have an Aversion to things of this World; whether the Affections of Flesh and Blood are Mortifi'd and Dead in you. 'Tis in this, and not in Sweetness and Consolation in Prayer, that you will see whether you have profited or not. Saint Ignatius was of this Sentiment; he made greater account of Mortification, than of Prayer; and it was from their Mortification, that he fram'd his Judgment of any Persons.

And

And Saint *Francis Borgia*, when any one extold or commended another to him as a Saint. *He will be so indeed*, says he, *if he be truly Mortifi'd.* *Bloſius* compares a Mortifi'd Servant of God, to a ripe bunch of Grapes, which is sweet and pleasing to the Taste. And he that is not Mortifi'd, to a bunch of Verjuice or sower Grapes, which is sharp and sower, according to the words of the Prophet *Iſay*: † *I expected from my Vine that it ſhou'd yield me good Grapes, to make Wine withal, and it has giv'n me only wild ones fit for Verjuice.* The difference there is between the Children of God, and those of the World, is, that these follow the Motions of their Passions, and think not of Mortifying their Bodies: * *But those that are of JESUS CHRIST, have Crucifi'd their Flesh, with their Vicious Desires and Inclinations, and are not guided but by the Spirit; which giv's 'em Life.*

Bloſ. in insir. spir. cap. 2.

† Expectavi ut faceret uvas, & fecit labruscas. *Iſa. 5. 4.*

* Qui autem sunt Christi, carnem suam crucifixerunt cum vitiis & concupiscentiis. Si vivimus spiritu, & incedamus. *Galat. 5. 24.*

'Tis true that Christian Perfection do's not essentially consist in Mortification, but in the Love of God. And that Man is not Perfect, till he is United to God by the Bond of Love, but as a Stone which is rais'd from the Ground falls back again to it's Center, as soon as the Impediment is taken away that hinders it from it's Natural Inclination of falling back; so no sooner is our Soul, which is a Spiritual Substance and Created for God, freed from the Impediments of it's Passions; and from all other things that miserably tie and fasten it to the Earth, but it presently raises it self unto God as to it's End and Center, and by the assistance of his Grace unites it self unto him by Charity. † *All things*, says Saint *Austin*, *move according to their Weight or Inclination; light things upwards, and heavy things downwards:* But that which the Weight or Inclination causes in Physical or Natural Bodies, love occasions in reasonable Creatures. * *My Love is my Weight, or Inclination that moves me, and I am carry'd thither, to which it carries me.* And as Natural things move according to the Natural Inclination or Weight that moves 'em, so Rational Creatures move according to that Love and Passion that is Predominant in 'em. So that the Love of Earthly things, whatever they be, whether it be the desire of Honor and esteem, to do our own Will, or to enjoy our ease, that Predominates in us, all our motions and desires will become sensual, and will carry us towards the Earth: But if by Mortification we free and untie our selves from Sensual

† Ponderibus suis aguntur omnia, & loca sua petunt levia sursum, & gravia deorsum. *Confess. lib. 13. cap. 9.*

* Amor meus pondus meum, & feror quocumque feror. *S. Aug. Ibid.*

* Fecisti nos
Domine ad te,
& inquietum
est cor nostrum
donec requiescat
in te.
Aug Conf. c. 1.

Aug. in illud.
† Quemad-
modum deside-
rat cervus ad
fontes aqua-
rum, ita desi-
derat anima
mea ad te
Deus.

Pf. 41. 2.
* Cervus ser-
pentes necat,
& post serpen-
tium interem-
ptionem
majori siti in-
ardescit: Per-
emptis ser-
pentibus, ac-
tus ad fontes
currit. Ser-
pentes vitia
sunt: Con-
sume serpen-
tes iniquitatis,
& tunc am-
plius deside-
rabis fontem
veritatis.
Augmentum
charitatis, di-
minutio cupi-
ditatis, per-
fectio, nulla
cupiditas.
Lsb. 83. 44.
§ 36.

† Ut memo-
riale aliquod
mandatum ve-
lut hereditari-
um legatum
relinqueret,
per quod pos-
sent ad per-
fectionis cul-
men præcepti.

sual things, the Love of our Creator will get the upper hand in us; that will be our Weight or Inclination that will move us, and then our Heart, will with a far swifter motion elevate it self to God, than a Stone falls to it's Center. * *You have made us for your self O God, and our Heart can never enjoy any repose but in you.* Behold therefore the reason why the Saints affirm that Mortification is the measure of our Advancement in Christian Perfection: For he who is very much Mortifi'd: is also very much touch'd and inflam'd with the Love of God, and will consequently become Perfect.

Saint Austin says upon those words of the Psalmist :
† *As the Hart pants and seek's after the Fountains of Waters, so do's my Soul seek after thee O Lord,* * "That the Hart tramples under foot, and kill's all the Serpents he meets with, when he seek's for Water; but after he has kill'd 'em, he finds his thirst augmented, and run's so much the swifter to seek for it. And go's on in applying the Similitude, "Wou'd you know, says he, why you Thirst not very much after your Perfection, and after the Love of God; 'tis, because you do not like the Hart, you do not destroy those Serpents, that stand in your way: Your Vices are the Serpents you must destroy these Serpents of Iniquity; and then you will run with Fervor to the Fountain of Truth and Life. We cannot advance in Perfection and the Love of God, but according to the proportion of our advancement in Mortification. "The diminution of Concupiscence, says he in another place, is the increase of "Charity, and the greatest Perfection consists in having "our Concupiscence quite Extinguish'd. As Gold is Purifi'd and refin'd, according as the bad Alloy of other Metals is consum'd, so Charity and the Love of God grow's more Perfect in us, and is augmented, as the Love of the World and our selves is diminish'd: And when this disordinate Love shall quite be extinguish'd and destroy'd, then the Love of God will be wholly perfected in us.

Cassian reports, † *That John the Abbot being upon his Death Bed, which wa surrounded by his Disciples, as Children about the Bed of their Dying Father, they earnestly begg'd of him, to give 'em the Comfort of some short Document for their Spiritual Advancement, to leave behind him*

at

as a Spiritual Legacy, that might help 'em with greater facility to ascend to the height of Perfection. I have never, says he Smiling, done my own Will, nor never Taught any thing to another, that I have not first Practis'd my self.

compendio facilius pervenire. Ingenitumque, ait, numquam, aut, meum feci voluntatem, nec quemquam docui quod prius ipse non feci. Lib. 3. de remediis, cap. 28.

C H A P. VI.

That Mortification is particularly necessary for all Religious, but above all, for those who are employ'd in the Exercises of Charity towards their Neighbor.

THE Exercise of Mortification belongs to all God's Servants in general, and all stand in need of it, to be able continually more and more to conform themselves to the Will of God; but it more particularly regards and belongs to Religious Persons, because in effect, we left the World and enter'd into Religion for no other end, than to Mortifie our selves. Saint Bennet, says that to be Religious, is to correct our ill Habits: And from hence it comes, that at the Profession which those of his Order make, they say, * *I Promise the change of my Manners*, we also make the same Promise to God, when we renounce the World, and 'tis to this we ought to apply our selves by the help of Mortification. † *Casting off the Old Man with his Works, and Cloathing our selves with the New one.* Saint Bernard was wont to say to those he receiv'd into Religion, *Take notice*, says he, *that your Mind is only to Enter, and that you are to leave your Body behind you at the Gate.* Giving 'em hereby to understand, that in Religion they ought not to think of treating their Bodies well, nor to Live according to their humor, and as they please, but they ought to take care only of their Souls, and of their Mind; according to the words of the Apostle: * *Walk according to the Spirit,*

* Promitto conversionem morum meorum. In form. votorum.
† Spoliantes vos veterem hominem cum actibus suis, & induentes novum. Coloss. 3. 9. 10.

* Spiritu ambulate, & de-

and

sideria carnis
non perficietis
Gal. 5. 26.

† Multis
quidem experi-
mentis edocti
tradunt eum
in cenobio
diutius durare
non posse, qui
prius volunta-
tes suas non
didicerit supe-
rare.

Cass. lib. 4. de
instit. remons.
cap. 8.

Chrysost. lib. de
Sacerdotio.

* Omnibus
omnia factus
sum, ut om-
nes facerem
salvos.
1a Cor. 9. 22.

and fulfil not the Works of the Flesh. 'Tis to walk according to the Spirit, to live according to the Sentiments of our more Noble Part, which are those of the Mind, and of Reason, and not according to the Motions and Inclinations of our Inferior Part: Which is our Flesh and Sensuality. Cassian says, † *It was the general Opinion of all the Ancient Fathers, founded upon frequent Experience, that 'twas impossible for any one to Persever in a Religious State of Life, if he had not learn'd to overcome his own Inclinations.* In effect what's more contrary to a Religious Life, than those Worldly Inclinations we bring with us unto it.

But if Mortification be so necessary for all Religious, 'tis far more necessary for us, who according to our Institute are design'd to help our Neighbor, in all sorts of Charitable Functions. Saint Chrysostom going about to prove the particular necessity those have to Mortify their Passions, who are forc'd to Converse in the World, thereby to assist their Neighbor, grounds himself upon this; that the occasions are there more frequent, and more dangerous; and our Passions, whom he call's Savage Beasts, find there more Food to nourish 'em. A Souldier, says he, may keep secret his Cowardise, till he has some occasion given him whereby he discovers it. 'Tis the same in a Christian. He who keep's at home and in retirement may hide his defects; but he who go's forth to Combat and Fight against the World, and is become a Publick Spectacle, being expos'd to the View thereof, 'tis fit he shou'd Excel in Vertue, and Mortification. Add to this, that to gain those to God, with whom you Converse; you must as much as you can, accommodate your self to their Manners and Humor; according to Saint Paul's Example, who says of himself, * *I became all to all, to the end I might gain all unto God, and save the whole World.* And how far the Spirit of Mortification, and Renouncing our own Will is necessary for this, is apparent enough in it self, and wants no Reasons to prove it.

Philosophers say, that that part of the Eye which receives the Species of Colours, and in which the Sight or Vision is fram'd, has no Colour in it self; and 'twas necessary it shou'd be without any; to the end it might be able to receive the Species or Impressions of all Colours; and see them as they are; for if it had any particular Colour,
it

it wou'd be able to receive any other, according to that common axiom. † *That which is within, hinders what is without from entering.* If 'twere red, all that we saw wou'd appear red: As we find by experience when we look throu' certain red Glasses; and if 'twere green, all things we look'd upon, wou'd to us appear also green. 'Tis after the same manner, that each one of us Mortifying his Passions, and rendring himself Master of 'em, casts away his own particular humor, having properly none at all; to the end he may with Saint Paul, be able so to accommodate himself to all, that thereby he may gain all the World unto God. The Spirit of Religion do's not require that we shou'd Sympathize and agree only with those who are of the same temper with us; or that the Cholerick shou'd not accommodate themselves, or converse but with the Cholerick; that such as are Melancholy, shou'd not be able to suffer those, that are not of that humor; and far less that they shou'd have a greater tie or inclination to those of their own, than to those of a different Nation. Wou'd you not believe it to be a very great misfortune, to have two Eyes, that shou'd be only able to see one only Colour? But 'tis a far greater, to have so narrow and limited a Will, and so ill dispos'd, that 'tis only carry'd and bent towards such, as are of the same humor, or of the same Country. Charity equally imbraces all; because it loves all for God, and in God; it makes no distinction or difference between one Nation or another, nor between one Person or another; and as Saint Paul well expresses: * *It makes no distinction between Jew and Gentile, between the Circumcis'd or Uncircumcis'd, between Barbarian and Christian, between a Slave and one that is Free-born, but in all beholds* JESUS CHRIST, *who is all in all:* 'Twou'd hide all within it's Charitable Bowels; because it looks upon all as Children of God, and Brethren of JESUS CHRIST; and what is there more proper to make us gain this Universal Charity, than the Mortification of our selves?

'Tis also very necessary for us, to conserve and keep amongst us that Spirit of Union and Fraternal Charity, which JESUS CHRIST has so recommended to us; and which is the Mark or Character whereby he wou'd have his Disciples known and distinguish'd from all others. For nothing do's more destroy this Union, than to seek our selves in all things; to love our own ease and commodities;

Tom. II.

D

to

† Intus ex-
istens prohibet
extraneum.

* Ubi non est
Gentilis & Ju-
deus, circum-
cisio & præpu-
tium, Barbarus
& Scythæ, ser-
vus & liber,
sed omnia &c
in omnibus
Christus.
Coloss. 3. 11.

to desire to draw or keep to our selves, the esteem or reputation of the World. Let each one Examine himself, and he will find, as often as he offends against Charity, that 'tis always some one of these things that is the occasion thereof. But the Mortification we speak of, frees us from all these bad ties to our selves, and makes the way of Charity become plain and easie. It causes us
 † *Not to seek our own Interest.* And 'tis for this reason that Saint Ambrose says, * *If any one desires to please all, let him not seek what is profitable or pleasing to himself, but what is so to others, as Saint Paul did.* Who would have us, † *Not to think upon our own proper Interest, but of the Interest of our Neighbor.*

† Non querit quæ sua sunt. 1 Cor. 13. 5.
 † Si quis vult placere omnibus per omnia, querat non quod sibi utile est, sed quod multis, sicut quærebat & Paulus.
 Ambros. 1. 3. Offic. c. 3.
 † Non quæ sua sunt considerantes, sed quæ aliorum.
 Philip. 2. 4.

C H A P. VII.

Of two sorts of Mortification and Penance.

SAINTE Austin speaking of that passage of Saint Matthew. * *Since the coming of Saint John Baptist, the Kingdom of Heaven suffers Violence, and the Violent take it by force.* † *There are, says he, two sorts of Abstinence and Crosses, the one Corporal the other Spiritual:* The one Afflicts the Body, as for Example to Fast, to take a Discipline, to wear a Hair-cloth, to lie upon the Ground, and such like practises that Mortifie the Flesh, and deprive it of it's ease and pleasure; and this is that we call Exterior Penance. *The other is more Meritorious and more Sublime; which is to command our Passions, daily to make War with our Vices, to become rigorous censurers of our selves, and to be in a continual strife against our inward Man.* That is, constantly to break our own Will, to dispoile our selves of our own Judgment, to overcome our Choler, to repress and keep under our Impatience, and in a word, to command our Mouth, our Eyes, our Tongue, and all our Senses, and bad Inclinations. * 'Tis he, says Saint Gregory, *who after this manner, having cast down this Rampire of his Passions, ascends*

* A diebus autem Joannis Baptistæ Regnum Cælorum vim patitur, & violenti rapiunt illud.
 Matth. 21. 12.
 † Duo sunt abstinentiæ & crucis genera: Unum corporale, alud Spirituale.
 Alterum genus est pretiosius & sublimius, scilicet regere motus animi, litigare quotidie contra vitia sua, incappare se quidam censurâ austeritatis & virtutis, & rixam quodammodo cum homine interiore conferre.
 Serm. 20. de Sanctis, c. 1. de S. Joan. Bapt.
 * Hæc qui facit, prærup- to passionis

ascends with violence to the Kingdom of Heaven. We must become brave and valiant after this manner, to be able to carry it by Assault. This kind of Mortification therefore is far more excellent than the former; because there is far greater Merit in curbing our Mind, in trampling under foot Honor and the Esteem of the World, than in Afflicting our Bodies, by Fasts, Disciplines, and Hair-cloths. But as this sort of Mortification is better, and more Meritorious than the other, so 'tis also more hard, and costs us a great deal more pains and labor; because that which is most Perfect, always costs more, than that which is less. This very Doctrine is that which Saint Gregory, Saint *Dorotheus*, and many other Saints in several places teach us.

muro violent-
ter ad Caele-
rum regna
conscendit.
1. 32. Mor. 6.
17. Or l. 6.
c. 15. & sup.
1 Reg. c. 2.

Our SOCIETY imbraces and puts in practise these two sorts of Penance and Mortification. As to the first, 'tis true, that Saint *Ignatius* has not subjected us, to any ordinary determinate Penance of Obligation, being desirous for very good reasons, that the SOCIETY might lead a Life common to all in the Exterior: But yet has not omitted to take care we shou'd Mortifie our selves, as I shall shew in it's due place. Many just Considerations mov'd him to ordain, that the manner of Living in the SOCIETY, shou'd have nothing extraordinary in the Exterior; because the Means ought always to be some proportion to the End; and the End of the SOCIETY being to labor not only for it's own Advancement, but also for the Advancement and Salvation of our Neighbor; 'twas very fit, that we might have a more easie access to all sorts of Persons, that we shou'd wear no other Habit but that, which was then common to all sorts of Priests; because by this means, 'twas a Religious Habit with other Religious, a Priests Habit with Priests, and amongst Secular Persons, 'twas a Habit that render'd us in some sort suitable also to them: It being very little different from the Habit of Secular Priests. Add to this, that the SOCIETY was Instituted in *Luiber's* time, when Hereticks had so great an aversion to all Religious, that they even hated their Habit; wherefore to have a more free access to them, and to be the better able to Dispute against 'em, thereby to Convince 'em, (which is a Function proper to our Institute) 'twas convenient that we shou'd have nothing extraordinary in our Habit, that might distinguish us from other Ecclesiasticks; lest Here-

Cap. 1. exor.
6. 6. & Reg.
4. sum. conf.

ticks, having a horror and aversion to us, before they even began to confer with us, this might be an obstacle and hinderance to one of the chief Ends, for which God Instituted our SOCIETY. Moreover, if we shou'd wear an Austere Habit, 'tis to be fear'd, that it might fright Sinners too much from us, who commonly desire to be brought to their Duty by sweetness, and wou'd otherwise be afraid to come near us, out of an apprehension, that the Austerity of our Habit, might be a mark of that of our Mind; and that we wou'd treat 'em too severely. We have therefore taken such a kind of common Habit, as is welcome to all Persons, whereby we may gain a more free entrance and access to all the World; to the end that no one may have any repugnance to treat with us. Our Holy Founder also wou'd even by our Habit, have us become all to all; to be the better able to gain all unto God. Imitating in this JESUS CHRIST, of whom Saint *Austin* and Saint *Thomas* say, that the better to accommodate himself to all Persons, and for their greater profit, he rather chose such a kind of Living, as was common in the Exterior, than such an Austere and Penitential Life as Saint *John Baptist* led.

*S. Aug. contra.
Faust. l. 16.
c. 10.
S. Thom. 3. p.
q. 40. art. 2.*

As to Exterior Mortifications, tho' our Rule do's not appoint any, yet there's a Living Rule, which is our Superior, who prescrib's to every one what he ought to do: And these sorts of Mortification may, as Saint *Ignatius* says, be taken two ways; either when by permission of the Superior, we make choice of 'em our selves, thereby to make a greater progress in Vertue; or when the Superior for the same reason shall impose 'em upon us. This great Saint thought it more to the purpose, to practise 'em after this manner, than to determine 'em by any Rule or Constitution. Because a Dead Rule cou'd not be made just and equal for all; all having not the strength to support the same Austerities; and therefore if he had Establish'd in this, a general Rule for all Persons, those who cou'd not observe it, wou'd have been troubl'd, because they cou'd not do what others did: Moreover, as the same regimen or treatment, and the same Physick, is not fit for all sorts of Sick Persons; so the same Penances are not fit for all. Some are more proper for Young Persons, others for Old: These are good for those who are Weak and Sickly; those, for such as enjoy a perfect Health: One sort of Penance is proper for those who Enter'd

*Cap. I. exam.
§. 6. & Reg. 4.
summ.*

into

into Religion, without having lost their Baptifmal Innocency; and another fort, is fit for thofe who Enter'd into Religion, all cover'd with the Wounds of Sin, and pierc'd, as I may fay, all over like a Sive. 'Tis for this Reason that Saint *Aufin* and Saint *Bafil* fay, we muft not wonder if in Religion, they treat not every one after the fame manner; and that fome ufe greater Austerities than others; becaufe there wou'd be a very great inequality, in an equal treatment. But 'tis not only in regard of different Perfons, that fuch a difference and diftinction is neceffary, 'tis alfo neceffary for the fame Perfon, according to different times, and according to the want he has of it. Such a fort of Penance is good in time of Temptation and Interior Aridity, and another is good in time of Peace and Fervor. This is proper to conferve the Peace of God in our Hearts; and that to regain it, when upon any occafion we are depriv'd of it. 'Tis for thefe reasons that our Founder wou'd not determine the Exterior Penances to be practis'd amongst us, which were generally practis'd by other Orders; but has left it to the difcretion of our Superiour, who is our Spiritual Phyfician, to impofe greater or leffer Penances, according to each ones ftrength and neceffity. 'Twas after this manner prefcrib'd in the Rule, that the Angel brought to *Pachomius* from Almighty God. Which order'd that the Superior fhould prefcribe to each Religious what Penance he was oblig'd to perform. So that tho' there be no ordinary Penances in the SOCIETY, that are prefcrib'd by Rule, as they ordinarily are in other Religious Orders, yet 'tis not becaufe there are no Corporal Penances in practice amongst us, or that we do not highly efteem thofe Holy Conftitutions, and Obfervances in other Religious Orders: (the variety of which contribute 'to the Beauty of the Church) But 'tis becaufe our Founder judg'd it more fuitable to the end of his Conftitutions, and more conformable to the Ancient Doctrine of Saints, to leave the meafure and manner, to the Prudence and Charity of the Superior. Yet this is far from being the caufe that there are fewer Austerities practis'd amongst us; but on the contrary, is the occafion that there are far more in ufe, which are alfo imbrac'd with greater Fervor: At leaft hitherto, by the Mercy of God we find, that by this means more are perform'd amongst us, than cou'd have been appointed by the Rule: God grant that this Fervor and

Spirit

*Aug. in Reg.
Bafil. in conf.
monast. c. 9. et
in Reg. fufius
difput. inter.
19.*

Spirit of Mortification so praise-worthy, so Holy, and so conformable to the practise of the Church of God; may still go on increasing more and more amongst us, and that as hitherto we have experienc'd, there may be more need of a Bridle to keep us in, than of a Spur to excite us to the practise of Penance and Mortification.

The second manner of Penance, which consists in the Mortifying of our Passions and Self-love, is that which the SOCIETY more strictly imbraces; and 'tis for this reason, that Saint *Ignatius* wou'd not establish any ordinary Penances amongst us, that were determin'd by the Rule; having a particular desire, that we shou'd above all things, apply our selves to the Interior Mortification of our Passions and Sensual Appetites; and that this kind of Penance, which is without comparison more Meritorious, and more Excellent than the other, might be our chief employment and occupation. Moreover, he prescrib's to us such things in the Constitutions, as are of very high Perfection, and which require a very great Interior Mortification, and renouncing of our selves. He wou'd have this Mortification, and renouncing of our selves to be our chief Study; and that our whole application shou'd be to make a Daily Progress, in all solid Vertues and true Perfection. He fears, and perhaps not without reason, that if he prescrib'd ordinary and general Penances, we might give our selves only to Fasting, Hair-cloths and Disciplines, to which we saw our selves oblig'd; and shou'd think we had done all, in satisfying this Obligation; whereby we might come to leave off the Mortification of our Passions, which is of greatest importance, as is the practise also of those Vertues, that are most Essential to our Institute. Wherefore he desires we shou'd have no other Prop or Foundation, than this Interior Mortification; he wou'd have our manner of Life to be Common according to the Exterior; to the end that we may intirely apply our selves to this Interior Perfection, which will render our Lives Pure, Holy, and Excellent, till the Union and Odour of this Interior Sanctity, comes to discover it self in the Exterior, and make us appear to be true Religious. 'Tis this in reality, that we stand more in need of, than any other Religious do: For as to other Religious, their Habit and manner of Living, makes, and leaves a good impression upon the Minds of Secular Persons; but for us who have not this Exterior distinction of Habit, for the reasons before

Cap. 4. exam.
c. 3. p. 105.
c. 1. §. 17.

before mention'd, it behoves us to supply the want thereof, by the Interior; and therefore to be full of Humility, Modesty, Charity, Zeal for the Salvation of Souls, and of the Union of the Holy Ghost; that all that see and treat with us, may take us, to be truly Religious of the SOCIETY of Jesus and may say of us: † *These are the Seed which our Lord has Bless'd.* We must therefore apply our selves to the Exercise of Interior Mortification, and make account that from the moment we cease to practise it, we leave off also to Live like Religious Men of the SOCIETY: And as to Exterior Mortifications, we must make use of 'em to help us to the gaining of the Interior. This is the Lesson that the Apostolical Man, the Great *XAVIER* has left us. And that which Saint *BONAVENTURE* taught long before him.

† Ipsi sunt
femen cui be-
nedixit Domi-
nus.
I/ta. 61. 9.

Bonav. l. 1. de
præfat. relig.
c. 9. in 3. Pr.
Xaver. vita l.
6. c. 7.

That which we hear so often spoken of, and which, by the assistance of God's Grace, we Daily Experience, how that the SOCIETY has a way of treating with their Neighbor full of sweetness; is the effect of this Interior Mortification. For this sweetness do's not consist in the facility of our Obligations, nor in the compliance of our Superiours with us in all things we cou'd wish; (for then there wou'd be no form of Religion) we having amongst us things very hard to Practise: But it consists in this, that all of us are oblig'd to Practise Mortification, and to renounce our selves; and in this each one ought to be intirely resign'd, to whatsoever Superiors think fit to ordain concerning him: This Pious disposition of Mind, and this Holy indifferency, is the cause of that sweetness which is found in the SOCIETY, either in the Government of Superiors, or in the Submission of Inferiors; for by this means, all Religious are in the Hands of their Superiors, as the Clay is in the Potters; for when Subjects of themselves desire nothing, the Superior very easily effects whatsoever he has a mind to. We may also say, that the care our Holy Founder had, to oblige us chiefly to this Interior Mortification and renouncing of our selves, was the effect, not only of an admirable penetrating Wit, but also of a particular Inspiration of God. He saw that there were very hard and difficult things amongst us: But he foresaw at the same time, that to render 'em easie to all, and to prevent Superiors from being too shy and backward in Commanding, he needed only to establish, and lay

lay a good Foundation of Mortification and Resignation of our selves: And 'tis for this reason that he wou'd have us intirely resign our selves into the Hands of our Superiors, and so to cast off our own Wills, that they might do with us whatsoever they pleas'd; as the Potter do's with his Clay: Or as the Taylor do's with his Stuff. The Taylor cuts his Stuff where and how he pleases, and for what use he pleases, one piece for the Sleeves, another for the Breeches, another for the Coller of the Doubler, and another for the Bordering; yet one part of the Stuff is as good as another; because 'tis all of the same piece. The Earth also, of which Vessels and Pots are made for the Kitchen, is as good as that, of which they make Vessels for the Table, * *Because 'tis all of the same Mass.* Now let us come to the application, many Religious enter'd at the same time into the SOCIETY; and Study'd all together; yet perhaps he who is design'd to Teach Grammar, is as good a Scholar, as he who is taken to Teach Philosophy, or Divinity; but howsoever it happens, he ought not to complain any more than the Clay or the Stuff, or to say, why do you apply me to this use? So that the cause of this sweetness of Conduct in the SOCIETY, depends purely upon our selves, that is to say, of our having our Minds Mortifi'd, Resign'd, and Indifferent to all things, without contradiction or any Exterior, or Interior repugnance, for any thing that our Superiors shall require of us. Wherefore cast not the fault upon them, if sometimes you find not all the facility, and sweetness imaginable, in those things they shall Command you; but cast the fault upon your self, that you are not so well dispos'd, nor so Mortifi'd as you shou'd be. For as to your Superior he do's his Duty, he supposes you to be a true and good Religious Man, and that you are indifferent to all things; that there's no need of consulting you, or asking your consent; because you ought always to approve of whatsoever he wou'd have you do, and to be always ready to perform, whatsoever he shall order. The Superior on the contrary, do's you an Honor, in having so good an Opinion of you, and so to Treat and Command you, as if you were such a one as you ought to be. When a Stone is well cut, there's nothing more easie than to adjust and put it in it's due Situation, 'tis only to let it fall into it's place; but when 'tis not well cut or fitted, what blows of Hammers and Chisels are requir'd,

* Ex eadem
massa.
Rom. 9. 21,

Lib. 15. de pro-
fessu. relig. c. 3.

requir'd, what pains is there not taken to make it lie even and well.

A thing most worthy of consideration follows also from hence, which is taken notice of by Saint *Bonaventure*; 'tis, that tho' Interior Mortification thou'd be far harder than Exterior Penances, yet we may more justly and easily dispence with one, than the other. It may be a true and lawful excuse for any one, that he has not sufficient strength to Fast, to wear Hair-cloths, to take Disciplines, to suffer the incommidity of going bare-foot, or of rising at Mid-night: But no one can say, that he has not strength or health enough to be Humble, Patient, or to have Tractability, Submission, and Resignation so necessary in the SOCIETY; no, you cannot excuse your self by saying, that you have not health or strength enough for this; for here there's no dispute about the disposition of the Body, but only of that of the Mind. The healthful and the sickly, the strong and the weak, are by the Mercy of God alike able and capable of undergoing this Mortification if they will themselves.

This is a great subject of comfort for those who have sometimes the Temptations of dejection and discouragement, imagining that they want those qualities that are necessary for so sublime an End as that of the SOCIETY of JESUS. We Read in the first Book of King's, that *Saul* having giv'n notice to *David*, that he desir'd to give his Daughter to him in Marriage, *David* gave this answer to those that brought him the Message: † *You believe then that 'tis a small matter to be Son-in-law to a King? For my part I am neither Rich nor Powerful enough to receive so great an Honor.* They brought back this answer to *Saul*, who Commanded 'em to return to *David*, and to tell him, that *The King stood not in need of Riches, nor of any Dowry for his Daughter, but only of twenty prepuces of the Philistian's, to be reveng'd of his Enemies.* We may make the same answer to those, whom the diffidence they have in themselves, fills full of fears and frights in the practises of Religion. God wants not so great a Capacity in you, nor so many Talents as you think for; therefore the Royal Prophet sayd well, * *You are my God, because you stand not in need of my Goods.* That which he desires of you is, that you wou'd Circumcise the *Philistian*, that is to say, Overcome your Passions, and Mortifie your

Tom. II.

E

Appetites.

† Num parum videtur vobis, generum esse regis? Ego autem sum pauper & tenuis.

Sic loquimini ad David: Non habet Rex Sponsalia necesse, nisi centum praputia Philistinorum, ut fiat ultio de inimicis regis. 1 Reg. 18. 23. & 25.

* Deus meus es tu, quoniam bonorum meorum non egēs. Psal. 15. 2.

Appetites. The SOCIETY desires nothing of you but this; wherefore you will render your self a fit and profitable Member thereof, if you do it. Be but Humble, Submissive and Resign'd to all they desire of you, and this will suffice. God preserve you from having the least Vanity or Pride, from loving your ease, from searching vain and unprofitable hinderances; but endeavour to walk uprightly, and to act sincerely with your Superiors: For if you do this, no Religion in the World can be too hard or severe for you: For to him who is Humble, who is Mortifi'd, who is truly Poor in Spirit, who is resign'd to all things, and has no Will of his own, whatsoever is hard in the SOCIETY will to him prove sweet and easie.

Wherefore we ought gratefully to acknowledge the extraordinary Grace God has bestow'd upon us, by rendring those things easie and pleasant, which of themselves are so hard and painful: For 'tis very certain, that those things that our Constitutions oblige us to in this point, is a very high Perfection, and the exercise thereof so very hard, that all other Penances and Corporal Austerities are nothing in comparison thereof. For proof of this, is not the giving an account to our Superior or Spiritual Father, of all the faults and imperfections we fall into very hard? Yet this obligation, the SOCIETY imposes upon us, and is one of our most Essential Constitutions: Nay, is it not a thousand times harder than all the Fasts, Hair-cloths, and Disciplines in the World? As to that Rule which requires, that, to be the better able to make progress in Spiritual things, and particularly to exercise our selves in Humility and Abjection, we must be content, that all our faults and negligences shou'd be discover'd to our Superiour by any one that knows 'em out of Confession. Is there not a very great Humility, and a great Submission of Mind requir'd to make no complaint at all: Either because we were not admonish'd of 'em before hand, or because they have made 'em greater than they were? Yet the severity of the Rule stops not here, but also requires that we shou'd be content to be reprehended in publick, either with, or even without any cause giv'n by us; and Saint Ignatius requires of us, that we shou'd always be dispos'd to receive all the false accusations that can be made against us, not only without murmuring, but also with joy, having giv'n no occasion for 'em; and as those of the World are glad
to

to be honor'd and esteem'd, so we shou'd also be no less glad to be expos'd to all sorts of injuries, contempts and affronts. But is there not a very extraordinary Vertue requir'd for all this? Yet 'tis moreover exacted of us to be intirely indifferent to all Offices, Occupations, or Employments whatsoever, in which Obedience shall place us; as also to any Degree of the SOCIETY; and since there are so many Degrees and Employments therein, the one above the other; is it not a mark of no small Vertue, and do's it not require a Mind truly Mortifi'd, to be thus indifferent to the one and the other; and to be as well contented with the least, as with the most considerable? We must moreover be always content and ready, to go to any part of the World whether our Superiors shall send us to exercise these Functions; either in another Province or Kingdom, in the *East* or *West-Indies*, in *Rome*, *Germany*, *England*, *Transilvania*, or in any other place so far distant, that we can never expect to see our Friends or Parents any more; all hopes of this satisfaction being intirely lost and layd aside. As to Poverty, that which the SOCIETY practises is so strict and rigorous, that no one can so much as receive any Present, nor keep any thing in his Chamber, either to Eat or for any other use; no not so much as a Book, upon which also he must make no mark, to shew it belongs to him, nor carry it away with him when he is sent to another Colledge. Lastly, we must renounce altogether, and be quite disunitd from all things; for (as I shall shew in the Treatise of Poverty) 'tis not permitted us to put a Lock upon any Box or Coffer, to keep any thing therein, but all things must be open in our Chambers, whereby we in a manner signifie to our Superiors, that they may take what they please, there being nothing in our Chambers that belongs to us.

'Tis easie to conceive how these things, and many others like unto them, that are practis'd by the SOCIETY, do either advance us to a very great Perfection, or expose us to such difficulties, as are above all Penances and Corporal Austerities. So that he, who out of a Spirit of Mortification, desires to do great Penance in the SOCIETY, will find therein sufficient to satisfie his desires. For tho there shou'd be some less faithful and constant in their Vocation, who wou'd fain palliate their slothful cowardise by a specious pretence of going to a stricter Order to practice greater Penances, thereby to gain a higher Perfection; yet in reality the cause

or subject of this their change and inconstancy, comes from the difficulty they find in that perfect Interior Mortification, we make Profession of in the SOCIETY. We have evident proofs of this, even from their own Confessions; and which is still more, from a Declaration of the Holy See Apostolick. Pius the V (who had been Religious of the Order of Saint Dominick) declares this in expresse terms, in a Bull granted to the SOCIETY against any such Apostates, who shou'd either leave it to return to the World, or to enter into any other Religious Order whatsoever, except amongst the Carthusians. In this Bull after he had spoken of the Perfection of our Institute, and of those difficulties to which we are subject, he comes to that, which was the cause or source of the Temptation which some have had to leave us to enter into other Religious Orders; speaking of 'em after this manner. † Some, says he, let themselves be carry'd away with such a levity of mind, as moves 'em to avoid the pains and labors, to which the SOCIETY is continually expos'd, for the good and increase of Christian Religion; indiscreetly preferring their particular commodity, before the publick good and profit of the SOCIETY, and even of Christianity it self; yet wou'd notwithstanding make us believe by fair but false insinuations, that what they do is for nothing else but to imbrace a more perfect Life, and a more strict observance; and brag that without their Superiors consent they have leave giv'n 'em to enter even into other Mendicant Orders. So that in effect, 'tis not the desire of a greater Perfection, or a greater Austerity of Life, that makes 'em change; but only the fear of pain and difficulty; and lastly, because they feel not in themselves so great a fund or stock of Vertue, as to seek after so high a Perfection, so intire a Mortification, such an indifferency and absolute resignation, as is requir'd in the SOCIETY. See therefore the reason why Saint Ignatius insists so much upon this Interior Mortification, and will have us apply our selves seriously thereunto, making it always our chief study.

† Nihilominus nonnulli animi levitate, ut credebatur, ducti, ac quietem labori, cui procul dubio Religiosi Societatis huiusmodi pro excolenda & propaganda Christiana Religione continuo erant expostiti, ac privatum commodum publicæ tam dicte Societatis, quam Christianæ reipublicæ indiscrète præferentes, fucatisque coloribus, afferentes se id facere ob frugem melioris vitæ, aut strictioris observantiæ, seu non obtentâ superiorum licentiâ, ad alios, etiam Fratrum Mendicantium Ordines transire posse iactabant.

C H A P. VIII.

*That Mortification is not a hatred of our selves,
but rather a true Love of our Soul, and
even of our Body also.*

WE have already sayd, according to the Doctrine of the Holy Fathers, taken out of the Gospel, that we must hate our selves: But tho' this seems hard and repugnant to Nature; yet, that no one may from hence take occasion of discouragement, and thereby leave off Mortification, I shall here explicate how 'tis to be understood. And shall make it appear, that this hatred is so far from doing us any harm, that 'tis rather a true love, that we have not only for our Soul's, but even Bodies also; and that in effect we cannot express a greater hatred both to Soul and Body, than by not Mortifying our selves. Saint *Austin* speaking of this passage of Saint *Paul*, that *The Spirit fights against the Flesh*: † *Far be it from me dear Brethren*, says he, that the Spirit shou'd hate the Flesh, by fighting against it; no, it hates only the Vices of the Flesh, it hates the Prudence of the Flesh, it hates the Treachery and Contradiction of the Flesh, which is capable of procuring the Death of the Soul. For as to the Flesh it loves us in effect by Mortifying and Contradicting it: And as the Physician hat's not his Sick Patient, but his Disease, against which he continually fights; and is so far from hating, that he loves him very much. For according to *Aristotle*, to love any one, is nothing else but to wish him well; and to hate one, is indeed nothing else but to wish him ill: But he who is bent upon Mortifying his Body, who resists his irregular desires and appetites, desires and procures for his Body the greatest good he can; and a greater good cannot be procur'd than it's Eternal happiness; and therefore such a one truly loves his Body.

But

† Abſt. Fratres mei, abſte ut ſpſitus concupiſcendo contra carnem, oderit carnem: vitia carnis odit, prudentiam carnis odit, contentiorem mortis odit.

Aug. l. 1. ſerm. de verb. Apoſt. ſerm. 6. in illud: Spiritus concupiſcit adverſus carnem. Gal. 5. 17. Ariſt. lib. 2. Rhetor. 4.

But he who careſſes and flatters it, and permits it to follow it's bad inclinations, procures the greateſt evils that can befall it, which are everlaſting pains and ſufferings; and therefore ſuch a one, truly and in effect hates his Body. For as Saint *Auſtin* moreover affirms with the Royal Prophet, † *He who loves Iniquity hates his Soul*; becauſe he procures Hell for it: So he who loves Iniquity, hates his own Body, becauſe he procures it the like miſfortune. Wherefore Divines ſay, that juſt and virtuous perſons, love themſelves far better than Sinners do, not only in regard of their Soul's, but in regard of their Bodies alſo; becauſe they will and procure for 'em what is truly good, which is Eternal happineſs; of which the Body after it's manner, partakes with the Soul. Saint *Thomas* adds, that for this very reaſon, the juſt love their Bodies not with an ordinary love, but with the love of Charity, which is the moſt ſublime and moſt excellent of all kinds of love.

This is eaſily perceiv'd by the example of two Sick perſons; the one Eats and Drinks whatſoever he fancies, being unwilling either to be let Blood or Purg'd: The other governs himſelf more prudently, and abſtains from Eating or Drinking, tho' his hunger and thirſt be never ſo great; he takes what Phyſick ſoever is preſcrib'd him, tho' never ſo bitter or diſtaſtful; he is content to be let Blood, or ſuffer any other pain, which the Phyſician thinks will do him good. Is it not certain, that this laſt, lov's his Body far better than the firſt; becauſe to procure it's health, he is content to Mortifie himſelf in his Diet, and to take Phyſick? And will not all people ſay the firſt in a manner kill'd himſelf; becauſe he wou'd not be rul'd, nor overcome himſelf by ſuffering a little Mortification for the preſent? The ſame thing happens in order to us. And this was the answer Saint *Bernard* was wont to give to Secular Perſons, who were aſtoniſh'd at the Aſterities of his Religious, and ſayd, that without doubt they muſt needs hate their Bodies, ſince they treated 'em ſo ill. You are deceiv'd, ſayd he, 'tis you that in effect hate your Bodies, ſince for a few paſſing pleaſures, you expoſe em to Eternal Torments: And theſe my Religious truly love their Bodies, ſince they treat 'em ill, only for a ſhort time here, to gain thereby Eternal Repoſe and Felicity for 'em hereafter.

This

† Qui diligit
iniquitatem,
odit animam
ſuam.
Psal. 10. 6.
Auguſt. lib. de
morib. eccleſ.
ca. 26.
Ib. de Trin.
ca. 14.
S. Thom. 2. 2.
qu. 25. art. 5.
Co. 7. Co. art. 5.
ad 2.

Reſert Sur. in
ſuis viſis.

This truth is taught us by the Son of God in the Gospel; for after he had sayd, * *Whoſoever will come after me, let him deny himſelf, take up his Croſs and follow me*; he preſently adds this reaſon: *For he who wou'd ſave his Life ſhall looſe it, and whoſoever ſhall looſe his Life for my ſake ſhall find it.* Saint *Auſtin* hereupon crys out, *Behold,* ſays he, *a great and wonderful Sentence, that the love of a Man for his Soul ſhou'd be the occaſion of looſing it, and the hatred he ſhou'd ſhow towards it ſhou'd be the cauſe of it's Salvation!* So it is, ſays he, if thou haſt lov'd it diſorderly, in effect thou haſt hated it; and if thou haſt hated it as thou ſhou'd'ſt do, in effect thou haſt lov'd it; becauſe thereby thou haſt Eternally preſerv'd it; according to the words of *JESUS CHRIST*, † *Whoſoever hates his Soul in this World, conſerves it for Life Everlaſting.* * *Thrice happy,* adds this Saint, *are thoſe who have hated it by conſerving it, for fear of looſing it, by loving it too much; wherefore take care of loving it too much in this Life, for fear of looſing it Eternally in the next.*

* Si quis vult venire poſt me, abneget ſemetipſum, tollat crucem ſuam, & ſequatur me. Qui enim voluerit animam ſuam ſalvum facere, perdet eam: qui autem perdidit animam ſuam propter me, inveniet eam. *Matth. 16. 24.*

† Qui odit animam ſuam in hoc mundo, in vitam æternam cuſtodit eam.

Joan. 12. 25.

* Magna & mira ſententia! Quemadmodum ſit hominis in animam ſuam am-

mor, ut pereat, ne pereat? Si malè amaveris, tunc odiſti? Si benè oderis, tunc amiſti. Odeunt cuſtodiendo, ne perdant amando! Noli amare in hac vita, ne perdas in æterna. *Aug. Tract. 51. in Joan.*

Saint *Auſtin* alſo alledges another very ſolid reaſon to confirm all I have ſayd: We ceaſe not, ſays he, from loving one thing, tho' we love another better; for example, he who permits his Arm or Leg to be cut off to ſave his Life, ceaſes not to love his Arm or his Leg, but he ſtill loves his Life more than he do's them; and he parts with a leſſer to conſerve a greater good. 'Tis alſo very certain, that a Covetous Man loves his Mony, and that he extreamly deſires to conſerve and keep it; yet he notwithstanding parts with it to procure himſelf neceſſaries to preſerve his Life; becauſe he loves his Life better than his Mony; and therefore to keep that which is deareſt to him, he parts with the other. For the ſame reaſon, he that Mortifies his Fleſh, ceaſes not to love it, but he loves his Soul better; and he Mortifies and treats his Body ill, for no other reaſon, but to ſave his Soul. Wherefore this is not to be call'd a hatred of our Body, but 'tis to love God, to love our Soul, to love Perfection, and to love Eternal Life better than we love our Body.

Idem. Lib. de doct. Chriſt. cæ. 25.

C H A P. IX.

That he who Mortifies not himself, leads neither the Life of a Christian, nor even of a Man.

Serm. 13. sup.
Joan.

SAINTE *Austin* says, that the Life of Beasts is different from that of Angels, and that of Men differs also from both. The Life of Beasts is wholly Terrene and Earthly, and taken up only in satisfying their Appetites. That of Angels is Heavenly, and only taken up with God. The Life of a Man is partly the one and partly the other, because Man partakes of both Natures. If he lives according to Spirit, he renders himself equal to the Angels, if according to Flesh, he becomes like unto Beasts. This agrees perfectly well with what Saint *Ambrose* says, that † *He who lives according to the Desires and Appetites of his Body, is Flesh; and he who lives according to the Commandments of God, is all Spirit.* So therefore, he that lives according to the desires of the Flesh, do's not only lead no Spiritual Life, nor the Life of a Rational Man, but even the brutish Life of Beasts. This alone ought to suffice to excite us to Mortification; for what can there be more unworthy, and more misbecoming the Nobility and Generosity of Man, Created according to the Image and Likeness of God, and to enjoy him Eternally, than to make himself like unto Beasts? Rendering himself a Slave to Flesh and Sensuality; governing himself only by the dictates of Flesh and Blood; and permitting himself to be carry'd away with the impetuosity of a Beastly Concupiscence. * *'Tis a very great abuse,* says Saint *Bernard*, *for the Mistress to Serve, and the Servant to Domineer.* 'Tis properly that disorder, of which *Salomon* speaks, when he says, † *That he saw Slaves Ride on Horseback, and Princes like Slaves walk on Foot.* Would you not think it a thing, says *Father Avila*, so wonderful as that it would surprize the whole World, if a Beast shou'd lead

† Qui secundum corporis appetitiam vivit, caro est; qui secundum præcepta Dei, spiritus est. *Ambros. in Ps. 118. cõo. 4.*
sub illud: Adhæsit pavimen-
to anima, &c.

* Dominam ancillari, & ancillam dominari, magna abusio est. *Bern. ca. 5. Medit.*

† Vidi servos in equis, & principes ambulantes super terram. *Ecclesi. 10. 7.*
Cap. 11. De oculis filia.

lead a Man bound after him, and shou'd oblige him to follow wheresoever it shou'd lead him. Yet notwithstanding, there are a great many People of all sorts, who let themselves be led by Beastly Appetites; and the great number of 'em makes 'em the less taken notice of, and is the cause why so strange a thing as this is not wonder'd at, which is as much to be admir'd, as the thing it self. 'Tis recounted of *Diogenes*, that walking with a Lantern and a lighted Candle in it at mid-day, in the Market-place of *Athens*, as if he look'd for something he had lost, one ask'd him what he sought for; *I seek a Man*, says he, *Do you not see a great many*, reply'd the other, *which the Market-place is full of? You are deceiv'd*, says he, *they are not Men but irrational Creatures; because they live not as Men but as Beasts, permitting themselves to be led by their Beastly Appetites.*

Diog. Laert. de ejus vita.

Saint *Austin* gives another comparison, taken from certain tricks, which Rope-dancers, or Tumblers are wont to Play, very proper for this subject, and explicates it very well. † *He who permits his Flesh to Domineer over him*, says he, *is in God and the Angels fight, like one who walks upon his Hands, or stands upon his Head.* Is there any thing more contemptible, or of less esteem amongst us, than these sorts of persons are? And yet we permit our selves to fall every Day into the like contempt, submitting our reason to the Flesh, and are not at all asham'd of it. *Seneca* had far more honorable and reasonable thoughts, when he sayd; * *I am Born for a more noble end, than to become a Slave to my Body.* These words deserve to be Grav'd in the Hearts, not only of all Christians, but of all Religious Persons too. Now if a Pagan illuminated only by the light of Nature, thought this a shameful and ignoble thing; what ought a Christian, aided with the light of Faith, or a Religious Man, prevented and favor'd with so many extraordinary Blessings and Graces, to think it? Wherefore Saint *Austin* had reason to say, whosoever is not sensible of this shame and ignominy, has intirely lost the use of reason; and is become a Monster, that deserves more to be wonder'd at, than a Man who shou'd be chang'd into a Beast, without his perceiving it, or being at all troubl'd at it.

† Qualis est in oculis hominum qui in-
versis pedibus
ambulare videtur,
talis est in oculis An-
gelorum cui
caro propria
dominatur.
Serm. 50. ad
Fratres in ere-
mo.

* Major sum,
& ad majora
genitus, quam
ut mancipium
sim mei cor-
poris.
Sen. ep. 65.

*Lih. contra men-
dacionem ad cou-
sent.*

Galen recounts, that when he was very Young he one Day saw a Man run, with a Key in his Hand, to open a Door;
Tom. I I. F but

*Galen. de cog-
noscentiis curam
disque animi
morbis.*

but when he could not open it, having, out of too much hast, set the Key fast in the Lock, he fell into such a fury, that he began to take the Key between his Teeth, and to break open the Door with his Feet: Afterwards he began to Blaspheme, even foaming at Mouth like a Mad-man, his Eyes sparkling and inflam'd with rage, which seem'd as if they wou'd start out of his Head. This sight, says *Galen*, gave me such a horror of Anger and Choler, and so great an apprehension of falling into the like disorder, that since, I do not remember to have been Angry upon any account. All this ought to teach us how to live like reasonable Creatures, without permitting our selves to fall into Passion. Saint *Hierom* writing upon these words of *Job*. *There was a Man in the Land of Hus call'd Job. He was truly a Man*, says he, presently giving the reason why he was so, *because in him the Flesh did not Command the Spirit, but he regulated all his Actions by the Empire of Reason*; according as the Scripture ordains: † *Your Appetite shall be subject to you, and you shall Command it.*

Hiero. in illud:
Vir erat in terra Hus nomine
Job.
Job 1. 1.
Non enim
terra carnis
ejus animam
superabat, sed
imperantis animi
consilio
cuncta faciebat.
† Sub te erit
appetitus tuus,
& tu dominaberis illius.
Gen. 4. 7.

C H A P. X.

That there's less pain and trouble in Mortifying, than in not Mortifying our selves.

ONE may perhaps object, I easily perceive of what profit, and how necessary Mortification is, but I cannot at the same time but think, of the pain and difficulty is found therein; and this is that which deters me from it. To this

S. Basil. in regul. fustius disput. reg. 52.

I answer, first with Saint *Basil*, that if for the health of our Body we willingly take bitter Medicin's, if we suffer most cruel Operations in Surgery; if to gather together a little Riches, Men expose themselves to so many dangers, both by Sea and Land, and overcome all obstacles in their way; what ought we not to do for the Spiritual health of our

our Soul, and to gain everlasting Riches? Is it not just, that we shou'd undertake all things possible, and that we shou'd be afraid even of apprehending any difficulty? Notwithstanding; because we are naturally willing and inclin'd to avoid all pain and labor, and that, in the indispensable necessity we are all in of suffering, we wou'd suffer as little as possible; I answer in the second place, that there's more pain in avoiding, than in imbracing Mortification. * 'Tis by your order O Lord, says Saint Austin, that all irregularity of Mind shou'd carry it's punishment along with it. This Interior irregularity of the Appetite in regard of reason, and of reason in regard of God, causes very great pains and disquiets in Man; and 'tis the same in all other things of the World: For what is there in Nature, which is not in disquiet and disorder, and do's not suffer very much, whilst 'tis not in that state or situation, in which, the Rule and Law of Nature has ordain'd and plac'd it? What pains do's not a Bone out of joynt occasion? What violence do's not Natural Bodies suffer, when they are out of their Element? But because 'tis so very fit and natural to Man, to live according to reason, ought not Nature to cry out against him? And ought not his own Conscience continually to check him, when he lives after so contrary a manner to it? † Who is able to resist him, says Job, speaking of God, and enjoy any Peace? We can never hope to be in Peace with our selves, living in this manner, and therefore Saint John says in the Apocalyps, * That those who Ador'd the Beast, enjoy'd no Peace Day or Night. Your Flesh, your Sensuality is this Beast, if you will be subject to it, you will never enjoy any Peace.

Physicians say, that health and a good disposition of Body, consist in a due temper, and a just proportion of humors; when this temper comes to be alter'd, the irregularity of humors cause great pains and diseases; but when the humors are well temper'd, they produce a marvellous health, and cause a lightfomness and vigour in our Bodies. The same happens in the health and good disposition of the Soul. It consists in the regularity and moderation of our Passions, which are as so many humors belonging to it. When they are not temper'd and mortifi'd, they occasion Spiritual diseases; but when they are well regulated, the Soul enjoys a perfect health; of which, Joy and Peace are inseparable Companions. The Passions in the Heart of Man

* iussisti, Domine, & sic est, ut poena sua sibi sit omnis animus inordinatus.
Aug. lib. 1.
Conf. ca. 12.
& lib. 13. ca. 9.

† Quis resistit ei, & pacem habuit?
Job 9. 4.

* Nec requiem habuit die ac nocte qui adoraverunt bestiam & imaginem ejus.
Apoc. 14. 11.

† Impii autem
quasi mare fer-
vens, quod
quiescere non
potest.

Isai. 57. 20.
* Imperavit
ventis & mari,
& facta est
tranquillitas
magna.
Matth. 8. 26.

are also compar'd to high Winds at Sea, for as the Winds agitate and disturb the Sea, and trouble it's calm, by their impetuous and violent blasts; so our Passions by their motions end irregular appetites, raise Tempests in our Hearts, and trouble our Peace. Sometimes Anger or Choler raises a Storm; sometimes a blast of Pride and Vain-glory domineers and transports us farther than they shou'd do; sometimes Impatience, sometimes Envy do's the like; and therefore the Prophet *Isay* sayd very well, † *The wicked are like a rough and raging Sea, which cannot be calm'd or quieted.* But as soon as these Winds are appeas'd, presently a calm follows, * *He Commanded the Winds and the Sea,* says the Gospel, *and a very great calm follow'd.* If you know therefore how to Command the Winds of your Passions and Appetites by Mortifying 'em, and subjecting 'em to reason, you will enjoy a wonderful peace and tranquillity. But so long as you do not apply your self in this manner to appease 'em, you will be subject to continual Tempests. But still to let you see more clearly, that he who hates and flies Mortification, suffers more pain than he who imbraces it, and carries a far heavier Cross; let us descend to particulars, and reflect upon our Daily experiences. See in what disposition of Mind you are in, when it happens that you permit your self to be so far transported with choler and impatience, as to give ill language to your Brother, or to do something that gives scandal. In what pain, what trouble, what discontent, what uneasiness do you find in your self? 'Tis very certain, that the pain you feel hereby is far greater, than that you wou'd have felt in Mortifying and Moderating your Passions. Consider moreover, how great the fears and apprehensions are of a Religious Person, that has not the Spirit of Mortification, Indifferency and Resignation to whatsoever by Obedience, shall think fit to impose upon him; one only thing, to which he has a repugnance, is sufficient to keep him continually upon the Rack; because he has a continual Idea thereof before his Eyes; and tho' Superiors perhaps think nothing at all, of imposing such an Obedience, yet knowing it to be what they may command, shou'd it come into their Minds, and that 'tis what they sometimes have commanded, and not knowing but that they may do so to him, he is in continual alarums and frights about it. And as a Man who has the Gout in his Hands and Feet, imagines that all that

that are about him may come so near as to hurt him; so a Religious Man who has not the Spirit of Mortification, is always in fears and apprehensions, that Superiors are about to order that, which gives him the greatest pain and difficulty. When on the other side, he who is indifferent to all Employments, and resign'd to all things, is always chearful, is always content, and has nothing to be afraid of. Take notice also, how much a Proud and Vain-glorious Man suffers, when he sees himself forgotten, when he is made no account of; and because he is put in no great or honorable Employment. And if some Employment be giv'n him to content his Vanity, or if he be order'd to do any thing extraordinary in publick, what disquiet do's he not undergo, for fear he shou'd not come off well: And that he shou'd get more shame than honor and glory, which he propos'd to himself in the performance thereof? So that his Pride torments him all kind of ways; the same he also suffers in all other things. Your Passions are so many Executioners, that continually torment you, so long as you do not labor to Mortifie your self; whether that which they move you to desire and covet happens or not, yet that pain always remains, so long as you obtain not what you desire; † *The hopes which are deferr'd, afflict the Mind*; and even when that is obtain'd or effected which was desir'd, this also gives a Religious Man pain and trouble, as often as he thinks upon it: What! Have I then perform'd what I aim'd at, and got thereby no Merit at all? Because I only sought my own Will and Satisfaction therein. And thus all the sweetness of the action is presently turn'd into gall and bitterness.

† Spes que
differtur, af-
fligit animam.
Prov. 13. 12.

Add to this the remorse of Conscience, which always accompanies a Person that do's not apply himself to Mortification, and who do's not his Duty: For what satisfaction can a Religious Man find, who having enter'd into Religion to advance in Vertue and Perfection, labors not at all to make any progress therein? 'Tis impossible but he must interiorly suffer a great deal of trouble and disquiet of Mind. We may say the same of any one who do's not his Duty in what calling or condition soever he is in: For we always carry about us the Worm of Conscience, which gnaws our Bowels with continual remorse, whilst we do not perform our Duty. Father *Avila* says very well, that shou'd we put in one Scale of the Ballance, all the pains requir'd to perform our Duties well, and to live with the Spirit of Fervor and Mortification;

Epiß. 1.

and

and in the other Scale, all those we suffer by the neglect of our Duty, and by our negligence and tepidity therein; we shou'd find the last a thousand times to out-weigh the first. 'Tis a thing very much to be wonder'd at, that he who serves God with fervor, shou'd find more pleasure and satisfaction in Fasting, Watching and Praying, and in all other Mortifications he meets withal, than a loose and tepid Religious Man meets with in all his Conversations, Entertainments, and seeming sweetneses of an easie Life, and in the full enjoymment of his own Will. A tepid Religious Man is outwardly chearful, whilst he is bitterly afflicted within; but a just Man always feels a Holy joy in his Heart, even in the midst of all his sufferings. * *The way of the slothful, says the Wise-man, is like a Hedge of Thorn's.* That is to say, in all they do, they are always as if they were walking upon Thorn's; and 'tis to such as these, to whom God speaks by the Prophet *Osee*, when he says; † *Behold I have compass'd your way with Thorn's.* He will's, that even the past-times and pleasures, that they take in following their own Will, shou'd be always mingled with remorses, bitterness and discontent; and here it is, that the tepid and negligent find those Thorn's which prick 'em, and even pierce their Hearts. * *But there's no stumbling block in the way of the Just; his path is very smooth.* What peace, what satisfaction is that, which a good Religious, that is truly Mortifi'd, enjoys, who has care of his Spiritual advancement, and performs what a true Religious Person ought to do? There's no contentment like unto his. We Daily experience, that when we serve God with fervor, we have such a joy and interior satisfaction, as cannot be express'd; and when we serve him tepidly and negligently we fall into dejection and disquiet. And in effect, 'tis very often the cause of that sadness and bitterness we sometimes feel, as I shall afterwards shew in it's due place. So that sometimes to save a little pains, we cause our selves far greater, according to the words of *Job*: † *He that fears Frost, shall be over-whelm'd with Snow.* You say because you are afraid of trouble, you do not Mortifie your self; and I say, that were it for this reason alone, you wou'd always enjoy true peace of Soul; and if you gain'd no other advantage but this by it, you ought to labor to Mortifie your self: And therefore, with how far greater reason ought you to do it, since you will thereby gain many other advantages.

* Iter pigro-
rum quasi se-
pes spinarum.
Prov. 15. 19.

† Ego septim
viam tuam
spinis.
Osee 2. 6.

* Via iusto-
rum absque
offendiculo.
Prov. 15. 19.

† Qui timet
primum, ir-
ruet super eum
nix.
Job. 6. 16.

C H A P. XI.

In which I begin to treat of the Exercise of Mortification.

TH E chief disposition we must bring along with us, for the gaining this Mortification, and to overcome our selves, is courageously to exercise our selves, in the casting away our own Wills and Appetites, that move us to the contrary; and endeavour never to satisfy our Flesh, nor admit or suffer any thing it desires. After this manner we shall overcome Nature by little and little; we shall root out our vicious and ill habits; we shall become Masters of our Passions; and Vertue will begin to enter, to take possession, and to fortify it self in our Souls. Saint *Dorotheus* gives a very profitable Instruction upon this subject. When you are tormented by any Passion, or bad Inclination, says he, if you be so weak as to condescend to it, and to go, whithersoever 'twould lead you, believe it for a certain truth, that hereby 'twill take deeper root, and become stronger and stronger; and from that time forward 'twill wage a more violent War against you, and give you greater pain and difficulty: But if at the first onset, you courageously resist it, 'twill Daily grow less, and 'twill every day have less strength to set upon you, till at length 'twill come to have no force at all, nor will be able any more to disquiet you.

*Serm. seu. doct.
15. in Biblioth.
55. Patr. ca. 3.*

This Counsel is very profitable and powerful against Temptations; for the same reason, as I shall afterwards prove elsewhere; and without doubt it imports us very much to resist betimes, for fear the ill habit thou'd grow stronger in us, and make us fall into greater inconveniencies. The Saints Counsel us to behave our selves towards our Body, as a good Cavalier do's, who being mounted upon a mettlesome Horse that is hard-Mouth'd, do's not fail notwithstanding to Master him by his skill and force; and makes him go whether he will, and what pace, or at what rate soever he pleases. We must do the same, we must, as he do's, always keep a good

good Hand upon the Bridle, and now and then, clap our Spurs to his sides, and by this means we shall tame our Body, do with it what we please, carry it whether we have a mind to, and with what pace or speed we please: But if we have not skill and force to keep him in, and to manage him well, he will become our Master, will run away with us, and cast us headlong into some Precipice. When a Horse is resty or skittish, the means they ordinarily use to break or correct him, is not to permit him to play his tricks upon any occasion. We must do the same towards our Flesh, to overcome it's stubbornness and bad inclinations. We must not suffer it to do any thing it has a mind to, but contradict it in all things; we must in the height and heat of it's desires and appetites, keep a strong hand upon it, and not permit it to do the least thing it has a mind to.

'Twill be very profitable for us to excite our selves to this exercise, and always to act upon this Motive. The outward Man, that is to say, our Flesh and Sensuality, is the greatest Enemy we have, and in this quality he continually endeavours to destroy us, by Rebelling against the interior Spirit, against Reason, and even against God himself. One of the chief Reasons, why the Saints say, that the knowledge of our selves is one of the most efficacious means to overcome all Temptations, is; because he who applies himself to this knowledge, sees very well his own weakness and misery, and therefore he no sooner discovers any bad thought or desire in himself, (which he perceives to be a Temptation of his Enemy, who would deceive him, and cast him headlong into a Precipice) but instead of hearkening to it, or believing what he suggests, he carefully stands upon his guard; whereas he who knows not himself, or studies not this knowledge, perceives not the Temptation when it comes, and do's not believe it to be one; especially if it suits with his inclination: On the other side he imagines, that what in reality is a Temptation, is a reasonable thought; and that which in effect is Sensuality, appears to him a pure necessity, and thus he easily yields. Wherefore convince your self well, that you have to do with your greatest Enemy, that all those bad Desires and Temptations you feel, are the Treasons of your Flesh and Blood, and of your Sensuality; that you have in 'em a mortal Enemy who seeks nothing more than your destruction; and by this means 'twill be far more easie for you to overcome and mortifie your self; for who is so foolish as to trust or confide in his Enemy?

Saint

Saint *Bernard* who makes an excellent reflection upon this matter, says, that we must treat our selves, that is, our Bodies, as we wou'd treat a Sick Person, committed to our charge; to whom we ought to refuse whatsoever wou'd do him hurt, tho' he shou'd never so earnestly desire it; and oblige him to take, even against his Will, whatsoever wou'd do him good. If we were fully convinc'd that we are Sick Persons, and that our desires and irregular appetites, are only such longings after what is hurtful to us, as Sick Persons commonly have, and that they are the Temptations of our Enemy, who wou'd destroy us; how easie wou'd it be for us to drive 'em away, and thereby to overcome him? But if instead of believing your self Sick, you believe you are in perfect Health; and instead of looking upon your self as the greatest Enemy you have, you think your self your truest and best Friend, you are in great danger: For how can you decline an evil you do not know or perceive, or how can you resist one, whom you look upon as a Friend? And how can you suspect or doubt of what you believe for a truth, and far from the least deceit?

*Epist. seu tract.
ad Fratres de
monie Dei.*

Saint *Dorotheus* recounts, that he exercising the charge of Spiritual Father, or Master of Spirit in the Monastery where he liv'd, all the Religious came to give him an account of their Temptations, and amongst the rest, one came to discover the Temptation of Gluttony, which very much tormented him. As one disorder commonly causes another, this Temptation was so great, as to make him play the Thief, to get something to Eat. The Saint having sweetly ask'd the cause of his Theft, he answer'd, that 'twas because they gave him not enough at Table, to satisfy his Hunger, which even devour'd him. Saint *Dorotheus* Conncell'd him to go and find out the Abbot, and acquaint him with his necessity: But perceiving that he had a great difficulty to do so, and that he was ashamed to speak to his Superior thereof; he go's to the Abbot himself, makes known the necessity of this bathful Religious Man, and the Abbot leaving the whole matter to be order'd by the Saint, as he shou'd judge best; the Saint call'd for the Dispenser who gives out Meat and Drink, and Commanded him to give this Religious, whatsoever he shou'd desire, and as often as he shou'd ask for it. The Dispenser obey'd, and the Religious having in abundance whatsoever he cou'd desire, pass'd for some Days without stealing any thing; but returning by little and

little to his former bad habit, he go's to the Saint all bath'd in Tears, discovers his fault to him, and begs a Penance for it: For he had still this quality, which was very good in him, that he made known his defects, as soon as he had committed 'em; which is a very proper means soon to overcome 'em. Saint *Dorotheus* ask'd him, whether the Dispenscer had giv'n him what he ask'd for, and whether he had ever refus'd him any thing; the Religious answer'd, no, but that he was aham'd to go so often to him, as his Hunger forc'd him: And wou'd you be aham'd or afraid, says the Saint, to come to me, now you know I am not ignorant of your Temptation? He answer'd, that he shou'd not be aham'd at all; whereupon the Saint order'd him to come to him, when he wanted any thing, and he wou'd supply him, and therefore advis'd him to play the Thief no more. Saint *Dorotheus* at that time had care of the Sick, and therefore treated him very well; which hinder'd him also for a little while from stealing any thing: But after some time he return'd to his bad habit; and then full of Tears and Confusion he discover'd his fault, begg'd Pardon, and desir'd a Penance for it. But how Dear Brother comes this to pass, says the Saint, since you say you are not aham'd nor afraid of coming to me, and you receive from me what you desire, that you still persist in your ill custom of stealing? I neither can conceive this, reply'd he, nor the reason why 'I steal; 'tis without doubt the bad habit I have got that moves me to it: For I neither want any thing, nor do I Eat what I steal, but even give it to the Horses: And in effect they went to his Chamber, and there under his Bed they found several things to Eat, which he had hid, and left there till they were spoil'd, and then not knowing what to do with 'em, he carry'd 'em to the Stables, and gave 'em the Horses. We may perceive by this, says Saint *Dorotheus*, the deplorable condition to which a bad habit or passion leads us, and therefore how great reason we have to look upon our selves as Sick Persons, and as our own grearest Enemies. This Religious easily perceiv'd he did ill, was afflicted for it, and wept to see himself faulty, and yet cou'd not refrain from falling into the same fault. Wherefore the Abbot *Nisiqueron* sayd very well, that we become Slaves to our passions and bad habits, when we once permit our selves to be led by 'em.

C H A P. XII.

How the Exercise of Mortification ought to be put in Practice.

SINCE the Exercise of Mortification, is the chiefest means we can make use of to overcome our selves, and to become Masters over our Passions and irregular Appetites, 'tis fit I shou'd proceed to discover to you more in particular, what you ought to do, to put this Exercise in Practice. The general Rule that is giv'n in these sorts of things, is to regard what is most necessary, and first of all to endeavour to obtain that. Wherefore, begin this exercise, by profiting by those occasions of Mortification, that Daily offer themselves, proceeding either from your Superiors, from your Brethren, or from any one else. Receive all with a good Will, and make your profit of 'em; because 'tis what is most necessary for your own Peace, as well as for the Edification of your Neighbor. The advantage we must draw from Mortifications ought to make us love 'em so far, as continually to importune our Superiors, to Mortifie us in something; to Command us those things, to which we have the greatest repugnance; to impose Penances upon us; and to give us particular reprehensions in publick. But if your fervor carries you not thus far, take at least in good part, and bear patiently the occasions of Mortification that present themselves; and which God sends for your good, and greater advancement in Perfection. He frequently makes an offer of 'em every Day; and if we attended to them, with design to profit by 'em, we shou'd Daily find sufficient occasions of Mortification. For first, as to those that may happen to us in the point of Obedience; you'll oftentimes think, that they Command you the hardest things, and that the whole burthen is put upon you, whilst others ought to bear their part: And do's it not frequently happen that something or other in every thing you do, gives you some Pain and Mortification? Reap profit by all this,

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prepare

prepare your self for it, and believe that the difficulty you find in it, is the Cross you are to carry after the Son of God. At another time, some other subject of Mortification will arise from your Meat, Drink, Lodging or Clothing; rejoyce, as the Rule Counsels you to do, that the worst things of the House are giv'n to you. Another time 'twill happen, that a Superior will give you a Penance, or reprehend you for what you think has not deserv'd it, or at least that your fault was not so great as he makes it, and that the matter was otherwise represented to him, than it happen'd. Well, be it so as I have sayd, be glad of what has pass'd, do not excuse your self, nor make any complaint at all, nor say any thing in your own defence, to make your innocency appear; wherefore, if we will profit by all these occasions of Mortification, that happen to us from our Neighbor or Brethren, we shall meet with a sufficient number of all sorts; some of those who were the occasion of 'em, had no intention to do us any hurt, or committed no fault in what they did; others were indeed to blame out of negligence, but without any ill intention; others infine, have done it either out of some contempt, or for want of a due esteem or concern for us; our Merit will be so much the greater, if with Patience we suffer it. But if we consider those which God immediately sends us, as sickness, temptations, disquiet of mind, the unequal distribution of his gifts, as well natural as supernatural; we shall find 'em to be numberless, and that an infinity of these Daily present themselves. Behold here the occasions, in which in the first place, we ought to exercise Mortification; and since these occasions happen continually, and depend not at all upon us, we must endeavour to make a Vertue of necessity, to the end that since we are oblig'd to suffer 'em, we may draw some fruit from 'em. But besides the Spiritual profit we shall hereby gain, we shall also spare our selves a great deal of labor and pains, if we receive 'em well; because oftentimes it happens, that the difficulty we find in things, comes not so much from the things themselves, as from the contradiction and repugnance of our own Will's; and so 'tis a great and secret means to render 'em easie and supportable, to imbrace 'em with a good and chearful Heart.

There are other Mortifications which we must also voluntarily Practise, some of which are call'd Active, to distinguish 'em from those they call Passive; it not being in our choice, whether

whether or no we will suffer 'em; notwithstanding 'tis in our power to suffer 'em well; and therefore tho' they must willingly be receiv'd, yet nevertheless they are morally necessary, and therefore as such ought to be put in the first place. Of these some are necessary to render us true Christians, and to compass and obtain our Salvation; as is the Mortifying our selves in whatsoever hinders the observance of God's Commandments: Others are necessary to become good Religious Men, and to acquire Perfection; as the observing of our Rules of Religion, and the well performing whatever is requir'd of us by Obedience. For 'tis certain, not only all Sins, but also all negligencies and imperfections, into which we fall in the way of Vertue, proceed only from a want of Mortification; and because we wou'd either avoid some pain that we find in the exercise of Vertue and Perfection, or will not abstain from some pleasure we experience in bad and vicious courses. But let us descend to a more particular Examin of matter of fact; as for example, when we offend against Obedience, against the observance of Rules, against Temperance, against Silence, against Modesty, against Patience, or infine, against any other Vertue whatsoever; we find 'tis always out of want of Mortification; 'tis because, that either we will not undergo the pain annex'd to these Vertues, or will not deprive our selves of the pleasure we take in committing the Vices contrary to them. In like manner also, to become good Christians, and to save our Soul's, we must Mortifie our selves in all things, that are opposite to the Law of God, according to the words of JESUS CHRIST, *† He that desires to follow me, let him deny himself*; and if he do's not deny and mortifie himself in this point, he can never be a good Christian, or save his Soul. So in like manner, to become a good Religious Man, and to attain to Perfection, we must Mortifie our selves in all things that are contrary to the State of Perfection. Wherefore cast your Eyes upon all things you do from Morning till Night, take notice of that which hinders you from performing your ordinary actions with due Perfection; and endeavour to overcome that impediment, and strive to Mortifie your self in that, which is the cause why you do not what you ought to do; and by this means, your actions Daily becoming better and more perfect, and you your self will become better and more perfect also: For the whole affair of your Spiritual advancement depends upon resolving to do what I have sayd.

† Si quis vult
venire post
me, abneget
semetipsum.
Matth. 16. 24.

A Religious proposing this Question, how it cou'd come to pass, that having very good desires yet he found himself notwithstanding very weak in occasions of executing 'em; and fell into many faults, without being able to arrive to Perfection. They to whom he propos'd it, attributed this weakness to a want of attending to himself; and each one prescrib'd what means he judg'd most profitable for him: But they proposing severall, which he found did him no good at all, he at length address'd himself to an Ancient Father, well vers'd in Spirituality, who told him, that this happen'd not from a want of attending to himself, but rather from a want of courage and resolution. 'Tis this therefore, which is in effect the cause that we make so little progress in Vertue, and that we cannot compass an intire correction of our faults and defects. Wherefore take courage, and make a firm resolution of Mortifying your self in what I have spoken of, and by this means you will soon become Perfect.

C H A P. XIII.

*Of Mortification in lawful and indifferent things,
as also in those that are of Obligation.*

IT seems as if nothing cou'd be added to what has been already sayd, and that the two kinds of Mortification before mention'd, are sufficient to make us become good and perfect Religious Men, and that nothing remains but to exercise our selves therein: But that we may the better effect it, and dispose our selves thereunto, the Masters of Spirit establish still another exercise of Mortification in such things as are lawful for us, either to do or to omit. A good Christian is not contented to perform only the things that are purely of Obligation, and necessary for Salvation, but they also perform others of Devotion, which Divines call Work's of Supererogation: For they are not contented to hear Mass only upon Days of Precept, but upon other Days also. They give themselves to particular practises of Devotion, and frequently

frequently approach the Sacraments of Confession and Communion. A good Religious Man ought not to content himself with the bare observance only of his Rule, and in the practise of such Mortifications as that prescribes; but must impose others upon himself; by depriving himself of such things as are permitted. Saint *Dorotheus* says, that there's nothing that so much helps to our progress in Vertue, and to the acquiring of peace and tranquillity of Mind, as to oppose and resist our own Will; and teaches us at the same time, the means to Mortifie it, in such things as are permitted us to make use of. You are going some whether, says he, and you have a great mind to turn your Head, to look upon something in the way; overcome your curiosity, and do not behold it. You are in Conversation, something occurs to your Mind that is much to the purpose, and it seems to you, that the saying it would make you pass for a Wit; let it alone, say nothing of it. † *A thought occurs of going to the Kitchen, to see what's making ready; do not hearken to it. By chance you cast your Eyes upon something brought into the House that's new, and you have a great mind to know who brought it; ask not who did so.* You see a Stranger enter, curiosity moves you to know who it is, whence he comes, whether he go's, and for what business; Mortifie your self, by making no inquiry after him.

Serm. 2. de Obed. & met. propria volunt.

† Suadet tibi cogitatio tua: adi coquum, & interroga quid parat obsonii; non obtemperes. Cernis fortasse quidpiam, & suadet tibi cogitatio, ut interrogas quisnam illud attulerit, non interroges.
Dorothe. ubi sup.

Saint *Dorotheus* says, this exercise helps very much to get a habit of Mortifying our Will; because if we accustom our selves to renounce our own Will's in these small things, we shall the sooner be able to deprive our selves of greater. As those who design to make themselves Souldiers, and fit to go to the War, exercise themselves in time of Peace, in the use of all sorts of Weapons, which exercise tho' it be but a kind of sport or may-game; yet it helps to form and render 'em fit for all sorts of Combat's. So a Religious Man in like manner, must endeavour to Mortifie himself, and Renounce his Will in small things, that are permitted and lawful for him to do; to the end that he may be the more ready, and better dispos'd to Mortifie himself in those which are forbidden. Saint *Bonaventure* teaches the same practise of Mortification in things which are indifferent, as in gathering or not gathering a Flower, when one Walk's in a Garden. For, says he, tho' there's no hurt in gathering it, yet 'tis very pleasing to God to refrain from it;

Reges. lib. 1. ca. 11. 19. & lib. 2. ca. 10. 11.

Blos. ca. 2. mon. spi.

it; thereby to mortifie and overcome our selves. Wherefore he adds, that a Servant of God ought often to say within himself; for the Love of you my God, I will deprive my self of the sight of this, of hearing that, of tasting this or that, or of taking this or the other Recreation. 'Tis reported of Saint *Borgia*, that being in the World he lov'd Hawking very much, and was wont to fly his Hawk's at the Heron; but at the same time that the Faulcon trust her Prey, he cast down his Eyes, and took, as I may say, the lure from 'em, depriving 'em of that pleasure, which with a great deal of pains they had all the Day long sought after. Saint *Gregory* says, that 'tis proper to the Servants of God, to deprive themselves of those things, they may lawfully make use of that they may be the farther from making use of such as are unlawful. The Ancient Fathers also of the Desert brought up their Disciples in this exercise, hindering 'em from doing little things they had a mind to, in which there was no Sin or Imperfection; and making 'em do such as they had no mind to do, hereby to teach 'em to Mortifie themselves in all things; and to render 'em able to stand the proof even in the very hardest. 'Tis from these Fathers, that the SOCIETY has taken that custom or practise, which in the beginning, it observes towards the Novices; imploying 'em in several things, and sometimes making 'em leave off what they have begun; other times making 'em undo what they have done, or obliging 'em to do it over again; and all this to hinder 'em from any inclination or tie to their own Will's and Judgments, and to habituate 'em betimes to cast 'em off.

The Saints advance yet still farther in this exercise, and are not contented that we shou'd only accustom our selves to leave our own Will's in indifferent and innocent things, but Councel us to Mortifie our selves in such as are absolutely necessary. But some may say, how can this be done? Must we, to Mortifie our selves, dispense with our Obligations? No, by no means; † *We must not do ill, that good may come of it.* But what then are we to do? The Saints have found a wonderful secret in this point; and they have taken it from the Doctrine of Saint *Paul*. Have a care, say they, to do nothing, to think nothing, to speak nothing purely to please your own Will, or to satisfy your Sensual Appetite. Before you Eat, Mortifie in your self that desire and inclination you have to do so: And
Eat

Lib. 1. ca. 5.
apud Vita.

Lib. 4. Dialog.
ca. 11.

3. Climac. grad.
4. circa finem.

† Non sunt
facienda mala,
ut veniant
bona.
Rom. 7. 5.

Eat not to satisfy your Appetite, but to the end you may obey God, who will have you Eat to nourish your self; and imitate the Abbot *Isidorus*, of whom *Palladius* recounts, that he was wont to Weep as he went to the Refectory, and went not thither but out of Obedience. Wherefore before you go to Study, Mortify your desire thereof; and then Study, because God Commands you to do so; and not because you find any pleasure in your Studies. Before you go into the Pulpit to Preach, or explicate any publick Lesson, Mortify your own inclination of doing it, and then Preach or Teach; not because you have a mind to it, but because 'tis what you are Commanded to do; and because 'tis God's Will. Observe the same practise in all other things; and thus depriving every action of the tie or inclination you have thereunto, perform 'em all purely for God's sake: For 'tis not fit that they shou'd lead or draw us after 'em; but we must be Masters of 'em, to carry and offer 'em to God alone, and to do nothing but for his sake, according to the words of the Apostle Saint Paul; † *Whether you Eat or Drink, or whatsoever you do, do all to the Glory of God.*

Pallad. in Hist. Lausac. lib. 1.

† Sive ergo manducatis, sive bibitis, sive aliud quid facitis, omnia in gloriam Dei facite.
1 Cor. 10. 31.

This point is without doubt very considerable, and contains in it a very sublime Spirituality; which is to do nothing, even what belongs to our charge or employment, out of the pleasure we take in it, but only for God's sake; to accustom our selves in all our actions, not to do our own, but his Will; and to take delight in 'em, not because they are pleasant in themselves, and because our inclination moves us to perform 'em; but because in doing 'em, we do the Will of God. He who shall perform 'em in this manner, will at the same time accustom himself, not only to Mortify his own Will, but also to do the Will of God in all things. Which is an exercise of the Love of God, the most sublime, most profitable, and of the highest Perfection, as I have elsewhere prov'd.

In what I have here sayd, I have lay'd open a very large Field; so that whosoever wou'd apply himself particularly to the Mortification of his Will, needs only by little and little to raise himself by those degrees or steps, which we have mark'd out in the two last Chapters. To do this he must in the first place endeavour to Mortify himself in those things which, without seeking present themselves. In which practise he will for some Days find enough to do; nay,

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even for many Days, especially if we wou'd bring our selves, not only to support 'em with Patience, but to receive 'em with Joy: Which is the third and most perfect degree of Mortification, as I shall prove hereafter. Secondly, we must Mortifie our Will's in whatsoever hinders us from doing such things, as are requir'd to become good Religious Men, that hinder our observance of our Rules, and the living with Edification; which contain so many things, as are scarce to be number'd. In the third place we must Mortifie our selves in some of those things which we may lawfully perform; to the end that we may the better hereby accustom our selves, to cast off our own Will's, in other things that are of obligation; and be the better dispos'd to do so: And to this effect we may purpose to Mortifie our selves so many times in the Morning, and so many times in the Afternoon; beginning at first with a small number, and going on every Day increasing, according to the progress we make in Perfection: Imitating certain Religious Persons of our SOCIETY whom I knew, who counted their Mortifications upon the Beads of their Rosary, and every Day completed the number thereof; as it appear'd very well, by the great progress they made in Vertue. In the fourth and last place, we may extend this Mortification even to those things that are of obligation; endeavouring to perform 'em, not only because they are pleasing to us, but because they are ordain'd by God; and this sort of practice is of so great Perfection, that we may continue it during our whole Lives.

I add moreover, that always keeping the same order, in the points which I have now set down, we may also observe this practice, as an exercise of Conformity to the Will of God; receiving all things as coming from his Hand, and as sent to us by him, with the tender and compassionate Bowels of a Father, for our greater good; imagining that JESUS CHRIST himself says to us, My Son, I wou'd have you do this, or suffer that at present: For by this means we shall find so great a facility and sweetness therein; that 'twill at length become such an exercise of the Love of God, as will render all things easie and pleasant. The thought alone that what we perform is the Will of God, and that he desires this of us, is what will prevent our sticking or making any demur at all in the performance, but will absolutely determine us to do it; which Motive,

is

is also the most profitable and most perfect that can be imagin'd.

We Read in the Life of Saint Francis Borgia, that parting one Day very late from *Valadolid*, whilst it Froze and Snow'd very hard, to go to *Simanques*, which was the Noviship, he arriv'd thither not till 'twas very late at Night, after the Novices were all gone to Bed. He remain'd a long time knocking at the Gate, the Snow all the while falling in great flakes upon him; and every one being in his first Sleep, and the Gate being a good distance from that part of the House where they Lodg'd, no one made any answer. At length they heard him, and went to open him the Gate; and because he perceiv'd the Novices were extreemly troubl'd for having made him wait so long at the Gate, and to see him all trembling and stiff with cold, he told 'em with a smiling Countenance: Dear Brothers, be not troubl'd, or in any pain at all, for I assure you God gave me a great deal of comfort whilst I was expecting to come in; for I thought that 'twas he that caus'd the Snow to fall upon me, and made the Wind to blow; that whatsoever he do's he performs with an infinite satisfaction; and consequently that I ought to rejoyce at the satisfaction he took in Mortifying me, and make his pleasure become mine; as we see for the pleasure of some great Prince, they often kill and cut Lyons and Bulls in pieces. 'Tis after this manner that we ought to receive all occasions of Mortification, by entertaining a holy joy and satisfaction, that the Will of God is fulfill'd in us.

C H A P. XIV.

*That we ought chiefly to Mortifie our selves in
that Vice or Passion which most of all domi-
neers in us, and causes us to fall into
the greatest faults.*

TIS Writ in the first Book of the King's, that God by the Mouth of *Samuel*, commanded *Saul* intirely to destroy the *Amalecites*, without sparing either Sex or Age, but to kill all even to their herds of Cattel, and Domestick Creatures. † *Saul notwithstanding and all the People*, says the Scripture, *Pardon'd Agag, and spar'd the fairest and best amongst the Flock's and Spoil's, and destroy'd all the rest which was of little or no value.* There are very many Persons, that now a days do the like, they Mortifie themselves in small matters, but spare themselves in great things that are of importance; and hereby still persist in their ill habits. But 'tis for such as these, that I say, that what's most precious and dear to us, is that which we must chiefly take notice of, to Mortifie our selves therein, and to make a Sacrifice thereof to God. What then did *Samuel* do? He go's and finds out *Saul*, gives him a sharp reprehension on God's part, caus'd *Agag* King of *Amalec* to be brought before him; * *And Agag who was very fat being brought to him, Samuel cut him in pieces before our Lord.* Behold what you ought to do; you must destroy the King of the *Amalecites*, that is to say, Sacrifice to God by means of Mortification, that Passion which chiefly Reigns in you, that Vanity, this Pride with which you are puffed up, that desire of Glory and Reputation, this Impatience, this bad and untractable humor wherewith you abound.

There

† Et pepercit
Saul, & popu-
lus Agag, &
optimis greg-
bus ovium, &
amentorum,
& vestibus, &
arietibus, &
universis quæ
pulchra erant,
nec voluerunt
disperdere ea;
quidquid verò
vile fuit & re-
probum, hoc
demoliti sunt.
1 Reg. 15. 9.

* Et oblatum
est ei Agag
pinguissimus;
& in frusta
concidit eum
Samuel coram
Domino.
Ibid. 1 Reg. 15.
32. & 33.

There are some who make it their whole care and business, to make the World believe all Sanctity consists in an Exterior Comportment of themselves; in having a Modest and Edifying look, and in letting a great moderation appear in all they do. But as to Interior Mortification, which is of greatest importance, they think not at all of it; but on the contrary are ty'd only to their own Will's and Judgments, and are more jealous of their honor and esteem, than any one can be. To such as these we may say in some measure, what our Saviour sayd to the Scribes and Pharisees:

† *Woe be to you Scribes and Pharisees, who make clean the outside of your Cups and Disks, and yet are full of Rapine and Impurity within. Blind Pharisee, first make clean the inside of the Cup and Platter, to the end that the outside may also become clean.* Make clean therefore, and

Mortifie first of all your Interior, if you wou'd have your Exterior neat and clean: For if this Exterior Modesty proceeds not from an Interior peace and tranquillity of Mind, all this is but deceit and hypocrisie. * *You are,* says our

Saviour, *like Painted Sepulchers, which appear fair on the outside to the Eyes of Men, but within are full of Dead Men's Bones, and all kind of Corruption.* And that which he sayd a little before in the same Chapter, makes more

to our purpose. † *Woe be to you Scribes and Pharisees, who pay your Tithes of Mint, Anise and Comin, and have neglected that which is of greater importance in the Law, which is Judgment, Mercy and Faith.* This is very pat to

our subject according to the Letter: Because there are some who take great care to Mortifie themselves in small matters, which cost 'em little or nothing, but that which hurts or touches 'em to the quick, they take very great care to avoid. But this is that which we must set upon, this passion, this vice, this bad inclination, this ill habit which most of all reigns within us, that leads and governs us, which exposes us to greatest dangers, and causes us to fall into the worst of faults; 'tis this we ought chiefly to Mortifie.

We see by experience, that there's scarce any one, but feels within himself some one thing that makes a more dangerous War against him, than all the rest; and that makes greater opposition against his Spiritual advancement in Perfection.

'Tis to this that every one is particularly to apply himself, to endeavour by Mortification to draw it out by the roots: 'Tis upon this which we ought chiefly to cast our

Eyes,

† Væ vobis
Scribæ & Pha-
risei hypocri-
tæ, quia mun-
datis quod de-
foris est calicis
& patophasis,
intus autem
pleni estis ra-
pinâ & im-
munditiâ.
Pharisee ecce,
mundâ prius
quod intus est
calicis & pa-
tophasis, ut
fiat id, quod
deforis est,
mundum.

* Væ vobis
quia similes
estis sepulchris
dealbatis, quæ
aforis parent
hominibus spe-
ciosâ, intus
verò plena
sunt ossibus
mortuorum,
& omni spur-
citiâ.

† Væ vobis
Scribæ &
Pharisei
hypocritæ,
qui decimaritis
mentham, &
anethum, &
cyminum, &
relinquitis quæ
graviora sunt
legis, judici-
um, & miseri-
cordiam, &
fidem.
Matth. 23. 23.
25. 26. 27.

Eyes, in our Particular Examin, and must insist upon it in our Prayer; because 'tis this which each one has most need to reform in himself.

C H A P. XV.

That we must not neglect the Mortifying our selves in small matters, and how pleasing this kind of Mortification is unto God, and useful for our advancement in Perfection.

WE must so fix our Eyes upon great things as not to neglect those of less importance; and this admonition is address'd to those who neglect lesser Mortifications and make no account of 'em, looking upon 'em as trifles, that help not at all to our Spiritual advancement and Perfection. This is a very great Error, which the Son of God takes notice of, in this reprehension he gives to the Scribes and Pharisees: For he blames not the care they had of small things, but the neglect they had of greater and more essential: † *These*, says he, *ought to have been done, and the other not to have been left undone.* I have already very often repeated how much it imports, to make account of little things, and not to neglect 'em; and in truth 'tis a point of so great importance, that it deserves very often to be spoken of, for fear lest laxity and disorder shou'd enter by this gap; which happens but too frequently. But I shall only now speak of what regards our present subject; and for this reason shall explain two things; the one, of what advantage these sorts of Mortifications are. The other, how dangerous a thing it is to neglect 'em. As to the first how pleasing these kinds of Mortifications, tho' but small, are unto God, and of how great Merit they are unto us, may easily be comprehended, if we consider that the chief thing in Mortification, consists not in the performance of the Austerity, but in the casting off our own Will; for that is properly the true Mortification

† Hæc oportuit facere, illa non omitters. Matih. 23. 23.

Mortification and Renouncing of our selves, that JESUS CHRIST requires of us in the Gospel. But we may renounce our own Will's no less in little, than in great things, and sometimes even more, and with greater Merit, if they be more contrary to our inclinations. We Daily experience that such things as are very small in themselves, give us a great deal more pain, than those which are more considerable do; because Mortification consists not so much in the things themselves, as in the repugnance our Will has to them: So that when we Mortifie our selves in any thing whatsoever, we offer a Sacrifice of our Will's unto God, striving with 'em, and overcoming 'em for the Love of God. And as in this we offer the choicest thing we have, which is our Will; so we may say, that in Sacrificing that, we make an intire Sacrifice of our selves.

Saint *Ambrose* upon this account, examines what the Scripture says of *David*, when he was Incamp'd in sight of the *Philistian's*, and his whole Army was in great want of Water, † Oh, says the King, that any one would get me some of the Water of the Fountain of Bethlem! Which was beyond the Enemies Camp. Whereupon three stout Souldiers, hearing him say this, departed presently, twice pass'd the Army of the *Philistian's*, and brought to *David* the Water of this Fountain. But the Scripture adds, * That he would not Drink of it, but made a Sacrifice of Effusion to our Lord, by pouring it forth, and offering it unto him. Is it therefore to great a Sacrifice to offer a Pot of Water to our Lord? Yes, says Saint *Ambrose*, 'twas a great Sacrifice, and very pleasing unto God; and fully to convince us of this truth, 'tis enough that the Scripture speaks of it as of one of *David's* greatest exploits. But would you know, says Saint *Ambrose*, in what the greatness of this action do's consist? † He overcame Nature by not Drinking it in an extreme Thirst, and thereby taught the whole Army by his own example, how to support the Thirst they suffer'd. 'Twas not only the Pot of Water he offer'd, but 'twas his own Will; and therefore in the Mortifying our selves, tho' in never so small things, 'tis the Will always that is Sacrific'd unto God, and consequently 'tis a Sacrifice of great value that we offer unto him, which is always very pleasing to his Divine Majesty.

Saint *Gregory* also recounts another Example of *David*, to the same purpose, as this which Saint *Ambrose* reports.

The

Ambros. in apol. de David. ca. 7.

† O si quis daret mihi aquam decifternæ Bethleem! † Paralip. 13. 17.

* Noluit bibere, sed magis libavit illam Domino. Ibid. vers. 18.

† Vicit ergo naturam, ut si tiens non biberet, & exemplum de se præbuit quo omnis exercitus tolerare sitim disceret. *Ambros. ubi sup.*

The Scripture, in the second Book of the King's says, that *David* transported the Ark of the Covenant unto the City of *Sion*, with very great Solemnity; and 'tis to be suppos'd that the People in those times were wont to Dance before the Ark of God, when they carry'd it from one place to another, as the *Spaniards* at present are wont to do in the Processions of the Blessed Sacrament. *David* as great a Man as he was, altogether forgetting what became his Gravity, and the Greatness and Majesty of his Rank, cast off his Royal Robes, and * *Naked like a common Dancer*, (for which *Michol* reproach'd him) joyning himself to the Rabble, began to Dance and Play upon the Harp. Saint *Gregory* cannot forbear admiring this Action of *David*; and speaking of it: † *I know not*, says he, *what thoughts others may have of this Action, for my part I stand more in admiration, to behold David Dancing before the Ark as one of the common rank of Men, than when he tore the Lyon in pieces, than when he kill'd Goliath, or when he defeated the Philistian's; in all these occasions his Glory was only in taming wild Beasts, in overcoming his Enemies: But in Dancing before the Ark, he became Conquerour over himself; and there's far greater pain and glory in overcoming our selves, than in getting the Victory over others.*

Wherefore let us make great account of these sorts of Mortification, and take care not to contemn or under-value 'em, for fear lest the same happens to us, which did to *Michol*; who being so far displeas'd at this action, as to conceive a contempt of *David*, and to reproach him for it to his Face; was Chastis'd by God with a perpetual barrenness. If you disdain to Mortifie your self in small matters; if you be asham'd exactly to subject your self to little things, as pretending they are below you to do, and that such a subjection as this, is only good for Children and Novices, be afraid lest this becomes the cause of your Spiritual barrenness or sterility, either in Prayer, or in your Conferences with your Neighbor; and be an occasion also, that your words make no impression, and cause no fruit in their Hearts; and that hereby you be for ever depriv'd of the comfort of Spiritual Children. This is that which above all things is to be fear'd by those who reproach others for their exact performance of all their Duties, who treat 'em as weak Persons, and scoff and jeer at 'em; there's scarce any thing more dangerous, or of what we ought to have greater Scruple than

* Quasi si nudetur unus de scurris.

2 Reg. 6. 20. & 1 Paralip. 15.

† Quid de ejus factis ab aliis sentitur ignoro. Ego David plus saltantem stupor, quam pugnantem. Pugando quippe hostes subdidit; saltando autem coram Domino femeripsum vicit.

L. 17. Moral. ca. 27.

than this; because at the bottom it go's so far, as to discourage and withdraw them from the practice of Vertue. The Answer which *David* gave *Michol* is admirable: * *I will Play before the Lord*, says he, *who has chosen and preferr'd me before your Father, and will render my self yet more despicable than hitherto I have done, and will humble my self yet more and more.* † *An excellent sport and divertisement* indeed, cries out *Saint Bernard*, which pleases God and displeases *Michol*, that appears a ridiculous sight before Men, and is a very pleasing spectacle to the Angels. He who sayd, * *We are become a Spectacle to Angels and Men*, was accustomed to this sort of sport or divertisement, which we ought to render familiar, without putting our selves in pain what they will say of us. † *Let us Play*, says *Saint Bernard*, that we may become the may-game of the World. For by this means, we shall indeed become a Spectacle of contempt to the World, but of admiration to the Angels, and of joy to God.

* Ante Dominum, qui elegit me potius quam Patrem suum, & ludam, & vilior factus sum, & ero humilis in oculis meis.
2 Reg. 6. 22.
† Bonus ludus quo Michol irascitur, & Deus delectatur: Bonus ludus qui hominibus quidem ridiculum, sed Angelis pulcherrimum spectaculum præbet.
Bern. ep. 87. in fine.
* Spectaculum facti sumus mundo, & Angelis, & hominibus.
1 Cor. 4. 9.
† Ludamus, ut illudamur.
Bern. ibid.

C H A P. XVI.

That 'tis very dangerous to neglect or contemn Mortification in small things.

BY this 'tis very easie to comprehend, how dangerous it is to contemn or neglect small Mortifications: For 'tis not only the thing, in which we neglect to Mortifie our selves, that we must look upon, but the refusing to overcome our Will's for the Love of God, even in small matters. There's also in this another very great inconvenience, which deserves to be very much reflected upon; 'tis, that by this means we permit our Will, to accustom it self to seek it's satisfaction in several things, and that it entertains and fortifies it self in this habit after such a manner, that afterwards we cannot master it in any thing. At first we perceive not the hurt we do our selves in it; for our own Will is in the beginning but a Lyons Whelp, but in a short time it grows

Tom. II.

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to

* Cesset pro-
pria voluntas,
& infernus
non erit.
Bern. serm. 3.
de Resurrect.

Richard. in
Cant. p. 2.
ca. 21.

Cass. lib. 8. de
spiritu ira
cap. 18.

Theodor. in
hist. relig.

to so cruel and fierce a Lyon, that 'tis not to be tam'd, that 'twill be impossible for us to resist it. Self-love is the cause of all Evils and Sins, and by consequence of Hell it self. * *If there were no Self-love, says Saint Bernard, there wou'd be no Hell.* But by these sorts of Mortification, we have spoken of, we accustom our selves to overcome our Will, and take away from it, the liberty of doing what it pleases. *Richard of Saint Victor* says, that as the Devil endeavours to make us commit little faults, to the end that after having gain'd some small advantages over us, and thereby weaken'd us, he may gain greater; just so ought we to endeavour to overcome our selves by frequent Mortifications in small things, to the end that it may be impossible for him to overcome us in greater. And afterwards he adds, we must begin with little things, that we may fortifie our selves by this exercise, and that the Victory we gain over our selves in small things, may be the means to overcome our selves in greater. *Cassian* gives the same Counsel, and makes use of an example to strengthen his advice: When you find your self, says he, mov'd to Choler, either because your Pen is not good, or that your Pen-knife cuts not well, or for some other such like cause; you must take great care to repress these irregular motions of Anger, how little soever the cause of 'em appears to be; because this Victory gives you new strength, to Mortifie your self in greater occasions that shall present themselves, and to conserve peace of Mind, and Charity amidst the greatest injuries and contempts.

There's also another advantage in the Practice of these voluntary Mortifications, which is, that it renders the assaults of the Devil less dangerous; as *Saint Eusebius* teaches us, who as *Theodoret* reports, continually exercis'd himself in 'em. One Day they ask'd this Saint, why he so apply'd himself to this Practice, 'tis, says he, because I have the Devil a crafty Enemy to deal withal; and therefore I endeavour to reduce the Temptations of Anger, Impurity, Envy, and all other Sins that may put my Soul in danger, unto small things; in the which if I be overcome, the loss will not be great; but if I gain the Victory, he cannot behold it without a double indignation and confusion, since that even in these small things he is not able to overcome me. This deserves to be taken notice of, for 'tis a truth experienc'd by the Servants of God, that the more you endeavour to Mortifie your self in small things, the more the Devil will endeavour

endeavour to turn all his forces that way, and all his Temptations will ordinarily be to hinder you from some Mortification, and prevent your overcoming your self in some slight or small repugnance, or in some other such like thing, in which you cannot lose very much, tho' it shou'd happen you shou'd some time or other be overcome. But if you leave off this exercise, and neglect to resist and fight with the Devil and your own Flesh in small things, both the one and the other will set upon you with far more dangerous Temptations, to which if you give way, your loss will certainly be very great.

Saint *Austin* reports, that a Catholick being provok'd to Passion, by Flies that continually tormented him, was visited by a *Manichean*, to whom he recounted the inconvenience he receiv'd from 'em, and the motions of impatience they caus'd in him. The *Manichean* thought he had found a fit occasion to insinuate his Error to him, which was, that there were two Origins or Causes of things; the one of Invisible things, which was God; the other of Visible, which was the Devil. ('Tis against this Error, that in the Creed of Saint *Athanasius*, Sung by the Church at Mass, these words are inserted, † *Of all things Visible and Invisible*; whereby we acknowledge God to be the Creator of all things, and not only of those that are Spiritual and Invisible, but also of those that are Corporal and Visible.) The *Manichean* therefore, perceiving that so excellent an occasion was offer'd him, of persuading the Catholick to a belief of his Error: Who do you believe, says he, was the Creator of these Flies? The Catholick, who found himself so tormented by these Animals, durst not say that 'twas God; but if 'twas not God, reply'd the *Manichean*, who was it, that made 'em? The other reply'd, that he thought 'twas the Devil; the *Manichean* still press'd the Argument more home; but if the Devil, says he, made these Flies, who made the Bees, who are of a bigger form? The Catholick, who before had confess'd that God had not made the Flies, durst not say he had Created the Bees; so that by reason of the small difference he perceiv'd between the one and the other, he answer'd, that if God had not Created the Flies, probably he had not also Created the Bees. The *Manichean* perceiving this, by little and little drew him on further, passing from the Bee to the Grasshopper, a little bigger than the Bee; from the Grasshopper to the Lizard, from the Lizard

*Tract. 2. sup.
Joan.*

† *visibilia
omnium, &
invisibilia.
In symb. S.
Athan.*

* Et persuasit
homini quod
non à Deo
factus est ho-
mo.

to the Sheep, thence to an Ox, then to an Elephant, and last of all to Man himself. * *And hereby persuaded this poor Man, says Saint Austin, that God had not Created Man.* See into what an Abyſſe of Miſeries he fell; becauſe he cou'd not patiently ſuffer the ſmall incommodity which was cauſ'd by the Flies. Bird catchers, ſays he, are wont to make uſe of little Flies to catch certain ſmall Birds withal; the Devil alſo made uſe of Flies to catch this unhappy Man. Wherefore take care that the like happens not to you, when you find the leaſt averſion to never ſo ſmall a thing; when any thing angers or troubles you, deſie the Devil, for 'tis by ſuch ſorts of Flies, that the Devil catches a great many, and by little and little draws 'em into very great diſorders.

C H A P. XVII.

Three very important admonitions upon this Subject.

THERE are three advertisements to be giv'n hereupon, which regard three ſorts of Perſons; and 'tis for the conſolation of the one, and to diſabuse the other, that I ſhall here ſet 'em down. All Men are not Born with the ſame diſpoſitions, ſome are of a temper which is hard to overcome; ſo that finding in themſelves a continual contradiction, to all actions they are to perform, they are hereby much afflicted, and think all is loſt. 'Tis to ſuch as theſe, to whom I addreſs the firſt advice I have to give, which is to let 'em know, that there's no Sin nor Imperfection in the repugnances we feel in this kind, nor in any motions contrary to reaſon; but only in following 'em. In voluntary motions, bad thoughts that happen againſt Purity, againſt Faith, or againſt any other Vertue whatſoever, for which many afflict themſelves very much, are not that which cauſe the Sin in theſe Temptations. Wherefore the Saints bid us not to put our ſelves at all in pain for 'em, 'tis not the feeling theſe thoughts, but the conſenting to them, which occasions

occasions the Sin; for when you are troubl'd at these Temptations, and endeavour to resist 'em, and do not entertain or take satisfaction in 'em, they are no Sin, but on the contrary an occasion of great Merit. 'Tis the same of those natural bad inclinations, which we feel, some more some less, from whence arise irregular motions in our Sensual Appetite, and so many repugnances and contradictions to Vertue. 'Tis not from hence that we become good or bad, perfect or imperfect; because this is a thing that's purely natural, that depends not at all upon us, but what we have inherited by Sin. Did not Saint Paul feel this Rebellion within himself, this contradiction of his Flesh? † *I feel*, says he, *another Law in my Body, that Wars against the Law of my Mind, and subjects me to the Law of Sin, which is in my Members.* Saint Austin explicating these words of the Psalmist, *Be Angry but Sin not.* *Thō some motions*, says he, *that rise in our Sensual Appetites, they being the punishment of Sin, be not in our Power, let us at least endeavour that our Reason and Will give no consent to them, but let us in Spirit, be Obedient to the Law of God, thō in the Flesh, we are still subject to the Law of Sin.* 'Tis taken notice of, in the first Book of King's, that the Cows that carry'd the Ark of the Covenant, belov'd as they went along; because they had taken their Calves from 'em; yet for all that, they omitted not to go straight on their way, without turning either to the right or to the left. Do you the same, persist in the straight way of Vertue, without permitting your self to be put out of your way, by the following of Flesh and Blood, and hereby you shall become perfect.

The difference that there is between Spiritual Persons, who labor after Perfection, and Carnal and Sensual Persons, who think not at all of it, do's not consist in feeling or not feeling these motions and contradictions of their Flesh, but in permitting or not permitting themselves to follow 'em. The Fish that is alive, swims against the stream, but a dead one, permits it self to be carry'd down with it; so to know whether the Spirit of God be living or dead within us, we need only to see, whether we go against the current of our Passions, or whether we permit our selves to be carry'd and driven along by their impetuosity. The Spiritual Man * *Hearkens not to the Voice of the Ex-*

actor, that is, according to Saint Gregories interpretation,

† *They*

† Video aliam legem in membris meis repugnantem legi mentis meæ, & captivantem me in lege peccati, quæ est in membris meis. Rom. 7. 23. August. in illud: Irascimini, & nolite peccare. Psal. 4. 5. Id est, licet infurgat motus animi qui jam propter penam peccati non est in potestate, saltem non consentiat ei ratio & mens, sed mente servimus legi Dei, si adhuc carne servimus legi peccati.

* Clamorem exactoris non audit. Job. 3. 18.

† Clamorem
exactoris non
audire, est vio-
lenti tentati-
onum motibus
minime con-
sentire.

Greg. lib. 3.
Mor. ca. 13.

* Ascendamus
etiam post il-
lum per vitia
& passiones
nostras. De
vitiis nostris
scalam nobis
facimus, & vi-
tia ipsa cal-
camus.
Aug. Serm. 3.
de Ascens.

I. lib. 3. Apol.
30.

† They do not at all consent to the violent motions of Temptation. The whole matter therefore consists in not giving Ear to Temptations, and not consenting to them; so that we must be so far from being discourag'd, by reason of these bad inclinations we find in our selves; that we must on the contrary take courage and excite our selves to gain a greater Crown by overcoming 'em. This is that which Saint *Austin* Counsels us, in his third Sermon of the Ascension; where having exhorted the Faithful to Ascend to Heaven with *JESUS CHRIST*, he proposes their own Passions and bad Inclinations as means or steps to help themselves withal. * *Let us Ascend after him*, says he, *by the help of our Vices and Passions; and would you know how this is possible to be done? 'Tis in casting 'em underfoot, and making 'em as it were a Ladder to clime up withal.* If we raise our selves above our Passions, they will raise us above our selves, and become as so many Ladders, to raise and elevate us even to Heaven it self.

We Read in the Life of Saint *Ignatius*, that being naturally Cholerick, he had so overcome and chang'd his Nature, by the help and assistance of Grace, that they thought him to be of a Phlegmatick temper. *Plutarch* reports almost the same thing of *Socrates*. He says, that an excellent Physiognomist having with attention consider'd him, cou'd not refrain from telling him, that he was a Man inclin'd to Lewdness, Debauchery, Drunkenness, and many other Vices; the Disciples and Friends of *Socrates*, fell into a very great Passion against this Man, and were ready to have treated him ill; had not *Socrates* hinder'd 'em, saying, the Man is in the right, for I thou'd be, says he, such a one as he Paints me out, or describes me to be, were I not giv'n to the Study of Philosophy; and to the Practice of Vertue. But if a Philosopher, who had only the assistance of the light of Nature, was able after such a manner to overcome his bad inclinations, what may not a Christian, or a Religious Man be able to do, by the help of Divine Grace? Which is a thousand times more strong and powerful, than Nature is.

There are another sort of Persons, who naturally are well inclin'd, and are so happy as to have inherited a good temper and disposition. It seems (as *Alexander de Hales*, sayd of Saint *Bonaventure*) as if they had not Sinn'd in *Adam*; they are of a sweet temper, of a nature that is inclin'd to good, that finds all things easie, nothing appears hard

hard or uneasy to them; they find not in their *Flesh* those contradictions and repugnancies, that others are tormented withal; but the contrary: Alas, say they, People do nothing else but complain of the difficulties they find in Religion, and we for our parts find none at all! 'Tis to these to whom the second admonition belongs, which I promis'd to give, which they must make use of, to undeceive themselves. If you have so good and pious inclinations as you speak of; if you are of so easie, sweet and regular an humor, that even the hardest things give you no pain at all, and that you scarce know what a Temptation is, be not at all puffed up upon this account, this is not Vertue that you have acquir'd, but a Temper, with which you were Born; and the Vertue and Progress of a Christian, consists not in a happy or good Physiognomy, in an agreeable Exterior, in a sweet Temper; but it consists in the endeavour of overcoming our selves, and in the Victory we gain over our Passions. This is an infallible Rule or Mark of any ones advancement in Perfection; and therefore one who is naturally Cholerick, do's far more, and Merits a greater recompence, when he resists and overcomes this Passion, than you, who in reality are of a sweeter and milder disposition; for you are always of the same temper, and have nothing at all to resist or overcome.

Plutarch extold *Alexander* the Great above all other King's; because, says he, others were Born to great Kingdom's, but *Alexander* Conquer'd 'em by his Sword and Valour, and purchas'd 'em by the many Wounds he receiv'd in several Battles. In like manner, such as have render'd themselves Masters over their Passions, by dint of Sword, if I may say so, Moderating and Mortifying themselves in all things, are far more worthy of praise, than those who are Born with sweet and peaceable tempers, and never have any provocation to fight at all. Wherefore, neither the sweetness of your humor, nor the natural heat or impetuosity that another suffers by his, ought to make you esteem your self the more, or him the less; but on the contrary, you must hereby take more occasion to humble your self; acknowledging that what appears to be Vertue in you, is not so, but a pure effect of your natural temper; and that 'tis a greater Vertue in others, to do the self same things you perform: For in what you have hitherto done, you have made little or no progress at all; because you have overcome your self in little or nothing; but others have made a
very

very great one; because they have resisted and overcome themselves in many and great things. He who is Born with a temper or disposition that is harder to overcome, finds himself thereby oblig'd to stand more upon his guard, to take greater measures of precaution, and to be more fervourous; by which means he Daily increases in Vertue: But as for you, the confidence you have in the goodness of your Nature, makes you continually to relent, and causes you to fall into greater negligence and tepidity: For having no Enemies, you neglect your Perfection, and permit your self to lead a kind of ease and idle Life. 'Twill be very good also, that sometimes you call to mind what you shou'd have been, had God giv'n you a harder Nature and Humor to overcome; and believe that you wou'd have fallen into greater faults than others have done: For alas, if you, notwithstanding that sweet disposition, and those good inclinations that God has bestow'd upon you, Daily fall into many faults, and are so lax and tepid in your Duty; what wou'd you have been, had you been Born with bad inclinations, and if you had been continually oblig'd to fight against your self? Wherefore, if God suffers you not to be Tempted, you must believe, 'tis because he sees you so very weak, that you wou'd not have strength to resist 'em: And you must also persuade your self, that the having giv'n you so sweet and tractable a Nature, is a pure effect of his Mercy, and the particular conduct of his Providence over you; for if you had more lively Passions, you wou'd not perhaps have force enough to overcome 'em. By this means you will at the same time, conserve such sentiments of Humility, as you ought to have of your self, and will harbour such thoughts and esteem also of your Neighbor, as you are oblig'd to have of him.

The third advertisement I promis'd, is to disabuse another sort of Persons, that experience not in themselves those Contradictions and Rebellions of the Flesh, but on the contrary imagine they enjoy a very great Peace within themselves. Yet this proceeds not, either from their Mortifying themselves, or from their being Born with these good inclinations; but happens, because they never think of using any violence to themselves, but follow their own inclination in all things; whereby they find themselves exempt from all those repugnances, which others feel in every thing they do: Who notwithstanding flatter, themselves that they enjoy a Peace, which in reality they have
not.

not. † *They only speak of Peace, but enjoy none at all.* Saint Austin Writing upon these words of the Apostle, * *I see in my Members another Law, which is repugnant to my Reason; and subjects me to the Law of Sin,* says, that † *Only those that fight under the Standard of Vertue, and that make War against Vice, experience these Combats within themselves.* Moreover, if we take notice, when we speak of Mortification to Secular Persons, 'tis a Language they understand not; because they are wont to do, only such things as please 'em; and follow no other Rule or Law, than their own inclinations: And because they know not what it is, to constrain themselves in any thing; therefore they feel no Interior War or Contradiction; there being indeed none at all: But those that seek after Perfection, who labor to gain the true Vertues of a Christian, and endeavour to pluck up by the roots their bad habits and inclinations; such as these are expos'd to a continual Warfare, and to the contradictions of the Flesh. And as a Bird that's taken in a Net, perceives it not, till it wou'd get out of it; so a Man who is engag'd in irregularity, never knows throu'ly the strength of his Passions, and how hard it is to overcome 'em, but when he labors to disengage and disentangle himself. 'Tis when we imbrace Vertue, that Vice renders the contradictions of an irregular Nature very apparent.

We Read in the Lives of the Fathers of the Desert, that one Day an Hermit propos'd this Question to a Holy Old Man. How comes it to pass, says he, that I feel not within my self those interior Combats and violent Temptations, that many others suffer? To whom the Holy Man made this Answer; 'tis because you are like a House, whose Doors stand always wide open, into which all People enter at what hour soever they please, without the knowledge of the Master. The Gate of your Heart is always open, you keep no guard at all over it, you live with little or no Attention to your self, with no Recollection of Mind at all; and therefore you must not wonder that you are not disquieted as others are. But if you wou'd keep the Door of your Heart shut; if you hinder'd bad thoughts from entering, you wou'd then see, what Combats and Violence they wou'd use to get in. If therefore you feel not this War within your self, nor any of these Combats of your Flesh, take heed lest this happens not, because you follow your own Will in all things;

Tom. I I.

K

and

† Dicentes,
Pax, Pax: &
non erat Pax.
Jerem. 6. 14.
* Video autem
aliam legem
in membris
meis repug-
nantem legi
mentis meae.
Rom. 7. 23.
† Hanc pug-
nam non ex-
periuntur in
semetipsis, nisi
bellatores vir-
tutum, debella-
torumque vitio-
rum.
Aug. de conti-
nenti.

and because you use no endeavours to contradict your Sensual Appetites, nor to root out those bad inclinations you find within your self.

C H A P. XVIII.

That 'tis always necessary to exercise our selves in Mortification; how advanc'd soever we may be in Vertue.

SAINTE Bernard says, that in the exercise of Mortification, we must always carry the Hook in our Hands; and that there's no Person, how Mortifi'd soever, who stands not always in need of pruning or retrenching something or other. * *Believe me,* says he, *that which is cut, sprouts out anew; that which is cast away, returns; that which is extinct, takes Fire again; and that which appears asleep, awakes upon a sudden.* 'Tis not sufficient therefore, adds the Saint, to have prun'd it once, we must cut it often, and even Daily if possible; for if you will not deceiver your self, you will always find something to cut, and to retrench within your self. The Hedges, which we see in certain Gardens, furnish us with a very fit comparison for this subject: The Myrthe and the Box, are there cut with so much Art, that hère they represent the figure of a Lyon, there that of an Eagle, and also a variety of many other shapes. But if the Gardener be not very careful to cut off the Leaves and little Branches, which shoot out every moment, in a very short time we shall neither see the form of an Eagle, nor of a Lyon, nor of any thing else; because Nature continually, according to it's custom, shoots forth new Wood and Leaves. The same happens here; tho' you shou'd be a Lyon or an Eagle, tho' you seem to your self so strong, as to fear nothing; nevertheless if you do not Daily cut and retrench something by Mortification, you will soon become like a Monster without shape; because the root of the Evil, which is within us, shoots forth

* Credite mihi, & putata repullulant, & effugata redeunt, & receduntur extincta, & sopita denuo excitantur.

Parum est ergo semel putasse: saepe putandum est, imò si fieri potest, semper; quia semper quod putari oportet, si non dissimulas, invenies.
Serm. 58. sup. Cant.

forth new Branches every moment; so that there's always something to be Mortifi'd within us. † *What progress soever you may have made in Vertue, says Saint Bernard, you deceive your self, if you believe you have intirely destroy'd all Vices within you; for you have only brought 'em under, and whether you will or no, the Iebulite will always remain with you. 'Tis an Enemy you may overcome, but you'll never be able to exterminate. * I know, says Saint Paul, that there's nothing good within me, that is to say, within my Flesh. And the same Saint discoursing upon these words; says, that the Apostle had sayd very little, if he had not presently added, that Sin made it's abode in him; saying, I do not the good which I wou'd do, but execute the evil I wou'd not: But if I do what I wou'd not, then 'tis not I that do it, but 'tis Sin that dwells within me. † Wherefore hereafter, adds the Saint, you must either prefer your self before the Apostle, or acknowledge with him, that you are not exempt from Vice.*

habitat in me peccatum. Rom. 7. 17.
illo, te quoque vitis non carere. Bernard. *ibid.*

† Aut te ergo, si audes præfer Apostolo: Aut fatere cum

† Quantulibet profeceris, erras, si vitas putas emotiua, & non magis suppreffa.

Velis, nolis, intra fines tuos habitat Jeſus: subjugari poteſt, ſed non exterminari. Bernard. ubi ſuprà.

* Scio quia non habitat in me, hoc eſt in carne mea, bonum: Non enim quod volo bonum, hoc facio: Sed quod nolo malum, hoc ago. Si autem quod nolo, illud facio, jam non ego operor illud, ſed quod

Saint Ephraim is of the same Opinion, when he says, that * *The War which Souldiers make is ſhort, but that which a Religious Man is oblig'd to, laſts all his Life long.* 'Tis a greater labor to Mortifie our Paſſions and Senſual Appetites, than to cut or poliſh the hardeſt Stone: For beſides, that the Stone of it ſelf makes no actual reſiſtance to the cutter, it is certain, that when 'tis once poliſh'd, it becomes not rough again or unequal, as 'twas before. But what oppoſition do we not find in overcoming our Paſſions? And when we have once got the maſtery over 'em, do they not again rebel every moment againſt us, and continually reaſſume new forces? Wherefore, we muſt always endeavour anew, without any relaxation, to overcome 'em. Saint Hierom Writing upon theſe words of the Prophet, † *Sing a Hymn to our Lord upon the Harp,* ſays, that as we cannot make any agreeable Muſick upon a Harp, if all the Strings be not in Tune; and that one of 'em being broke or ſlacken'd, cauſes a diſcord in all the reſt; ſo one irregular Paſſion, is ſufficient to diſcompose the Harmony of our Soul, and hinder it from making any pleaſing Muſick in God's Ears. When all our Paſſions are equally ſubdu'd, 'tis then that * *We Sing his Praiſes upon an Inſtrument of Muſick of Ten Strings;*

* Bellum militum breve, ſed Monachi pugna continuus ad usque migret ad Dominum, durat. Ephr. exb. ad prælat. tom. 1. pag. 7.

Hieron. in Pſal. 97. 7. & l. 6. ſup. Iſai. † Pſallite Domino in cithara. Pſal. 97. 5.

* In pſalterio decem chordarum pſallite illi. Pſal. 32. 2.

but to be able to subdue them after this manner, 'tis absolutely necessary, we shou'd continually exercise our selves in Mortification.

*Chmac. grad. 4.
de obedientia,
art. 26.*

'Twas only for this reason, that the Ancient Fathers continually try'd those, who were already advanc'd in Perfection, by all sorts of Mortifications and Contempts; because such, who seem'd to have intirely gain'd the tractable Spirit of Mortification, lost it by little and little, together with the habit they had got in suffering, when their Superiors, looking upon 'em as Men already consummated in Vertue, ceas'd to make any farther tryal of 'em. For as the most fertile Land grows full of Weeds, and becomes barren, if we neglect to Cultivate it; and produces nothing but Thorns and Thistles; so let a Christian be never so Perfect, if this Perfection be not Cultivated by a continual exercise of Penance and Mortification, he will soon become like a wild and fruitless Field, full of Thorns and Rushes; that is, full of many bad thoughts, and of a vain and dangerous confidence in himself. So that all the World stands in need of Mortification, not only such as have any bad or corrupt inclinations, but even those also, who have very good ones; not only those who are still imperfect, and are newly enter'd into the way of Vertue, but those also, who have made great progress therein; and lastly, not only those who have Sinn'd, but those also who have conserv'd their Baptismal innocency: Wherefore generally speaking all stand in need of Mortification; some to get, others to conserve Vertue. How good and sure footed soever a Horse may be, 'tis always good to keep a firm Hand upon the Bridle, and to let him now and then feel the Spur.

† si quis vult
postm: veni-
re, abneget
semetipsum, &
tollat crucem
suam quotidie.
Luc. 9. 23.

Clim. grad. 4.

*Suet. in Tit.
ca. 8.*

† If any one will follow me, says our Saviour in Saint Luke, let him deny himself, and Daily take up his Cross, which is as much as to say, that we ought to let no Day pass, without Mortifying our Will in something or other. Which if you neglect to do, says Saint John Climacus, believe, you thereby suffer a very great loss, and that 'tis a Day lost, and a Day also, in which you cou'd not properly stile your self Religious. Friends, sayd the Emperour Titus, when he had pass'd a Day without gratifying any one, *I have lost this Day.* And for that Day he look'd upon himself, as not to have been Emperour; and esteem'd it also as a Day that ought not to be counted in his Reign. But, without doubt, 'tis far more Essential for a Religious Man to Mortifi: himself, and Renounce his own Will, than 'tis for Kings and Emperours to bestow

bestow their favours: For 'tis proper to a Religious Person, to perform whatsoever he has no mind to do, and to do nothing, that he has a mind to perform.

Saint *Francis Borgia* in this, as well as in other things, has giv'n us an excellent example to imitate. He sayd, that he found every thing that he Eat very bitter, and disagreeable to his Palate, upon that Day he had not Chastis'd his Body by some Penance and Mortification; and added, that 'twould be a very great discomfort to him, if he knew he shou'd Die upon a Day, in which he had not Mortif'd his Senses, nor perform'd some Penance. Wherefore no Day past, in which he did not Mortifie himself: Moreover, he begg'd this Grace of Almighty God, that all the pleasures of this Life might become a punishment and cross unto him, and that all sufferings might be to him instead of pleasure. 'Tis in this that the third and most sublime degree of Mortification do's consist, and therefore he sayd, that till he had arriv'd to it, he desir'd that no care at all might be taken of him. He watch'd continually to make War against his Body; he Daily found out something to Mortifie and Treat it ill; and gave the Title of Friend, to whatsoever help'd him to afflict it. When he walk'd in the Sun in Summer time, and was scorch'd and most of all incommoded thereby, our Friend, says he, treats us as he shou'd do. He gave the same title to Cold, Wind, Rain, the Gout and pain of the Heart, to which he was very much subject. Lastly, those that Persecuted him, and spoke ill of him, he also stil'd his Friends; because all these help'd him to conquer and subdue his Body, which he look'd upon as his mortal Enemy. But he was not contented with these occasions only of Suffering and Mortification, which Daily presented themselves, but sought and found out also new inventions how to Mortifie himself. Sometimes he put Gravel and little Stones into his Shoo's; to the end that he might find pain in his Feet whilst he walk'd. He walk'd very softly in Summer time, in the heat of the Sun, to suffer the heat so much the longer; and did the same in Winter, even in the middle of the Snow, to suffer more cold: By his drawing the Hairs out of his Temples, they were become quite raw; and when he cou'd not give himself a Discipline, he found other ways to Mortifie himself; either by pinching, or inflicting some other pain upon his Body. In his Sickness he sought out new pains, to add to those he suffer'd; for when they gave him loathsom Physick, he took it at several draughts

very

*In ejus vita,
lib. 4. ca. 5.*

very slowly, as if it had been some pleasant Broth; when he took any Pill's, how bitter soever they were, he always chaw'd 'em, and kept 'em a long time in his Mouth. Thus did he apply himself, to the Mortification of his Senses, and the Crucifying his Flesh. And 'twas hereby also, that he arriv'd to so high a pitch of Sanctity and Perfection.

C H A P. XIX.

*Of two sufficient means, to render Mortification
sweet and easie; which are, the Grace
of God and his Holy Love.*

IT remains at present, that I should speak of such means, as may help us to render this so necessary Practice of Mortification, not only light and easie, but sweet and pleasant also. The first means is the Grace of God, with which all things become easie: Saint Paul serves us both for an example, as also for a proof of this truth; who having thrice earnestly begg'd of God, to be deliver'd from that Thorn of his Flesh, which the Angel of Satan continually made use of to torment him; God made this answer to him: † *My Grace is sufficient for you.* Whereby he found himself so fortifi'd, that he sayd, * *I am able to do all things, in him that strengthens me.* And added moreover in the same place, † *Yet 'tis not I that do it, but the Grace of God assisting me.* We must not believe that God leaves us to our own strength, in time of Mortification and Suffering. No, he bears the greatest part of the Burthen himself; and for this reason the Law is call'd a Yoke, which is to be born by two. For JESUS CHRIST joyns himself to us, to help us to support it; and with his assistance who can be discourag'd? Wherefore let nothing in the Law appear to you too hard, since you'll have nothing but the easiest part of it to bear. 'Tis for this reason also, that he calls it a Yoke and a Burthen; when

† Sufficit tibi gratia mea.

1 Cor. 12. 9.

* Omnia possum in eo qui me confortat.

Philipp. 4. 13.

† Non ego autem, sed gratia Dei mecum.

1 Cor. 15. 10.

he says, † *My Yoke is easie, and my Burthen light*: For tho in regard of our Nature, and the weakness of our forces, it be never so hard a Yoke, and never so heavy a Burthen, yet the Grace of God renders it very easie and light; because our Lord himself helps us to bear it; according to his promise made us by the Prophet *Osee*, * *I will be unto them, as he that takes the Yoke from off their Heads*. God says the same in *Isay*, † *That he will make the Yoke rot, before the Oyl*. For the Mortification appears a troublesome and heavy Yoke, yet the Grace of God, which is signifi'd by Oyl, will make it rot, that is to say, will sweeten it after such a manner, that 'twill be so far from hurting us, that we shall scarce feel it.

† *Yugum enim meum suave est, & onus meum leve.*
Matth. 11. 30.

* *Et ero quam exaltans jugum super maxillas eorum.*
Osee 11. 4.
† *Computrescer jugum & facio olei.*
Isai. 10. 27.

Ser. de Dedic. Eccles.

† *Ecce scitis quia verè crux nostra mun- da est. Sed ut ita dicam, amaritudo nostra dulcissima.*
Bern. ubi sup.

Aug. Confess. lib. 2. ca. 2.

* *Et mandata eius gravia non sunt.*
Joan. 1. 3.

Greg. lib. 7. 1 Mor. ca. 8. in illud: Qui sperant in Domine, mutabunt fortitudinem.
Isai. 40. 31.

Saint Bernard, in his first Sermon upon the Dedication of a Church, says, that as in the Consecration of a Church, the Walls are Anointed with Holy Oyl's; so our Saviour do's the same in Religious Souls, sweetning, by the Spiritual Unction of his Grace, all their Crosses, Penances and Mortifications. Worldlings are afraid of a Religious Life; because they see it's Crosses, but perceive not the Unction, with which they are cover'd and made easie. † *But you*, says the Saint speaking to his Religious, *know by experience, that our Cross is truly full of Unctions, whereby 'tis not only light, but all the bitterness and hardship we find in our State, is render'd by the Grace of God sweet and pleasant*. Saint Austin own's, that before he knew the Power of Grace, he cou'd never comprehend what Chastity was, nor believe that any one was able to Practice it: But the Grace of God renders all things so very easie, that if we possess it, we may say with Saint John, * *That the Commandments of God are not at all heavy*; because the abundance of Grace he bestows upon us, whereby to fulfill 'em, renders 'em most sweet and easie. Saint Gregory Writing upon these words of the Prophet *Isay*, † *They who hope in God shall change their strength*, says; there are two sorts of strength; that of the Just, which makes 'em suffer all Mortifications for the Love of God; and that of the Wicked, which makes 'em undergo all sorts of pain for the Love of the World, for the maintaining of their Vanity, for the obtaining Riches, and for the satisfying all their irregular Appetites: And adds, that those who consist in the Grace of our Lord, shall change that vain force of Worldlings, into that of the Ser- vants of God:

The

† Omnis labor non amantibus gravis est: Solus amor est qui nomen difficultatis erubescit. Qui amat, non laborat.
Aug. in manual. in Praef. de laud. cher. l. de bono viduitat. in fine. Serm. 9. de verbis Domini, & Serm. 43. de Temp.

* Videbantur illi pauci dies prae amoris magnitudine.
Gen. 29. 32.
 † Fasciculus Myrrhae dilectus meus mihi.
Cant. 2. 12.
 * Propterea non fascem, sed fasciculum dilectum dicit, quod leve prae amore ipse ducat, quid laboris imminuat & doloris.
Bern. Serm. 43. in Cant.

† Ubi autem amor est, labor non est, sed iusor.
Idem Serm. 83. sup. Cant.

The second means, which makes the Practice of Mortification easie, is the Love of God. There's nothing that sweetens all sorts of pain like Love. † *He who Loves, says Saint Austin, thinks nothing hard; and the least labor is insupportable to those who Love not. There's nothing but Love, that is asham'd to find difficulty in any thing.* 'Tis after this manner that those who love Hunting, make no account of the labor and pains they take in it; but rather look upon it as a pleasure. Is it not Love that makes the Mother find no difficulty in Nursing or bringing up her Infant? Is it not Love, that keeps the Wife Day and Night at her Sick Husbands Bed-side? Is it not Love, that causes all sorts of Creatures, to take so much care in nourishing their Young-ones, that they even abstain from Eating, and expose themselves to danger for their sakes? Infine, was it not Love that made Jacob think his Fourteen Years Service for Rachel short and sweet? * *His Love, says the Scripture, for her was so great, that he counted so long a time as nothing.* Saint Bernard upon these words of the Spouse, † *My Beloved is to me a little Posie of Myrrhe.* * *She calls him, says the Saint, a little Posie, by reason that the excess of her Love made her look upon all the pains she cou'd suffer as little or nothing.* Moreover, adds the Saint, take notice that the not only says, *My Beloved is a Posie of Myrrhe*, which is us'd for pleasure, but a little Posie of Myrrhe, to me; by which last words, she wou'd expresse, that 'tis only a little and pleasant Posie to those that Love. Wherefore if this little Posie seems great or unpleasant to you, 'tis because you Love not: For we are to measure the Love we have for God, by the greater or less difficulty which we find in things. The difficulties in Vertue, are not great in themselves; 'tis the weakness of our Love, that makes 'em appear so to us. † *Wherefore Love much, and you'll not only find no pain, but much pleasure therein:* For no sooner Love appears, but all pain vanishes, and all sweetness accompanies it. A certain Holy Woman sayd, that from her first being touch'd with the Love of God, she knew not what it was to suffer, either exteriorly or interiorly; neither from the World, the Flesh, nor the Devil; nor infine, by any other way or means whatsoever: Because that pure Love, knows not what pain nor torment is. Love therefore not only raises the price of all our Actions, and renders 'em more perfect, but it gives us strength and courage to support all sorts

sorts of Mortifications; and makes us find a great facility and sweetness, even in the most bitter and hardest things. 'Twas after this manner that Saint *Chrysostom* explicated these words of the Apostle, *Love is the fulfilling of the Law*: For he do's not only say, as this great Saint takes notice, that the Law, and all the Commandments are included in Love, but that 'tis Love, which renders the observance of both most easie.

*Chrys. Hom. 2.
sup. Epist. ad
Rom. is illud:
Plenitudo le-
gis est dilectio.
Rom. 13. 10.*

This is confirm'd by these words of the Wise-man: † *Love is as strong as Death*. Amongst many explications which the Saints give of these words, there are two which serve very well to our purpose. The first is Saint *Gregory's*, who says, that as Death separates the Soul from the Body, so the Love of God separates the Soul from Corporal and Sensible things; and as Death takes a Man away from the Commerce of all things of this World; so the Love of God, when 'tis become Master of our Heart, intirely disingages us from all ties either of the World or the Flesh. *Love is as strong as Death*; because as Death kills the Body, so the Love of God kills and extinguishes our affection to all Carnal Objects, and causes a Christian to Die to the World and Self-love, and makes him enjoy no other Life but what is in JESUS CHRIST: And therefore he may say with Saint *Paul*, * *I Live indeed, yet 'tis not I who Live, but JESUS CHRIST who Lives in me*.

† Fortis ut mors dilectio.
Cant. 8. 6.

*Greg. Hom. 11.
in Evang.
Aug. Epist. 294
ad Ieron.*

* Vivo autem, jam non ego, vivit vero in me Christus.
Gal. 2. 20.
Aug. sup. illud: † Ponite corda vestra in virtute ejus.
Psal. 47. 142.

The second explication is of Saint *Ansin*, who says, that † *The Love of God is as strong as Death*, because nothing can resist Death when it comes. No Remedy, no Knowledge, no Riches, nor any greatness is able to withstand it: In like manner, when the Love of God has taken full possession of a Heart, nothing in the World is able to cast it out, Riches, Honors, Prosperity and Adversity are very insignificant obstacles, and serve only to increase, and so much the more fortifie it in a Soul. Such as have renounc'd the World, to follow the narrow Path of Religion, know very well, that by a spark only of his Love, they made a courageous resistance, to all things that oppos'd their design; so that no consideration of Friends, Parents, or any thing else in the World, was able to withdraw them from it: But on the contrary, that with joy they trod 'em all underfoot, and thought 'em meer Vanity and Misery, in comparison of the happy Life they embrac'd. Let us therefore Love much, and nothing will be able to hinder us in the

Tom. II.

L

way.

† Quis ergo nos separabit à Charitate Christi? Tribulatio, an angustia, an fames, an nuditas, an periculum, an persecutio, an gladius? Certe sum, quia neque mors, neque vita, neque angeli, neque principatus, neque

virtutes, neque infantia, neque futura, neque fortitudo, neque altitudo, neque profundum, neque creatura alia poterit nos separare à charitate Dei, quæ est in Christo Jesu Domino nostro. Rom. 8. 35. 38.

way of Perfection; then we shall be able to say with the Apostle: † Who then shall be able to separate us from the Love of JESUS CHRIST? Shall Tribulation, Affliction, Hunger, Nakedness, Dangers, Persecutions, or even the Sword it self be able to do it? For my part, I am certain, that neither Death, nor Life, nor Angels, nor Principalities, nor Powers, nor any thing that is in Heaven above, or in Hell beneath, nor lastly any Creature whatsoever, shall be able to separate us from the Love of God, which is in JESUS CHRIST our Lord.

C H A P. XX.

Another means to render the Exercise of Mortification sweet and easie, which is the hope of future recompence.

* Quis mihi tribuat, ut scribantur sermones mei? Quis mihi det, ut exarentur in libro libro ferreo & plumbi lamina, vel celste sculptantur in silice? Job. 19. 23.

† Scio enim quod Redemptor meus vivit, & in novissimo die de terra surrecturus sum, & circumdabor pelle mea, & in carne mea videbo Deum meum, quem visurus sum ego ipse & oculi mei conspiciunt eum, & non alius. Job. 19. 26.

* Reposita est hæc spes in finis meo. Isa. 27.

THE third means whereby we may render the Exercise of Mortification sweet and easie, is the greatness of that recompence we expect. Job comforted himself hereby, and encourag'd himself to undergo the greatest sufferings, when he sayd, * Who will be so kind to me, as to Write down what I say? Who will grant my request, by Engraving it on a Plate of Lead, or upon Flint? Why do you think he so earnestly desir'd, that his words might remain and be left to Posterity? 'Twas nothing else, but that those that should come after him, might receive in their afflictions the same comfort he receiv'd in his. And what are these words, that are as he says, so full of comfort? They are these, † I know that my Redeemer Liv's, and that at the last Day, I shall be rais'd from Dust, and shall be again cloth'd with this my Skin, and that I shall see God in my Flesh; that I my self shall see him, and shall behold him with these very Eyes. * This is that hope that I conserve in my Heart.

Tis

Tis from this endless Treasure of Consolation, that I continually get comfort in my sufferings. By this hope God encourag'd *Abraham*, when he appear'd to him, and assur'd him that his recompence was abundantly great. By this hope, *Moses* renounc'd to all the Riches and greatness of *Pharao*. † *Moyse*, says Saint Paul, being grown up, and having a lively Faith, wou'd pass no longer for the Son of *Pharao's* Daughter, choos'ing rather to be afflicted with God's People, than to enjoy for a short time any happiness that Sin cou'd procure him; believing that the ignominy of *JESUS CHRIST*, was a far greater Treasure, and more to be esteem'd, than whatsoever *Egypt* cou'd bestow upon him; because he consider'd the recompence to come. By this hope, the Royal Prophet exercis'd himself continually, in the observance of God's Law and Commandments; as he himself tells us:

* I was resolv'd to persevere in the observance of your precepts, whilst I beheld the recompence I thereby expected. † You'll perhaps object, says Saint *Austin*, that here's a great deal to do. But consider on the other side the promises made you; for there's no pain thd never so great, which will not become light, when you think upon the recompence annex'd therewith; for the hope of a recompence is of great comfort in our labors: Which we Daily see and experience in Merchants, Labourers and Souldiers. The Merchant is not discourag'd at Tempests and Ship-wracks; bad weather do's not keep the Labourer from his Work; neither are the continual Labors, Wounds, nor Death it self, thd it presents it self every moment, able to affright the Souldier, or make him quit the Field, barely upon account of that Temporal gain he has in prospect: How comes it then to pass, that a Christian whose hopes and inheritance is in Heaven, shou'd startle and be afraid of Mortifications and Sufferings upon Earth? Since they are the best means, whereby to gain the possession of what he hopes for. Shall these Persons expose themselves to inconveniences and dangers * For a fading corruptible Crown; and we who expect an immortal one, stand looking on and do nothing? Did we but consider the vast reward which will infallibly follow the performance of what is requir'd of us, we shou'd presently be convinc'd, how inconsiderable that is, which is exacted from us for the gaining it; and believe, that to get Heaven at such an easie rate, is to purchase it for nothing. 'Tis not sufficient to know the price, but the true value

† *Moyse* grandis factus negavit se esse filium filie *Pharaonis*, majoris eligens affligi cum populo Dei, quam temporalis peccati habere iucunditatem: Majores divitias aestimans thesauro *Aegyptiorum*, imperium Christi: Alpiciebat enim in remunerationem. Heb. 11. 24. 25. 26.

* *Inclinavi cor meum ad facientes iustificationes tuas in æternum propter retributionem.* Psal. 118. 112.

† Dices forsitan: Grandis labor: Sed respice quod promissum est. Omne opus leve fieri solet, cum ejus pretium cogitatur, & spes præmii solatium est laboris. Aug. Ep. 149. ad virg. De metriad.

* Et illi quidem ut corruptibilem coronam accipiant, nos autem incorruptam. 1 Cor. 9. 25.

value also of a thing, before we can judge whether it be dear or cheap: For shou'd I ask your Opinion, whether you think it dear to give a Hundred Crowns for a thing? You'd answer me, that's according to the value of the thing which is thereby purchas'd; since perhaps it may not be worth one, and perhaps it may deserve a Thousand Crowns: For if it be a Diamond of an extraordinary greatness, if it be a Lordship of very great extent, 'tis to have it for nothing. Wou'd you therefore know, whether God asks much or little of you, take notice what it is you buy of him; see what he gives you in exchange for the price you give him: † *I my self*, says he, *will be your recompence*. 'Tis nothing less than himself that God gives you, 'tis therefore a very cheap purchase, and what he asks for it, is nothing: For what he desires of you, is only the Renouncing your Will, and the Mortifying your Senses. * *He will save his Servants for nothing*, says the Psalmist; and can you purchase any thing at an easier rate? † *Make hast therefore you that have no Money, come and buy Wine and Milk without it, or without giving any thing in exchange for it*; run, make hast, and loose not the advantage of so good a Market.

Saint Basil also extreamly recommends this means unto us; * *Let your Heart*, says he, *continually be employ'd in thinking upon the Heavenly promises, that they may incourage you to advance in the way of Vertue*. 'Twas by this also, Saint Anthony excited his Disciples, to persevere continually in the severity of a Religious course; and sometimes, as astonish'd at God's liberality, there is, says he, a great equality in the Traffick that Men make in the World; each one gives as much as he receives; and that which is sold, is worth the price giv'n for it. But as for Eternal Glory, 'tis giv'n for a small price, since Holy Writ tells us, that † *The ordinary Course and Life of Man lasts only for Sixty Years; and that even the strongest scarce arrive to Fourscore; and the Years above this Age abound only with pain and misery*. Wherefore tho' we shou'd have serv'd God for Fourscore, or a Hundred Years or more, he do's not recompence us only with so many Years of Glory, but our recompence will have no end, we shall Reign Eternally in Glory, as long as God shall be God. * *Wherefore, my beloved Children*, says Saint Paul, *be not weary in Fighting against your Enemy, nor let the Ambition of Vain-glory flatter and deceive you*: † *For all the sufferings of this Life have no proportion* with

† Ego ero
merces tua.
Gen. 31. 2.

* Pro nihilo
salvos facies
illos.

Psal. 55. 9.

† Qui non habetis argen-
tum, propo-
nate, venite,
emite absque
argento & abs-
que ulla com-
mutatione vi-
num & lac-
tum. Isaie 55. 1.

* Semper cor
tuum promit-
ta caelestia me-
ditetur, ut ipsa
te ad virtutis
viam provo-
cent.

Basil. in ad-
mon. ad fil.
spirit.

† Dies anno-
rum nostro-
rum in ipsis
septuaginta
anni. Si au-
tem in poten-
tibus, octo-
ginta anni, &
amplius eorum
labor & dolor.
Psal. 89. 10.
11.

* Ergo, filii,
non vos aut
caelum defati-
get, aut vanæ
gloriæ dele-
ctet ambitio:

† Non enim

with that future Glory, that shall be reveal'd in us. * These short and light afflictions produce in us an unconceivable and Eternal weight of Glory. Saint Bernard gives us a very fit comparison: There's no Labourer, thò never so stupid, says he, that complains that the Seed time lasts too long; because he knows for certain, that † *The less time he spends in Sowing, the less plentiful will be his Harvest.* That of a Christian ought to be the same; the Sufferings and Mortifications of this Life ought not to seem long; because now 'tis our Seed time, and the more we labor and sow at present, the greater will be our Crop hereafter. And we cannot increase our Sowing, thò it be never so little, adds the Saint, but 'twill always produce a greater abundance of Grain, when the time of Harvest is come. When the Labourer sees that for a Bushel of Wheat he Sow'd, he Reaps Twenty or Thirty, he cou'd wish that he had Sown a greater quantity.

passiones huius temporis ad futuram gloriam, quæ revelabitur in nobis.

Rom. 8. 18.

* Id enim, quod in presenti est momentaneum & leve tribulationis nostræ, supra modum in sublimitate æternæ gloriæ pondus operatur in nobis.

2 Cor. 4. 17.

† Et certe modicum seminis incrementum, non modica seminis multiplicatio est. Bern. Epist. ad Monach. Eccles. S. Virgin.

CHAP. XXI.

In which what has been sayd in the former Chapter, is confirm'd by some Examples.

WE Read that the Companions and Scholars of one of the Ancient Fathers, having observ'd his continual Mortifications and rigid Austerities, press'd him once to be more remis and moderate in his excessive Penances: To whom he reply'd, My Dearest Children, were the condition of the Blessed in Heaven capable of grief, they wou'd extreamly regret their not having suffer'd more in this World, since they now clearly see the reward they might have had, and how much they might have increas'd their happiness, and at how easie a rate. Saint Bonaventure's sentiment is the very same, who says, * *That as much as we spend of idle time here, so much do we diminish our degrees of Glory hereafter, which had we employ'd our time well, we might have very much improv'd.*

* Tantam enim gloriam omni horâ negligimus, quanta bona interim facere possumus, si otiosam eam transigimus. Bon. de profect. relig. l. 1. c. 13.

This

Blot. refer.
Tale. Prop. coll.
lib. v. cap. 30.

This is confirm'd by what is recorded of Saint *Mechilda*. That *Jesus CHRIST* (whom this Saint had chosen for her Spouse, and to whom she intirely Dedicated herself) frequently us'd to Visit her, and to let her see the Glory of Heaven. One Day she heard the happy Soul's crying out, and saying, O thrice happy you, who still live in the World, in whose Power it is to augment your Glory every moment! Did but Man know how much he might increase his Merit every Day, he wou'd never wake without a cheerful Heart replenish'd with joy, to think he is to begin another Day, in which living to God, he may be assist'd by his Divine Grace every moment to advance his Honor, and his own Merit. This very thought is sufficient to incourage and strengthen us against all difficulties and Mortifications, and make us suffer 'em with satisfaction.

Pelag. Dia.
num. 31. in ge-
stis SS. Patrum.

The *Spiritual Meadow* (approv'd of in the 'second Council of Nice, and made by *John Evirar*, tho' others think Saint *Sophronius* Patriarch of Jerusalem was it's Author) tells us, that an Hermit who went about Twelve Miles to fetch all the Water he us'd, finding himself once extreemly weary, began to complain upon the way, that he was not able any longer to undergo so great a labor, and sayd thus to himself; What necessity is there of giving my self all this trouble? 'Tis better for me, to go and Build my self a little Cell near the Fountain, and live there. The next time that he went with his Pitcher for Water, he began to consider what place wou'd be most convenient for an Hermitage, and in what form he shou'd Build it, and what kind of Life he shou'd lead therein. Immediately he heard the Voice of a Man, as he suppos'd, counting One, Two, Three, &c. being surpris'd to hear one Measuring the way, or Casting Accounts in the Desert, he turn'd about, but saw no body. Going on his way, he had no sooner thought of his new design of Building, but he heard the same Voice again, and looking round about him, he still saw nothing. But the same thing happening a third time, he stop'd and saw a lovely Youth all in Glory following him, who bid him take Courage; I am, says he, an Angel of God, who have counted every Step you have taken; each of which shall be particularly rewarded. Having sayd this he Vanish'd out of his sight. The Hermit reflecting seriously with himself, cry'd out, how is it possible, that I shou'd loose my Senses so far, as to be willing to renounce so great a Blessing, and deprive

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my self of so certain a reward? From which very moment he resolv'd to live still farther from the Water than before, in order to increase his labor, and thereby his Merit.

Tis recounted in the Lives of the Fathers, that an Ancient Anchorite, who liv'd in the Desert of *Thebais* us'd every Evening to make a Exhortation to a Young Disciple of his, who liv'd with him, and was very much lik'd by him; after which they sayd some Prayers together, and so went to rest. It happen'd one Day that some Secular Persons, invited by the Sanctity and Reputation of this good Old Man, came to Visit him, and stay'd with him very late. He had no sooner dismiss'd 'em, but he began (according to custom) his Exhortation; which he made so long, that he fell asleep. His Scholar expected every moment when he shou'd wake, to finish their usual Devotions, and then retire to rest. But the Old Man continuing to sleep, the Scholar grew somewhat impatient, and found himself mov'd to go to rest. This Temptation attack'd him Seven times, but he courageously resisted and overcame 'em all. Being now past Midnight the Holy Anchorite wak'd, and finding his Scholar still by him, ask'd him why he let him sleep all that while, to whom he answer'd, that he was afraid to disturb him. Here they began Matins together, which being ended, the good Old Man gave his Disciple his Blessing, and sent him to rest. The Holy Hermit, had no sooner fallen to his Prayers, but he was in Spirit rapt unto Paradise, where an Angel shew'd him a bright and glorious Throne, upon which stood Seven very Rich Crowns. The Saint desir'd to know for whom these Crowns were design'd, and the Angel told him they were for his Young Disciple, to whom God had allotted the Throne as a reward of his Holy Life, and as for the Crowns, he had purchas'd 'em that very Night. As soon as 'twas Day, the good Hermit calls his Scholar, and ask'd him what had happen'd to him after his falling asleep. To whom he reply'd, I found my self, says he, often mov'd to impatience, and the Temptation of going to sleep before you wak'd, attack'd me Seven times, but I yielded to none of 'em; here the good Father understood, how his Scholar had purchas'd those Seven Crowns he had seen.

The Brother of Saint *Francis* the Seraphical, met him once in the middle of Winter, and seeing him almost naked and half starv'd with cold; scornfully bid one ask him

In Vir. SS. PP.
Pa. 3. fol. 137.

Chrys. Ord. S.
Franc. 1. p. 1.
l. c. 51.

to sell him a drop of his Sweat. The Saint putting on a pleasant Countenance, answer'd, tell my Brother, that I have already sold it to God, and that at a very dear rate. The same Saint was at another time most grievously tormented with such an excess of pain, and with such troublesome Temptations, that in all Human appearance 'twas impossible for him to suffer 'em for any considerable time. Notwithstanding, a comfortable Voice from Heaven, bid him rejoyce, and told him that his sufferings wou'd procure him a Treasure in Heaven, to which, were the whole Earth one solid Mass of Gold, the Stones all turn'd into Pearls and Diamonds, and all the Waters here below chang'd into the most precious Balm, they wou'd not be comparable, nor ever reach the greatness and value of that reward, which was layd up for him there. This assurance so softened and mitigated his pain's, that from that time forward, he scarce felt any, and being transported with a Spiritual joy, he call'd his Religious and acquainted 'em with the comfort, Almighty God had bestow'd upon him.

C H A P. XXII.

Another help to render the Practice of Mortification very easie; which is, the Example of our suffering Saviour.

† Per patientiam curamus ad propositum nobis certamen, aspicientes in auctorem fidei, & consummatorem Jesum, qui proposito sibi gaudio sustinuit crucem, confusione contempta. Recogitate enim eum qui talem sustinuit a peccatoribus adversus semetipsum contradictionem, ut ne fatigemini, animis vestris deficientes, nondum enim usque ad sanguinem resististis, adversus peccatum repugnantes. Heb. 12. 1. 2. 3. 4.

THE Example of our Lord and Master JESUS CHRIST, is the fourth means, and most powerful incouragement to Mortifie our selves. 'Tis what Saint Paul proposes to us, and invites us to follow in these words. † *Arm'd with Patience, let us run to the Combat propos'd unto us, having our Eyes constantly fix'd upon JESUS CHRIST, the Author and finisher of our Faith, who contemning Ignominy, Dy'd with satisfaction upon a Cross. Think continually upon those contradictions he suffer'd from Sinners, barely that you shou'd not relent, nor be dejected; for as yet, you have not resisted to the shedding of your Blood, in fighting against Sin. Holy Writ tells*

tells us, that the Children of *Israel* found the Waters of *Mara* so bitter, that they could not Drink of 'em. Upon which *Moses* fell to his Prayers, and Almighty God shew'd him a sort of Wood, which being thrown into the Water, render'd it very sweet and pleasant. This was a figure of the Wood of the Holy Cross, which sweetens all our Mortifications tho' never so bitter, and painful. The memory of *CHRIST's* Passion, of his Whipping at the Pillar, of his Crown of Thorns, of the Gall and Vinegar they gave him to Drink, is sufficient to make all our sufferings easie and delightful.

Exod. 15. 25.

We Read in the Chronicles of Saint *Francis's* Order, that a Person of a great Estate, and one who had been brought up very tenderly, and with too much delicacy and niceness, made himself a *Franciscan*. The Devil much concern'd at this change, resolv'd to try his skill, and use all his Power to divert him from his undertaking. Wherefore he begins to persecute him, and to represent every moment the Austerities of his Order, in which, in place of a plentiful Table, he found nothing but a few Beans, very ill Dress'd; instead of a good Suit of Clothes, and Lodgings Richly furnish'd; nothing but a coarse Habit, and a Straw Bed; infine, that in place of all those other conveniences the World afforded him, he met with nothing here, but a very great want of all things; which must certainly seem very hard. But the Devil made all things much worse than they were, and continually represented 'em before his Eyes, still soliciting him to quit these hardships and return to the World. This Temptation prevail'd so far as to make him resolve to leave his Order: Being thus resolv'd, it happen'd, that he pass'd throu' the Chapter-House, where kneeling down before a Crucifix, and fervorously recommending himself to God, he fell into a Trance or Extasy: In which *CHRIST*, and his Blessed Mother appear'd to him and ask'd him the cause of his departure; to whom he Modestly reply'd, that his nice and tender Education in the World, had made him very unfit and even unable to undergo the hardships of Religion. At this our Saviour lifting up his Right Arm, shew'd him the Wound in his Side Bleeding afresh, and spoke thus unto him: *Put here your Hand and rub it all over, with the Blood that comes forth, and whenever those painful Austerities which you are to suffer come into your Mind, refresh and comfort your self with this*

Chr. S. Francis.
1. Part. li. 4.
ca. 10.

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this Blood, and the most severe Penances shall always seem sweet and easie unto you. The Novice being come to himself, did all that our Saviour had commanded him, and whenever he was attack'd by niceness or impatience, he call'd to mind the Passion of our Saviour, and all the bitterness of Mortification he before felt, turn'd into sweetness. How is it possible, that Man form'd of Dirt, and a meer Worm of the Earth, thou'd look upon any Suffering or Mortification as too great, after he has seen his God Crown'd with Thorns, and Nail'd to a Cross for Love of him. And who is there that is not ready to suffer and expiate his own Sins, that has seen the God of Majesty, the Lord of Heaven and Earth, suffer so much for him?

This means, of which I speak, has all along been very much Practic'd by all Holy Men: For there is nothing can more encourage us to Mortification, than to propose to our selves the example of JESUS CHRIST, and endeavour to follow it. Besides, 'tis an exercise of the highest Perfection, and adds a new value to our good works; because it animates 'em with an ardent Love of God. Hence it happen'd that Saint Ignatius, who at the beginning of his Conversion, us'd only to mortifie himself, whilst he call'd to mind the Sins of his Life past; arriv'd at last to so high a pitch of Mortification, that in his greatest Austerities he thought more of imitating JESUS CHRIST, than of satisfying for his Sins. Holy Men reflect, that our Saviour has chalk'd out unto them the way of Mortification, and that he lov'd his Cross so well, as to shed his very last drop of Blood upon it for our Redemption. And as Naturalists say, that Elephants become more furious in Battle, at the sight of Blood; so Holy Men take more Courage, and burn with a greater desire of Martyrdom, when they behold the Sacred Blood our Saviour shed so plentifully for their sakes; but not being able to become Masters of their wishes, they even become their own Executioners, by long Penances and Mortification of their Will, and Exterior senses, whereby they abate their great thirst of suffering, having the satisfaction to have come as nigh our Saviours Practice and Example, as they were able. Thus we ought to do, *† Carrying always the Passion of JESUS CHRIST in our Bodies, so the end, that the Life of JESUS CHRIST may appear in us.* That

† Semper mortificationem Jesu in corpore nostro circumferentes, ut & vita Jesu manifestetur in corporibus nostris.
2 Cor. 4. 10.

That is, we ought so to treat our Bodies with Suffering and Mortification, that they may always represent unto us the Life and Death of our Saviour. † *Niceness and Delicacy*, says Saint Bernard, are very misbecoming a Head Crown'd with Thorns: Let us therefore Afflict and Crucifie our Flesh, that we may be the more like our Head CHRIST Jesus, whose Members we are.

† Non decet sub capite spinoso membrum esse delicatum. Bern. Serm. 7. Quadrages.

Twere easie to set down several other means, since all those that the Saints have left us, and the many arguments they have us'd to exhort and move us to Penance, may also serve us at present as so many Motives to Mortification. Saint Bernard Writing upon these words of the Apostle: * *The Sufferings of this Life have no proportion to the Glory that shall hereafter be reveal'd in us*; says, that they not only bear no proportion to the Glory of Heaven, but none also to the punishment we deserve, for the Sins we Daily commit, or to the Benefits we continually receive from God. Each one of which considerations seriously ponder'd, is a sufficient and most lively encouragement to this Practice of Mortification.

* Non sunt condignæ passionis hujus temporis ad futuram gloriam, quæ revelabitur in nobis. Rom. 8. 18.

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CHAP.

C H A P. XXIII.

Of the three Degrees of Mortification.

Bern. ubi suprà.

I Shall conclude this Treatise with a short explication of the three Degrees of Mortification, establish'd by Saint Bernard; and assign'd as so many steps to raise us to the highest pitch of Perfection. The first Degree is taught us by Saint Peter, in his first Canonical Epistle: † *I conjure you, says he, my dear Brethren to look upon your selves as Strangers and Passengers only in this World, and to abstain from all Carnal desires, which make War against the Soul.* We are no more than Strangers here, and Banish'd from our Native Country Heaven. * *We have no fix'd abode at present, we are in pursuit of another, and we wander like Pilgrims, and are far from God, so long as we carry about us these our Mortal Bodies.* Let us therefore behave our selves like Travellers, who are far distant from home. A Traveller, says Saint Bernard, always keeps the strait Road, and endeavours to avoid all turning and winding paths as much as he can. If he chances to see People upon the way, either quarrelling or making mirth, he is not at all concern'd nor troubl'd, but prosecutes his Journey with all diligence; those things being the least of his care or business. His chief affair is to long after his Country, and advance every Day towards it; for this reason he contents himself with ordinary Clothes and homely Fare, and takes nothing along with him that is burthenfome, or that may retard his Journey. Thus we ought to do in the Pilgrimage of this World; we must look upon our selves, as really we are, upon a Journey; nothing ought to stop us upon the way, nor must we carry any thing along with us which is unnecessary. † *Having Clothes and Victuals, we ought to be content, and as for the rest, we must leave behind us every thing* that

† Carissimi
Fratres, oro
vos tamquam
advenas & peregrinos abstinere vos à carnalibus desideriis, quæ militant adversus animam.

1 Pet. 2. 11.

* Non enim habemus hic civitatem permanentem, sed futuram inquirimus, & dum sumus in corpore, peregrinamur à Domino.

Hebr. 13. 14.

2 Cor. 5. 6.

Bern. ubi sup.

† Habentes autem alimentum, & quibus regamur, his contenti sumus.

1 Tim. 6. 8.

that is useleſs or ſuperfluous; that we may perform our Journey ſo much the better and more ſpeedily. Let us therefore languish after our dear Native Country, and obſerving the grief which the diſtance from it cauſes in us, cry out with the Pſalmiſt: † *Woe is me that I am thus long detain'd in baniſhment!* Happy is the Man, ſays Saint Bernard, that really thinks himſelf a Pilgrim in this World; he knows, and knowing laments his unhappy Exile, in theſe pathetick words; * *Be not Deaf to my Tears O Lord, I am a Stranger and a Pilgrim before you, as all my Predeceſſors were, call me home to Live for ever with you.*

† Heu mihi,
quia incolatus
meus prolongatus eſt.
Pſal. 119. 5.

* Lachrymas
meas ne ſileas,
quoniam advena
ego ſum
apud te, &
peregrinus ſicut
omnes patres
mei, remitte
mihi.
Pſal. 138. 13.

'Tis certain this Degree contains a more than extraordinary Vertue; and to arrive to it, requires no ſmall pains; but there's another of a more elevated Perfection; For tho' a Traveller, ſays Saint Bernard, makes no long ſtay in a Country where he paſſes; yet it often happens, that the curioſity of knowing the Cuſtoms and Manners of the Inhabitants, ſtops him for ſome time; which tho' it do's not quite break off his Journey, yet it certainly makes his return home ſo much the longer; and he may alſo be diſpos'd to take ſo much pleaſure in ſatiſfying his curioſity, that he will not only return late, but perhaps never arrive to his Native Country. You'll perhaps ask me, who can be more eſtrang'd and diſingag'd from the World, than he who lives in it like a Traveller? Wou'd you know? 'Tis he who lives in it, and is Dead to it. A Traveller is always in want of ſomething or other for his Journey, and were there nothing elſe but the care of providing neceſſaries, and the carriage of 'em, 'twou'd be a ſufficient hinderance. But he that is Dead do's not feel a want of any thing, no not ſo much as of his Grave. He is equally indifferent to praiſe and diſpraiſe, flattery and detraction ſound both alike to him, or to ſpeak more properly, he neither underſtands the one nor the other. This is the ſecond Degree of Perfection, which is far more ſublime and perfect than the firſt, and is diſcrib'd by Saint Paul: † *You are Dead, and your Life is hiddeſs with God in CHRIST.* Thus you ſee, that it is not enough to be in the World as a Traveller, but we muſt be truly Dead to it. Wou'd you know how to Live this Death? Turn your Eyes and look upon a Dead Carcaſſe:

* *It neither Hears, Sees nor Speaks, no Paſſion of Pride or Anger*

† Mortui enim eſtis, &
vita veſtra abſcondita eſt
cum Chriſto
in Deo.
Col. 3. 3.

* Hic non videt,
non loquitur,
non ſentit,
non audit,
non inſtarur,
non iraiſcitur.
Lanſberg.

Anger disturbs it, nothing at all troubles it, all sense and motion has left it. Wherefore if you still are ready to pry into other Peoples Actions; if you are never at a loss for an Answer to excuse and dispenſe with the obligation of Obedience; if you take it ill when your failings are reprehended; and lastly, when you seem to be neglected, or have an occasion given you of humbling your self by another, and you presently resent it and stomach at it, be assur'd, that you are so far from being Dead to the World, that you Live and Act by a Worldly Spirit: For one that is Dead is altogether unconcern'd at any contempt or injury done him. Happy is the Man, says Saint Bernard, that is thus Dead. This kind of Death is the only true Life, it disingages us from the World, even in the midst of it, or rather separates us from all things in this present Life.

Bern. ubi sup.

† Magnus omnino gradus est iste: At fortasse poterit adhuc aliquid superius inveniri. Bern. ibid.

* Humiliavit semetip. um Dominus noster Jesus Christus usque ad mortem, mortem autem crucis. Philip. 2. 8.

† Mihi mundus crucifixus est, & ego mundo. Gal. 6. 14.

† See here, continues the Saint, a very noble degree of Mortification, but perhaps we may find one yet more sublime. Where shall we seek for it, or where shall we find it but in him that was rapt to the third Heaven? For if there be another degree more Sovereign than what we have spoke of, it very well deserves the name of a third Heaven. For what can we do more than to lay down our Lives in imitation of * JESUS CHRIST, who was Obedient even to Death? Nothing sure can go beyond this? Yes, there still remains something more, 'Tis the Death of the Cross, as the Apostle adds, and as the Holy Church Sings upon Good-Fryday, in memory of the Passion. To Die upon a Cross, is more than barely to Die: For in those Days it was the greatest infamy to Die upon a Cross. This is the third Degree of Mortification, far more sublime than the two others, and to which Saint Paul was elevated, as well as to the third Heaven. When he sayd, † The World is Crucifi'd to me, and I to the World. He was not content to say, that he was Dead to the World, but wou'd add that he was Crucifi'd to it, and that the World was a Cross to him, and he to it. 'Tis the same as if he had sayd, Pleasures, Honors, Riches, the Esteem and Praise of Men, and all which the World Courts and Adores, is a sensible Cross to me, and an Object of hatred and horror; on the contrary, I love and imbrace with the greatest tenderness of my Heart, all that the World looks upon as infamy and disgrace. 'Tis then that a Christian is truly Crucifi'd

Crucifi'd to the World, and the World to him, when he perceives that the World is a Cross to him, and he to it. This made Saint Bernard own that this third Degree of Mortification, was far more perfect than the other two. For tho' a Traveller only passes by, without making any considerable stay to look upon what offers it self to his sight, yet he still beholds those Objects, and in that must needs spend some little time: And as for him that is Dead to the World, which is the second Degree, he is indeed equally indifferent to Adversity and Prosperity, to Infamy and Honor: But still the third Degree far surpasses this, and is not satisfi'd with this Holy indifferency. He that is come to this Perfection, thinks it a poor business to look upon the esteem and glory of the World as nothing, and as if he were Dead, unless he really thinks 'em a Cross and the greatest Punishment can fall upon him: To be insensible of affronts and disgrace, is but a very small matter in his sight, who rejoices and glories in them, and says with Saint Paul; † *Far be it from me to Glory, unless in the Cross of CHRIST JESUS by which the World is Crucifi'd to me, and I to it.* 'Tis the Love of JESUS CHRIST that makes me hate all the World loves, and causes me to place my greatest content and delight in what the World hates. * *I am fill'd with comfort, and I feel a superabundant joy in my afflictions*; and all my satisfaction is in suffering for JESUS CHRIST.

This is the third Degree which Saint Bernard justly terms the third Heaven, because 'tis so sublime. Holy Men and Masters of Spirit are of the same Opinion, since the most Sovereign Perfection of Mortification consists in it; and Philosophy teaches, that 'tis a certain sign of having acquir'd any Vertue in Perfection, when we perform it's acts with ease and pleasure. Do you then desire to know if you have arriv'd at this third and most perfect degree of Mortification? Examine your self whether you rejoyce when your inclinations are thwarted, your petitions deny'd, and you your self contemn'd; on the contrary, when People respect and honor you, do's this trouble and afflict you? † *Wherefore let every one of us consider, says Saint Bernard, in what degree we are, and endeavour to make a new progress; for by our advancing from one Vertue to another we shall enjoy the beatifical Vision in the Heavenly Sion.* This was the sublime state which our Saviour spoke of to Saint Francis in these words; *If you desire to enjoy me, make all bitter things sweet, and all sweet things bitter to you.*

† *Mihi autem absit gloriari, nisi in cruce Domini nostri Jesu Christi, per quem mihi mundus crucifixus est, & ego mundo.*
Gal 6. 14.

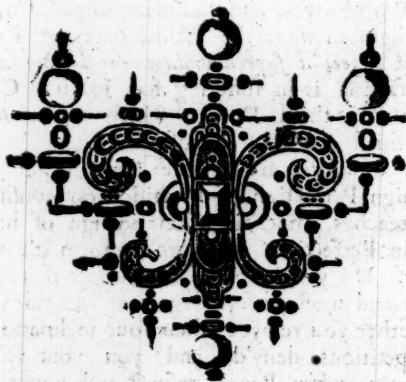
* *Repletus sum consolatione, superabundo gaudio in omni tribulatione nostra.*
2 Cor. 7. 4.

Ubi sup.
† *Pensamus ergo singuli in quo gradu quisque sit positus, & studemus proficere de die in diem, quoniam de virtute in virtutem videbitur Deus Deorum in Sion.*
Psal. 83. 8.

Cesarini

*Lib. 8. Dial.
cap. 16.*

Cesarini in his Dialogues tells us, that there was a Lay-Brother in one of the Monasteries of the *Cisterrians*, call'd *Rodolphus*, a great Servant of God and frequently favor'd with Divine Revelations, who staying one Night in the Church after Matins, saw our Blessed Saviour and Fifteen *Cisterrian* Monks about him, all hanging upon Crosses. Our Saviours Body reflected so great a light, that by the help thereof he easily knew the Monks, for they were all still living; who being much surpris'd at this sight, our Saviour ask'd him if he knew those Persons who were there Crucifi'd with him; to whom he answer'd yes, but cou'd not comprehend what the Vision meant. *These*, says our Saviour, *whom you see, are the only Persons that are Crucifi'd with me, by a Conformity of their Lives to my Death and Passion.*



THE

THE SECOND TREATISE OF MODESTY and SILENCE.

CHAP. I.

How necessary Modesty is, for the Edification and Profit of our Neighbour.



MODESTY, of which we treat at present, consists in this, that our Exterior be so compos'd, our Senses so recollected, our manner of proceeding, our Conversation, our very Gate, and all our Gestures and Motions be such, as may Edifie those that shall live and converse with us. All that belongs to this kind of Modesty, is comprehended in this short sentence out of Saint *Austin*; † *Let there be nothing offensive in your Exterior, take care that every thing there be suitable to your Holy Profession.* 'Tis not my intention to descend to all the particulars, in which this Vertue is broken or kept; this general Rule lay'd down by Saint *Austin*, and follow'd by the best and most Spiritual Men, shall suffice at present; and is as follows: Endeavour that all your Actions be so

† In omnibus vestris motibus nihil fiat quod cuiusquam offendat aspectum, sed quod vestram deceat sanctitatem.
In Regu's S. August.

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well order'd, that they never give any occasion of Scandal, but on the contrary give great Edification to every one; and be sure that Humility, joyn'd with a grave Religious behaviour, shine in your Exterior, and then you'll keep all the Laws of Modesty. Wherefore all I pretend at present, is to shew, how far this kind of Modesty is necessary, for those who by their End and Institute, are oblig'd not only to labor in procuring their own; but their Neighbours Salvation also.

'Tis certain, that Man cannot see the Interior, whence it is, that nothing do's edifie or gain more upon our Neighbour, than a prudent and modest behaviour; this Preaches more forcibly, than all the Eloquence that words can express. Saint *Francis* one Day calling one of his Religious, sayd to him, come let's go out to Preach; whereupon they went abroad, and having taken a turn in the City, return'd home. Being return'd, his Companion ask'd him, when he wou'd make the Sermon he promis'd, 'tis done already reply'd the Saint, insinuating hereby, that the Religious Modesty with which they had appear'd in the Town, had been an admirable Sermon to all that saw them. And indeed an Humble and Mortifi'd Exterior, excites not only to Devotion, but to a Contempt of the World. It causes sorrow in the beholders for their Sins, and raises their Thoughts and Hearts towards Heaven. In a word, this silent Preaching oftner works more upon the Minds of Men, than the most Eloquent and Sublime Discourses from a Pulpit are able to do.

In vita S.
Franc.

In order to our selves, 'tis also very certain, that to be compos'd and modest in the Exterior, is of a very great advantage, for the obtaining of Vertue; as you'll afterwards see more at large: For there's so strait a union betwixt Body and Soul, betwixt the outward and the inward Man, that all that's in the one, appears in the other by a secret Communication. When the motions of our Mind are compos'd and regular, those of our Body sympathize with them: On the contrary, when these are unquiet and disturb'd, those are also unequal and disorder'd. Hence it is, that a modest composure in the Exterior, is an argument of an Interior Recollection, and of a Christian's Proficiency in Vertue; in the same manner as the Hand of a Watch, is an infallible sign of the exact and regular motion of the Wheels.

'Tis for this reason, that our Neighbour, as we sayd in the beginning, esteems so highly, and is so much Edifi'd at Exterior modesty and gravity; since from thence he draws a
consequence

consequence of the equality and peace of our Mind. Saint Hierom says, that † *Our Face is our Soul's Looking-glass, and that our Eyes, tho' silent, discover the secrets of our Heart.* The Wise-man says in his Proverbs, that * *As those who look into the Water, see their Faces clearly represented, so a prudent Man, by looking upon another, easily sees the bottom of his Heart.* No Glass represents an Object better, than the Exterior do's the Interior. † *A Man is known by his looks, says Ecclesiasticks, and the lineaments of his Face discover his humor. His manner of Apparel, his Laughter, and his Gate tell us what he is.* And the Holy Ghost describes a wicked Man to us in these words; * *This Son of Belial is restless and unprofitable, his steps are fierce and cruel, his eyes continually rowling, and his hands and feet are always employ'd in anticke gestures.* Saint Gregory Nazianzen speaking of Julian the Apostate, says, "A great many knew not Julian till he made himself known by his infamous Actions, and his abuse of Sovereignty; but for my part, says this Saint, when I first knew him, and liv'd and convers'd with him at Athens, I never cou'd perceive the least mark of goodness in him. He carry'd his Head extreamly high, his Shoulders as well as his Eyes were always in motion, his Behaviour was haughty and fierce, his Feet never stood still, every moment either Anger caus'd his Nestrils to swell, or Disdain drew them in, he frequently play'd the Buffoon, his Conversation was very scurrilous, his Laughter was ungratefully loud, he wou'd very freely grant and deny the same thing with the same breath, his Discourse was indigested and irrational, his Questions importune, and Answers impertinent. But why do I stay so long in describing thus by peecemeals his Exterior? Wherefore to conclude, I knew him by these Exterior marks, before I had heard any thing of his Impiety, which now confirms my former Judgment of him. Those that liv'd with us then at Athens, were they here present, wou'd witness, that having observ'd his Manners, I sayd, that the Roman Empire was bringing up a dangerous and pernicious Serpent. This I then sayd, and at the same time I heartily wish'd I might be mistaken; and without doubt it had been much better that I had been so, since we then shou'd not have seen those Evils, which have almost render'd the World desolate. Thus you see, that an irregular Exterior, is a sign of a disorder'd Interior, as well as an Exterior Modesty is a mark

† Speculum mentis est facies; & taciti oculi mentis fatentur arcana. Hieron. Ep. ad Furiam vid.

* Quomodo in aquis resplendens vultus prospicientium, sic corda hominum manifesta sunt prudentibus.

Prov. 27. 19.

† Ex visu cognoscitur vir, & ab occurso faciei cognoscitur senatus; amictus corporis, & rillus denarium, & ingressus hominis annuntiant de illo. Eccles. 19. 26. & 27.

* Homo apostata, vir inutilis, graditur ore perverso, annuit oculis, terit pede, digito loquitur. Prov. 6. 12. & 13.

Hist. Eccles. l. p. 2. l. 4. in fine.

of a compos'd Interior; which is the reason why Men are ordinarily hereby so much mov'd and Edifi'd.

'Tis upon this very account, that we are more oblig'd than others, to an observance of Modesty and Religious behaviour. For by our Institute we are bound to Preach, hear Confessions, Teach, Reconcile Enemies, Visit Prisons and Hospitals, and infine, to do all the duties which Charity requires of us: And 'tis not to be doubted, but that from a Modest, Humble and Mortifi'd Exterior, those Functions make deeper impression, and are render'd more efficacious, in order to the Salvation of Souls. By this they gain credit from their Auditours, who hereupon, forming a great Opinion of the Sanctity of those that speak to them, receive their words as Oracles coming from Heaven, and engrave 'em in their Hearts. *Surins* tells us, that *Innocent the II.* coming to Visit the Monastery of *Clarevaux*, *Saint Bernard* and all his Monks went to meet him, at whose Modesty, his Holiness and the Cardinals that waited upon him were so Edifi'd, that they wept for joy. Nor were they able sufficiently to admire the Gravity and Modesty of those good Religious Men; who, notwithstanding the Solemnity of the Day, and that extraordinary occasion of receiving his Holiness, attended by the Sacred Colledge of Cardinals, kept their Eyes fix'd upon the ground, without once lifting 'em up; and thò they were curiously Ey'd by all that were present, yet had not so much as once the curiosity to look upon any one of their beholders.

This Modesty we speak of, do's not only serve for the Edification of Persons in the World, but also of our Brethren in Religion. For as Secular People when they see a Religious Man in the Church very Devout and Recollected, or Modestly walking the Streets in Silence, without taking notice of what happens round about him, conceive a great esteem of him, and feel themselves mov'd to Devotion; so in a Religious House, those that are Modest and Recollected give extraordinary Edification to the whole Community.

† Their looks, says *Saint Hierom*; is an Exhortation of Silence to those that break it, their very presence is a lesson of Modesty and Recollection to all those, whose Words and Actions are any ways irregular. Lastly, These Persons keep up Religious Houses, by maintaining their esteem abroad, and supporting Vertue and Regular observance at home; because their example draws others to Devotion, and Creates

*Lib. 2. c. 2.
vita S. Bern.*

† Ut loquaci-
bus compun-
ctionem inge-
rant, & in-
trandi ad soci-
etatem veram,
sancta deside-
ria incitent, ut
affectus ad cæ-
lestia move-
antur.
*Hieron. in Reg.
Monach. c. 22.*

in

Part. 2. Of Modesty and Silence.

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in 'em a Love of Heavenly things. Hence it is, that our Holy Founder recommends this conduct to us, that by observing and considering one anothers Actions, we may all increase in Piety, and thereby Eternally praise our Blessed Redeemer.

'Tis sayd of Saint Bernardin, that he had so Grave and Modest an Air, that his presence alone, inspir'd Modesty and Recollection into his Companions. We Read also, that Pagans were Converted by only looking upon Saint Lucian, the Martyr. These were good Preachers and true imitators of him, who was, as the Gospel says, † *A bright and shining Lamp*, that is to say, in whom the Fire of the Love of God did not only burn, but sent forth a clear light, to guide Men throu' the paths of Salvation, by the example of his own Miraculous Life. All this must needs extreamly incourage us to an observance of Modesty in all our Actions, in order to Edifie our Neighbours and Brethren; and produce in both the Fruit we have spoken of; otherwise whar's become of the Zeal of God's Glory which we profess? Where is our care to save Souls? If we do not endeavour this one thing, so proper for their Edification in this World, and Salvation in the next, since 'tis also so easie to be perform'd by us?

† Erat lucerna
ardens, & lu-
cens.
Joan. 5. 35.

CHAP.

C H A P. II.

Of the necessity of Modesty in order to our own particular advancement.

TIS the common Opinion of Holy Men, that a Modest guard over our Senses, is one of the chief means left us to advance in Vertue, for as much as it highly contributes to Interior Recollection; for our Senses are the Gates, by which all Evil enters into our Hearts, and therefore ought to be well guarded, that our Hearts may be in greater security. Saint Hierom upon the words of Job: † *Are not the Gates of Death open to you, and have you not seen the Doors of darkness?* says, That our Senses are the Gates of Death, and that Sin, which is the Death of the Soul, enters by them, as the Prophet Jeremy affirms: * *Death Ascends by our Windows*, and he moreover adds, that they are call'd the Doors of darkness; because they give entrance to the Night of Sin. Saint Gregory is of the same Opinion, and this Axiom in Philosophy, † *There's nothing in the Understanding which has not first pass'd the Senses*, is frequently brought by Holy Men for a proof of this. When the Gates of a House are shut and well guarded, all within Doors is secure; but if they be left open, and no body takes care to look to them, so that all People may go in and out at pleasure, no body can be safe in that House; at least, no one can be secure or quiet, whilst so many go in and out every moment. Wherefore we see, that those who take care to secure the Gates of their Senses, live Devoutly, and enjoy the blessings of an Interior peace; but on the contrary, such as are negligent in this affair, do never enjoy any true peace and quiet in their Souls. Hence the Wife-man advices us * *To use all possible diligence in defending our heart, because 'tis the fountain of Life*. Saint Gregory

Hier. in illud:

† Numquid
aperte sunt
tibi portæ
mortis, & o-
stia tenebrosa
vidisti?
Job. 38. 17.

* Ascendit
mors per fe-
nestras no-
stras..

Jerem. 9. 21.
Greg. in Job.
21. ca. 1.

† Nihil est in
intellectu
quod prius
non fuerit in
sensu.

* Omni custo-
dia serva cor-
tuum, quia ex
ipso vita pro-
cedit.
Prov. 4. 23.

is of Opinion, that a guard upon our Senses is the best defence of our heart; for says he, † We must not give leave to our Senses to Sally out; if we desire to preserve Purity of heart. Saint Dorotheus bids us * Never to accustom our Eyes to look here and there upon vain and unprofitable Objects; which only serve to divert our Thoughts from being better employ'd, and render 'em unprofitable. If we are not diligent in watching over our Senses, we shall easily loose all the stock, we have spent so much time and pains in treasuring up, and in the end find our selves empty handed: Since a short negligence, destroys both God's Grace, and our own painful endeavours. † Avoid speaking much, says Saint Dorotheus, as the very hane of Pious Thoughts and Divine Inspirations. * Silence and quiet, says Saint Bernard, do with a very sweet kind of necessity force us to Meditate upon Heavenly things, after we are once freed from the noise and bustle of the busie World. The same Saint says in another place, that modest and down-cast Eyes, make the Heart look up to God; and we find by Daily experience, that the more we restrain that Sense, the more we improve in Devotion, and the greater is our Interior Recollection.

secularium perpetua quiete cogit caelestia meditari, Bernard. Epist. 378. & 1008.

It was for this reason, as Cassian assures us, that the Fathers of the Desert sayd, that one shou'd be Blind, Deaf and Dumb, to acquire true Perfection, to keep a clean Heart, and to live Interiorly Recollected; for in this case nothing cou'd be able to fully or defile our Soul, which wou'd hereby be disingag'd and more free to Converse with God. Here you'll ask me, how can Blindness, Deafness or Dumbness, suit with us, who are so much ingag'd to converse with our Neighbour, and consequently oblig'd to hear and see much more than we desire? The Answer brings a cure along with it, we are to see them, as if we did not see at all; and hear, as if we wanted that Sense; nothing that is either heard or seen must be permitted to stay one moment in our Hearts, but be chas'd immediately from thence. Saint Ephrem furnishes us with a Story upon this subject: A Monk, says he, ask'd an Old Father what he shou'd do, since his Abbot having appointed him to go every Day to the Bake-house, to assist the Baker; where he still met with some Young People, whose Licentious Discourse, did very much disedifie and offend him,

† Unde nobis ad custodiendam cordis munditiam exteriorum quoque sensuum disciplina servanda est. Greg. in Job. lib. 2. ca. 1.

* Affuece oculos non circumferre ad vanas res & alienas, hoc enim labores omnes flectificos depetere facit. Dorothe. Ser. 22. Imit. Christi. lib. 1. ca. 22.

† Cave à multiloquio, hoc enim sanctas ac rationabiles & à Cælo advenientes cogitationes penitus extinguit. Dorothe. Serm. 30.

* Juge silentium & ab omni strepitu de 12. grad.

Cassian. lib. 4. de Institut. regul. ca. 41.

S. Ephrem. tom. 2. ca. 73. & de varia doct. pa. 234.

It

it not being fit to be heard. The Old Father answer'd him thus, have you not seen a great many Boys in a School, and observ'd the noise they made in getting their Lessons by-heart, which they were to say to their Master? Every one there, only minds his own Lesson, that being what he is to give an account of, and do's not trouble himself with another's. Do you the same; do not be in pain for what others do or say, but mind your own duty; since Almighty God will only call you to an account for that.

'Tis sayd, that Saint Bernard was so strongly united to God, that he saw without seeing, and heard without hearing. Nay, he seem'd even to have lost the use of his Senses; since he did not know whether the Floor of his Cell, in which he had liv'd the Year of his Novitship, was boarded or brick'd. There were three Glass Windows in the Church yet he never perceiv'd more than one. He had walk'd almost a whole Day by the side of a Lake with some other Religious, who speaking to him of it, he ask'd 'em what Lake they meant? For he had seen none that Day. The same is reported of Abbot *Palladius*, who liv'd Twenty Years in the same Cell, without ever looking up to the Roof of it. In the same manner, whilst we converse with the World, in order to our Neighbour's Salvation, we shou'd be Blind, Deaf and Dumb; whereby whatsoever shou'd offer it self to our Eyes or Ears, wou'd not in the least hinder our Spiritual advancement.

C H A P. III.

*Of the Error of those, who make little account
of this Exterior Modesty, as not being
Essential to Perfection.*

WHAT I am about to say at present, is chiefly to disabuse those that deceive themselves by making little or no account of what appears in the Exterior; under pretence, that Perfection consists not in Modesty and Silence, but in the Interior, and in the Practice of true and solid Vertues. *Lipomanus* relates an excellent example upon this subject, taken out of the *Spiritual Meadow*, which is as follows; one of the Ancient Hermits who liv'd in the Deserts of *Egypt*, came one Day to *Alexandria*, to Sell some little Wicker Baskets he had made, where seeing a Young Hermit go into a Tavern, he was extremely dissatisf'd, and resolv'd to wait his coming out. After some little time the Old Man seeing him come out, call'd him to him, and taking him aside, spoke to him after the following manner; do you not consider Dear Brother that you are as yet very Young, and that our Enemy is continually laying Snares to intrap us? Do you not reflect upon the danger to which an Hermit exposes himself by entering into Cities, where his Eyes and Ears meet so many dangerous Objects? How comes it then to pass, that you dare hazard your self, in a place frequented by so much ill Company both of Men and Women, and where you cannot possibly avoid the hearing and seeing of very great liberties? Wherefore in the Name of God, do so no more, but hasten back to your solitude in the Desert, where by the assistance of God's Grace, you'll be secure from danger. The Young Man reply'd, good Father be not at all in pain, for what I have done; since Perfection do's not consist in what you see in the outside, but in the Purity of the Heart; for so long as I keep my Heart undefil'd, I

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shall perform all that God requires of me. At this the Old Man lifting up his Hands to Heaven, cry'd out, Lord, be you for ever bless'd and prais'd; for my part I have spent Five and Fifty Years in the Desert, and liv'd with all Recollection possible, yet I find not this Purity of Heart; whereas this Young Man, notwithstanding his frequenting scandalous Houses has obtain'd it. This is the best Answer to all those that shall make the same objection. For notwithstanding all agree that the very Essence of Perfection consists in Purity of Heart, in Charity and the Love of God; yet no Man will ever arrive thither, unless he be extremely careful in guarding his Senses, and in the observance of Exterior Modesty.

I ib. 2. de perfectione Relig. ca. 22.

Saint *Bonaventure* hereupon makes this particular remark, and gives the following reason for it; saying, that Interior Recollection is got and preserv'd by Exterior; this being the chief guard and outwork of the Heart. Nature never produces a Tree without Leaves and Bark; of Fruit without Skin; but still in all her products, provides both for ornament and preservation: Grace in like manner (whose acts are conformable to those of Nature, tho' much more Perfect) never forms a Vertue in the Heart, without procuring such a compos'd Exterior as we speak of, for a Companion; which is as the Bark and Skin of Devotion, and also of all Interior Recollection and Purity of Heart; which Bark and Skin, if you once take off, the rest will quickly decay and corrupt. Every one knows that a good or bad temper of Body, consists not in outward appearances, or in a good or bad look, but in an exact proportion or disorder of humors within. Notwithstanding, when we see a Man look ill, we presently conclude, that he's not well, saying, do you not observe his Colour, how pale and hollow Ey'd he looks? The same Parity holds in order to our Soul's health, which is easily judg'd by outward symptoms.

Traité de vera Virgin. ca. 2.

Saint *Basil* farther explains this Doctrine by another comparison, very pat to our purpose; which is also frequently made use of by other Holy Men. Our Senses, says he, are the Windows of our Soul, throu' which it beholds all that passes by. Whereupon he moreover adds, that there's the same difference betwixt a Recollected and Dissipated Soul, as there's betwixt an honest and dishonest Woman. The first, you'll rarely see at her Window, the second is continually either there, or at her Door, to see who passes by, and to call in

in some or other to talk with her. Observe here, says Saint Basil, the difference betwixt a modest sober Religious Man, and one that is not so: The modest Man seldom looks throu' the Windows of his Senses, he lives retir'd within himself, and is always Recollected. The other is never absent from the Window, to see and hear all that's done, and sayd, and spends his time idly with any one that passes by. But to come close to our comparison; 'tis certain, that tho' to frequent or not frequent a Window much, be no infallible sign of a Womans honesty, or dishonesty; yet notwithstanding it discovers too great a levity, and too much freedom of humor; and will certainly sooner or later be the loss of her Honor, if it be not already forfeited. In the same manner 'tis also certain, that Christian Perfection is not essentially contain'd in the Recollection of our Senses, yet certainly a vain and curious Soul, which is delighted in pouring out it self upon all Exterior Objects it meets withal, will never acquire this Christian Perfection, nor true Purity of Heart.

Let us here observe one thing more, that is very essential, which is, that as Exterior Recollection helps to create and conserve in us a good Interior, so Interior Recollection infallibly causes a good and edifying Exterior. † Where JESUS CHRIST is, there also is Modesty, says Saint Gregory Nazianzen. When solid Vertue is within, there's always Gravity and Modesty, and a very good comportment without. Such a true and solid Modesty as this, Saint Ignatius requires of us, that flows from an humble and peaceful Mind: Not such a thort and affected one, which upon the least occasion discovers it self to be false, and to want the solidity of such a Modesty, as proceeds from an Humble, Mortifi'd and Recollected Heart; which produces effects proportionable to it's cause.

What I have sayd will help us easily to discover whether a Man be fit for a Spiritual Life or not, and whether or no he be a proficient in Vertue; for the better discovery of which, Saint Austin gives us an excellent similitude. We are now, says he, come to Man's Estate, and have left off those little Divertisements we us'd when Children, which if any body had then hinder'd, we thou'd have been very much offended; but now being Men, we can part with 'em without the least difficulty, since we perceive they are sports only fit for Children. The same happens in a Spiritual

† Ubi Christus est, ibi modestia quoque est. Epist. 193.

Regul. 29. summ. consist.

Aug. lib. 99. 83. q. 70.

† Cùm essem
parvulus, lo-
quebar ut par-
vulus, sapie-
bam ut parvulus,
cogitabam
ut parvulus.
Quando au-
tem factus
sum vir, eva-
cuavi quæ erant
parvuli.
1 Cor. 13. 11.

course. When a Christian has once tasted the sweetness of Heaven and Heavenly things, and begins by little and little to advance in Spirit and Perfection, he is not troubl'd to be bereav'd of those Sensual Pleasures, he was before delighted withal; because now these Divertisements appear to him as only fit for Children, and misbecoming one at Man's Estate. † *When I was a Child, says Saint Paul, I spoke as a Child, I thought as a Child, and discours'd as a Child; but now being grown a Man, I have left off all Childish toys.* Do you desire to know whether you are a Man, whether you are improv'd in Vertue, or whether you are still a Child, look and consider well, whether you have left off all Childish sports? Do you still please your self with the little follies and trifles of Children? Do you let your Senses rove and wander, whether they please? And feed your Eyes with all the vain Objects they meet withal? Do you glut you Ears with all sorts of Discourses, and give full scope and liberty to your Tongue? Be assur'd if you do this, that you are still a Child, and very imperfect; because such Childish Divertisements as these, are your only satisfaction: For the Spiritual Man who Daily increases in Perfection, disdains such foolish trifles, and is far from taking any pleasure in 'em; but being a Man he contemns and laughs at this Childrens Play, and is asham'd to ingage himself therein.

CHAP.

C H A P. IV.

Of the Profit and Advantage of Silence.

MODERATION in speaking, is one of those means which conduces very much to advance our progress in Vertue and Perfection: As on the contrary, intemperance of Speech, is the greatest hinderance to both. These two great truths are set down by Saint James in his Canonical Epistle, where he says, † *If there be any one that offends not with his Tongue, he's a Perfect Man.* Again, * *If any one thinks himself Religious, and bridles not his Tongue, but permits it upon all occasions to discover his thoughts, his Religion is vain and unprofitable.* Saint Hierom makes use of this passage to recommend Silence to us, and says, that the Fathers of the Desert, grounded upon this Authority, were extream careful in the observance of this Vertue; and that he himself had met with several of 'em, who for Seven Years together had not spoke to any one. Denis the Carthusian assures us, that this Sentence of the Apostle, caus'd the Rule of Silence to be made in all Religious Orders, and mov'd Superiors to order a publick Penance, to be inflicted upon those that shou'd break it.

Now let us see the reason why 'tis so earnestly recommended to us. Can then one idle word be so great a Crime? Is there any more harm in it, than the loss of a moment of time, or is it any more than a Venial Sin, which a little Holy Water is able to wash away? Yes certainly, there's more harm in it than the bare loss of a moment, and it must needs be of greater importance than we are aware of; since the Holy Scripture (which is far from exaggerating our faults, and do's not use false weights, to make 'em the heavier) insists so much upon it. The Saints and Doctors of the Church (whom God has favor'd with particular lights, for the better understanding of Holy Mysteries) have taken a great deal of pains to make us sensible of the advantages of

† Si quis in verbo non offendit, hic perfectus est vir. Jacob. 3. 2.

* Si quis putat se Religiosum esse, non refrænans linguam suam, sed seducens cor suum, hujus vana est Religio. Jac. 1. 26. Hieron. in Reg. Monac. ca. 22.

of Holy Silence, and of the great inconveniences caus'd by a breach thereof.

*S. Basil. in reg.
fufius diff.
reg. 13.*

Saint *Basil* recommends it to beginners in Vertue, as a help to speak well; which is a thing very difficult, and requires a great deal of prudence. We employ several Years to make our selves Masters of other Arts and Sciences, and why thou'd we not do the same in the Art of speaking? Since 'tis a Science we shall never perfect our selves in, without long Study and much Application. You'll Answer me perhaps, that frequent practising of an Art, is the best way to get it, and consequently speaking much, is the readiest way to speak well. No, says Saint *Basil*, if you would learn to speak well, first learn to hold your peace. The reason he gives is this; many circumstances are requir'd to speak well, which being not accusom'd to, we do not observe, but rather speak whatever comes to our Tongues end, and after what manner we please, without either Rule or Method. On the contrary, Silence produces two admirable effects, which teach us how to speak well: The first is, to forget all the Language the World had taught us, which is as necessary to speak well, as 'tis for one that pretends to be Master of any Science, to drive out and forget those false Maxims he has already learn'd. The second effect of Silence is, that it gives us time to consider what, and how we are to speak; it gives us both time, and the advantage also of observing how the ablest Orators behave themselves. Whose Practice ought to be our example, both to speak with deliberation and sweetness; and also with that gravity and prudence which we perceive in their Discourse. An Apprentice observes how his Master Work's, thereby to inform himself, and to become afterwards Master of his Trade; so we ought continually to hearken to the best Masters in this Art, and endeavour to imitate 'em as much as we are able. Take notice therefore of some one of the more Ancient and exemplar Religious, observe with how much sweetness and easiness of Mind he gives Ear to all that comes to him; and with how much Charity he dispatches their affairs; who notwithstanding any other business he has upon his Hands, seems as if he had nothing else to do, but to attend to their concerns that come to him. Nay, what is still more, he's always in the same temper, and is ever like himself. But how different is his humor from yours, when at any time you are employ'd in never so small a matter? Are not your Answers not only too
brisk

brisk and peremptory, but sometimes very disobliging: Look upon another, and see with what joy and easiness he submits to his Superiors orders; without alledging any pretended excuses, or desiring that any one else should supply his place. Take notice of another, who is never heard to say any thing which may give the least offence to his Brother, either in or out of time of Recreation, either in jest or earnest, either to his Face or behind his Back; so that when, where, or of whom-ever he speaks, he always shews respect and esteem for the Person he speaks of; and learn of all these to do the like. Last of all observe another, who upon some harsh and ill Language giv'n him, makes no reply, but handsomly and charitably dissembles, as if he did not hear it, verifying the Royal Prophets words, † *I am become like a Man that is Deaf*. Mind also how that at the same time, by thus conquering himself, he gains his Brother's Heart; and learn to behave your self thus also, in the like occasion. Thus you have seen out of Saint Basil the two effects of Silence, and of how great an advantage they are. The same Saint farther adds, * *As often as we leave off the custom of speaking ill, so often we forget what we ought to be ignorant of; and at the same time get an opportunity of learning what we ought to know*.

Saint Ambrose and Saint Hierom Writing upon this passage of Ecclesiastes, † *There's a time to be Silent and a time to Speak*, confirm what I have sayd, and tell us, that Pythagoras ordain'd Five Years Silence to his Scholars, to the end they might in that time forget those Errors they had before learn'd from others; and that by only hearing him their Master, they might make themselves able Men, and learn those truths they were afterwards to Discourse of and teach others. * *Let us then, concludes Saint Hierom, first learn to hold our Tongues, that hereafter we may never use 'em but to the purpose. Let us keep Silence for some time, and hearken with attention what our Masters tell us; looking upon this as an undoubted truth, that after a long Silence, and having been a long time Scholars, we shall also have our turn, and hereby become Masters*.

Tho' what these great Saints have sayd, seems only intended for beginners, yet without doubt it equally concerns all: For either you are Ancient in Religion, or not; or you desire to behave your self like a Novice, in what relates to your Tongue, or else like an Ancient Religious; take which you please: If you'll govern your self like a Novice, the first

† Factus sum
sicut homo
non audiens,
& non habens
in ore suo re-
dargutiones.
Psal. 37. 15.

* Quippe cum
taciturnitas si-
mul & obli-
vionem ex de-
fectu pariat,
& ad ea
quæ recta sunt
discenda otium
suppediit.

Basil. ubi sup.
Ambros. lib. 1.
Offic. ca. 10. &
Hieron. in illud:
† Tempus ta-
cendi, & tem-
pus loquendi.
Ecclef. 3. 7.

* Discamus in-
taque & nos
prius non lo-
qui, ut postea
ad loquendum
ora referamus.
Sileamus cer-
to tempore:
ad præceptorum
eloquia pen-
deamus; nihil nobis vi-
deatur rectum
esse, nisi quod
discimus, ut
post multum
silentium de
discipulis effi-
ciamur magi-
stri.

ubi sup.

first Lesson they'll set you, will be to hold your peace, till you shall be able to speak as you shou'd do. If you wou'd carry your self like an Ancient Religious, you must be a living example to others, and the very model, according to which the Novices are to be form'd, and from whom all Young beginners must take their pattern. But I cou'd wish you wou'd rather govern your self like an Ancient Religious Man, than like a Novice; since now you have an obligation upon you rather to do so: For having done your Novitship, and for a long time observ'd the Rule of Silence, in order to learn to speak; 'tis not to be doubted after all this, but that you know the Art of speaking, and are by your example, able to help others in it: But in case you have not been a Novice, nor as yet have learn'd to speak, 'tis necessary you shou'd now begin, and know by this means, of what, and when you are to speak.

CHAP. V.

That Silence is a very great help to Prayer.

SILENCE not only teaches us to speak with Men, but with God also, and makes us Men of Prayer. This is Saint Hierom's Opinion, who says, that † *This was the reason why the Holy Fathers of the Desert, who were instructed by the Holy Ghost, were so careful in the observance of Silence; which they look'd upon to be the Author and Preserver of Contemplation.* Saint Diadocus says, * *Silence is an admirable Virtue, being the Mother of our best and most Holy Thoughts.* Do you wish to be a Man of Prayer, to converse familiarly with God, to be freed from bad Thoughts, and always be in a disposition to receive Divine Inspirations? Take care to live in Recollection and Silence. A great noise, hinders us from understanding what is sayd to us; in like manner, Secular business and much idle talk, permit us not to listen to Divine Inspirations, nor to conceive in our Hearts, what God wou'd have us do; who when he entertains a Soul, he desires to be alone with

† Ex hoc enim in eremo Sancti Patres cuncti summa cum diligentia observant sancta silentia, tanquam sanctae contemplationis causam.

S. Hieron in Reg. Monach. ca. 22.

* Praeclaratissimo res est silentium, nihilque aliud quam mater sanctissimorum cogitatum. S. Diadoc. de perfect. spirit. 7. in Biblioth. S. S. Patr. tom. 3.

with her. † I'll lead her, says he, into Solitude, and speak to her Heart. * There I will feed her with the sweet Milk of Spiritual Comfort. God is a Spirit, and 'tis a Spiritual retreat he asks of us. † What signifies, says Saint Gregory, the Solitude of the Body, if the Mind be not also in Solitude? God requires a Closset in your Heart, in which he may Converse with you: At which time you may truly say with the Psalmist. * I have fled from the World, and retir'd to the Desert: But to do this, you need not make your self an Hermit, nor quit those places, where Charity to your Neighbour requires your presence: Wherefore, if you desire to maintain Devotion in your Heart, and to be always in a good disposition to Prayer, live in Silence and Recollection, when Obedience and Charity permits. 'Tis a good observation of Saint Diadochus, that as often opening the Door of a hot Bath, exhales the heat; so a frequent and unprofitable opening of the Mouth, lets out the fervor of Devotion, divides the Heart between many Objects, and leaves a Soul so destitute of good thoughts, that 'tis even very surprizing, to see all the Spirit of Devotion, thereby quite let out and totally lost. Wherefore, if you desire to be free, and to manage your time so, that you may still find a vacant hour for Prayer, keep Silence, and you'll find sufficient time, wherein to entertain both God and your self. Thomas à Kempis says, that if we bid adieu to all unprofitable Conversations, imploy our selves no more than necessary requires, and disengage our selves from the vain curiosities of the World, we shall find sufficient leisure for the admitting of Holy Inspirations; but if we love to talk much, and to fix our Hearts upon all those Objects, that strike or please our Senses, we must not wonder that time is too short, and that we scarce ever find enough for our ordinary Actions. Hence it was, that the Children of Israel, being dispers'd all over Egypt to seek Straw, cou'd never perform the task that was set 'em, which caus'd the Officers to treat 'em after so severe a manner.

There's still another thing very necessary to be observ'd, which is, that Silence and Prayer mutually cause each other. Silence naturally disposes to Prayer, as well as Prayer to Silence. † I am Tongue-ty'd, sayd Moyses to God, and stow in Speech ever since you were pleas'd to speak to me. The Prophet Jeremy also, after he began to speak to God, look'd upon himself as an Infant, and as one that knew not how to speak. Saint Gregory takes notice, that those who give themselves to Spirituality, and frequently Converse with

Tom. I I.

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God,

† Ducas eam in solitudinem, & loquar ad cor ejus. O'ie 2. 14.

* Ecce ego lachabo eam. Ibid.

† Quid prodest solitudo corporis, si solitudo defuerit mentis? Greg. in Job. lib. 30. ca. 12.

* Ecce elongavi fugiens, & mansi in solitudine. Psal. 54. 8.

Lib. 1. de Imit. Christi. ca. 20.

Exod. 5. 12.

† Ex quo locutus es ad servum tuum, impeditoris & tardioris sum lingue. Exod. c. 4. 10. Jerem. 1. 6. Greg. lib. 7. in Job.

† Valde nam-
que insolens
atque intoler-
abile æstimant
quidquid illud
non sonat,
quod intus a-
mant.
Greg. ubi sup.

Imitat. Christi.
lib. 1. ca. 10.

God, grow Deaf and Dumb to all Earthly things, and can neither speak themselves; nor indure to hear others speak of 'em: † *For being unwilling to speak of any thing but what they love, all other things become very tedious and intollerable to them.* This we our selves sometimes experience, when God is pleas'd to shower down his Graces upon us in Prayer, and when we come from it full of Devotion. For then we do not desire to speak to any body, but keep our Eyes so modestly cast down, that we seem to have lost all curiosity; insomuch, that those that thou'd see us then, wou'd think our Mouths chain'd up, and even that we had no Senses at all. Whence comes this, but from our Interior Conversation with God, and by our being in such a condition, as diverts us from seeking any satisfaction from Creatures? On the contrary, when we love to talk, and Exteriorly have nothing to do, 'tis because we have no Interior fervor. How comes it to pass, says the Author of the *Following of CHRIST*, that we so much love to Converse with one another, since we rarely do it without harm to our Conscience? The reason is; because we desire to be comforted by one another; because we are willing to disburthen our Hearts of a multitude of thoughts that oppress it; and because we take pleasure in speaking of what we love; or of what we are afraid of, as being opposite to our natural inclinations. We cannot find in our Hearts, to live without some little contentment or other, and having none within our selves, or from God, we endeavour to find it without us in Creatures. Hence it is, that our Exterior failings, for example our breaches of Silence, loss of time and many other irregularities, are so much taken notice of in Religion, and so severely punish'd; since these faults, tho' they seem small in themselves, yet they are a great sign, of a Soul's being very little advanc'd in Vertue, and shew that the person who commits 'em, wants the qualities requisite for a Spiritual Life, and that he has not as yet tasted how sweet God is; because he knows not how to entertain himself with him, when alone in his Cell. When a Chest has no Lock upon it, we easily conclude, that there's nothing in it of any considerable value, in like manner also, where Silence and Custody of Senses are wanting, there's seldom any considerable Vertue to be found; and therefore when we perceive any one to be deficient in these, we frame a judgment of him accordingly.

C H A P. VI.

That Silence is one of the chief means to obtain Perfection.

A Certain Religious Man, no less vers'd in Spiritual than Human Learning, sayd, what is so very much to the praise of Silence, that it may perhaps seem an exaggeration, tho' 'tis a truth experimentally certain. These are his words, Silence well observ'd, is sufficient to reform, not only one Religious House, but even a whole Order: Keep Silence well and I'll engage for the Reformation of all other irregularities. The reason is this; when Silence is strictly kept in a Community, all are employ'd in their Spiritual advancement, which is the thing for which they came to Religion, and quite lay aside all other concerns. But if this be neglected, there's nothing heard but Complaints, idle Stories, Murmurings, Detraction, and particular Disgusts; which are not only introduc'd, but fomented by too great liberty of Conversation. 'Tis hereby, that one Man makes many others lose their time, and one inconvenience draws on another, till at length all regular observance decays, and the whole House in a very short time, loses the name of being Religious, and becomes both Secular and Profane. On the contrary, where Silence is observ'd, it Consecrates the House to God, causes all to breathe an Air of Sanctity, and fills it with an Odour of Virtue and Recollection; which excites all Strangers to Piety, and makes 'em cry out: *† God is truly here, this is the House of God, and Gate of Heaven.* What we say here of a House in general, may be apply'd to every Person in particular. Let any one Religious observe his Rule of Silence exactly, and I'll warrant him he shall soon mend his imperfections. For let us upon those Days we have spoke much, Examine our selves at Night, and we shall find that we have fallen into a great many faults. * *Much Misery, says Salomon, attends much talk.* Whereas, if we have strictly observ'd

P 2

Silence,

*Par. Natal.**S. Clim. grad.*
11.

† Verè Dominus est in loco isto. Non est hic aliud nisi domus Dei, & porta celi. Gen. 28. 16. & 17.

* Ubi verba sunt plurima, ibi frequentior egestas. Prov. 14. 23.

† Qui custodit
os suum, cu-
stodit animam
suam.
Prov. 13. 3.

* Qui pauco
sermone utru-
tur, legibus
multis non
indigent.
Plutar. tract.
13. & Moral.
lib. 10. post.
medium, id re-
fert de Carillo.

Jacob. 5. 2. &
1. 16.

† Numquid
vir verbosus
iustificabitur?
Job. 11. 2.
Greg. Moral. 1.
10. c. 2.

* Vir linguo-
sus non dirige-
tur in terra.
Psalm. 139. 13.
† Effulus es
sicut aqua,
non crebras.
Gen. 49. 4.

Silence, we shou'd scarce find matter for our Examins: For as the same Wise Man says, † *He that guards his Mouth, defends his Soul*; of which truth the Heathens themselves were not ignorant; wherefore a Lacedemonian Philosopher being ask'd, why *Lycurgus* had enacted so few Laws for that Common-wealth? Answer'd, * *Those that speak little, need not many Laws to keep 'em in due subjection*. This is the reason why Silence is sufficient to work an intire Reformation, not only in one particular Person or House, but in the whole Body of a Religious Order, and even in Kingdoms and Common-wealths also. From whence we may easily gather, why the Ancient Fathers of the Desert, had so high an esteem of the practice of Silence, and why 'tis made so considerable a Rule in all Religious Orders. *Denis the Carthusian* assures us, that this was the reason, why the Apostle taught us this great Moral above cited. *He that offends not in his Tongue is Perfect. He that thinks himself Religious, and do's not bridle his Tongue, his Religion is vain and unprofitable*.

Wherefore let every one now attentively consider, at how little expence he may be Perfect, and how easie are the means prescrib'd. Do you desire to be a Vertuous and Perfect Man? Saint *James* the Apostle assures you that Silence will accomplish your desires. Do you wish to be a Spiritual Contemplative? The Saints ingage that Silence will make you so. On the contrary, if you are careless in the observance of this Vertue, you'll never arrive to Perfection, and as for Contemplation, you'll always be a stranger to it. Pray tell me if ever you saw a great talker much giv'n to Prayer, or any other Spiritual Duties? No certainly, such a one will scarce ever profit in Vertue; since the Scripture not without reason doubts of it, when it says, † *Shall the Man that talks much be justifi'd*? Wherefore Saint *Gregory* Writing upon this passage, says, that a Man much giv'n to talk, will never make any great progress in Vertue; for proof of which assertion, he brings a great many Authorities of Scripture, and this amongst the rest, * *A talkative Man shall miss his way upon Earth*; that is to say, he shall not advance in Vertue, but *Jacob's* Malediction to *Ruben*, shall fall upon his Head; † *You are pour'd out like Water, you shall not increase*. Your Heart is always taken up with vain and unprofitable entertainments, 'tis always wandering abroad and absent from you; wherefore you shall never make any great advancement in Perfection, or increase in Vertue.

The

The Saints fitly compare a talkative Man to a Vessel without a Cover, which God in the Book of *Numbers* Commanded should be look'd upon as unclean. * *A Vessel, says he, that is open, and has no Cover, shall be unclean, it being always expos'd to receive all kind of dirt and filth.* In the same manner, the Heart of a Man, by keeping his Mouth always open, is defil'd with Sins and Imperfections. The Holy Ghost confirms this in several other places of Scripture: † *He that uses many words, wounds his own Soul.* * *Where there's much talk, Sin will not be wanting.* And lastly, † *To speak much is a very great folly.*

* Vas, quod non habuerit operculum, nec ligaturam desuper, immundum erit. Num. 19. 15.

† Qui multis utitur verbis, lædit animam suam. Eccles. 10. 8.

* In multiloquio non decet peccatum. Prov. 10. 19.

† In multis sermonibus inveniatur stultitia. Eccl. 5. 2.

I wish to God that we had not Daily experience of this truth. Saint *Gregory* taking notice of this inconvenience, says thus, your Discourse is good at the beginning, but presently it degenerates into idle talk, then rallery succeeds, which is sometimes too sharp and reflecting: At last the Company grows warm, and you become too hot also in proving what you sayd; and to make it appear the more probable, rather than fail you'll not flick at a Lye, nor perhaps at something still worse. Thus what is little in the beginning, grows great in the end, and jest is turn'd into earnest.

S. Greg. Moral. lib. 7. cap. 17. Et: Post. pa. 3. adm. 15.

Albertus Magnus goes farther yet, and says, that * *The Devil easily overcomes, where Silence is not kept, and proves it out of the Proverbs; † A Man that is profuse, and cannot contain himself in speaking, is like an open and un-wall'd Town.* Saint *Hierom* says upon this place, that as a City without Walls, is continually expos'd to the Enemies incursions, and in great danger of being Plunder'd, so a Christian who is not shelter'd and defended by Silence, lies open to all the Temptations of the Devil, and is in very great danger of surrendring. We may add to all this, the following comparison, which comes more home to my design, and confirms what I have sayd. 'Tis easie to surprize a careless and negligent Man, but very hard to do so, to a Person that is vigilant and always upon his guard. Thus the Devil finds no great difficulty in deceiving a Man that talks much, and has his thoughts quite taken up with vain and impertinent Objects. Whereas, he that is Recollected and lives in Silence, is never unprovided, but is always in readiness to resist his attempts, so that his Enemy has a great deal to do before he can surprize him.

* Ubi non est taciturnitas, ibi homo de facili ab adversario superatur. Lib. de virtut. cap. 31.

† Sicut urbs patens, & absque murorum ambitu, ita vir qui non potest in loquendo cohibere spiritum suum. Prov. 25. 28.

C H A P. VII.

That Modesty, Recollection and Silence, do not make us Melancholy, but rather pleasant and agreeable.

THE consequence which ought to be drawn from the precedent Discourse, is very remarkable, which is, that this retir'd way of living, in which we have our Eyes always modestly cast down, where nothing but meer necessity forces us to speak, or to hear others, where the Love of God makes us Blind, Deaf and Dumb, is not an uneasy Melancholy Life, but is so much the more sweet and pleasant; by how much the Conversation with God, to which it exalts us, is above all the satisfaction and charms, that human Conversation can afford. † *Let others think what they please*, says Saint Hierom, *for my part, the World is a Prison to me, but Solitude a Paradise.* Saint Bernard shew'd himself to be of the same Mind when he sayd; * *I am never less alone, than when alone*; for 'twas then he found the best Company, and was most of all contented: God being still with him, who alone can give the most solid comfort to a Soul. Those persons that are unacquainted with these private Entertainments and Conversations with God, and have never yet relish'd the sweets of Prayer, and of a Spiritual Life, will meet with a great deal of discontent and sadness in this sort of Life; but a good Religious Man will find therein, much comfort and content of Mind.

† *Viderint alii quid sentiant; unusquisque enim suo sensu ducitur. Mihi oppidum carcer, & solitudo paradus est.*
S. Hieronymus. Ep. 4. ad Rustic. Mon. de vivendi forma.

* *Nunquam minus solus, quam cum solus.*
Bern. Epist. ad Fratres de monte Dei.

From what has been sayd, we may discover a great abuse committed by those, who judging other Persons by themselves, and seeing one of their Brethren grave and modest, walking with his Eyes fix'd upon the ground, without stopping to talk with all he meets, presently conclude, that he is troubl'd with some Temptation or other; or is in some great Affliction: And by a frequent discovery of these their suspensions

suspicious, they sometimes cause the Parties to become so uneasy, that several, out of an imprudent bashfulness, have afterwards never dar'd to observe, that Silence and Modesty they were even oblig'd to, and which otherwise they wou'd have perform'd. We ought to be extremely careful in this, that the indiscretion and want of Recollection in one, do not turn to the prejudice of many. When you your self find no satisfaction in Modesty and Silence, you presently think your Brother to be in the like disposition you are in; or perhaps it may also happen, that you have no mind to suffer these good qualities in another; because they are a continual check and reprehension to your own carriage. But do not trouble your self, nor disturb your Brother in so Holy a practice, since he finds more content in it than you; for his joy is interior, and truly Spiritual. Hence the Apostle takes notice, that the Servants of God, † *Carry indeed a kind of sorrowfulness in their looks, but always possess a joy in their hearts.* Their outward appearance seems the more sad and full of sorrow; because their sole delight lies hid within. Heathens as well as Christians are of Opinion, that there's no joy so true and lasting, as that which is Interior. That Gold which is found upon the surface of the Earth, is not comparable to that which lies deep, and hid within the veins and bowels thereof, nor is that content true and solid, which only discovers it self in words and Exterior signs, wherein the Soul has no part or share at all. True and solid joy, lies low in the bottom of the Heart; and this true contentment can only be found in the peace of a good Conscience, in a generous disdain of all perishable and fading Objects, and in a Mind that soars above the Earth, and all other goods that are transitory.

† Quasi tristis, semper autem gaudet.
2 Cor. 6. 10.

Sen. Epist. 1. 3.
ep. ad Lucil. de
solido & inanis
gaudio.

C H A P.

C H A P. VIII.

What Circumstances are to be observ'd in Speaking.

* *Pone, Domine, custodiam ori meo, & ostium circumstantiæ labiis meis.*
Psalm. 140. 3.
Greg. lib. 7. Mor. ca. 17. & Pastor. 3. p. adm. 15.
Ambros. lib. 10. Offic. cap. 3.

* **L**ORD put a guard upon my Mouth, and shut up my Lips with a Door, says the Royal Prophet. Saint Gregory and Saint Ambrose speaking of the great inconveniences which are caus'd by the Tongue, and prescribing Silence, as the best way to avoid 'em, ask, whether we ought to be Dumb. They answer, by no means; since the Vertue of Silence, do's not only consist in not speaking at all, but both in speaking and in being silent, as time and place shall require; just as the Vertue of temperance also do's, which ordains not a continual Fast, but allows us moderately to satisfy the cravings of Nature, when necessity requires; and only to abstain from what is superfluous. † *There's a time to Speak and a time to be Silent*; but how to do both well, requires a great deal of prudence; since an unreasonable Silence, is every whit as ungrateful, as an ill-tim'd Discourse. We are taught how to behave our selves in both occasions, by these words above cited; *Lord put a guard to my Mouth, and shut up my Lips with a Door.* David, says Saint Gregory, did not ask of God, that he wou'd Wall up his Mouth, or shut it so, that he shou'd never be able to open it; but only desir'd that it might be so secur'd, as that he might always have the liberty and free use of it, as necessity shou'd require; to inform us, that the Vertue of Silence, consists no less in speaking, than in holding our peace, when necessity requires either the one or the other. Salomon following his Royal Fathers steps, begs the same favor in these words, * *Who will give a guard to my Mouth, and set the seal of prudence upon my Lips, that I may never offend by them, nor be ruin'd by my Tongue?* The great difficulty in speaking seasonably and to the purpose, makes the Wisest of Men Petition Heaven, that he might be able to discern the proper time, both of speaking and

† *Tempus tacendi, & tempus loquendi.*
Eccles. 3. 7.

Psalm. 140. 3.

* *Quis dabit ori meo custodiam, & super labia mea signaculum certum, ut non cadam ab ipsis, & lingua mea perdat me?*
Eccles. 12. 33.

and of being silent. One mistake is able to spoil all we say, but to speak well, no one circumstance must be omitted, but all must be exactly perform'd without the least Error. The same is requir'd in Morality, and in the distinction betwixt good and bad; according to that Maxim, † *All Causes and requisite conditions must of necessity concur, to make an Action good, whereas, any one particular defect, is sufficient to rank it in the number of bad ones.*

† Bonum ex integrâ causâ, malum ex quo libet defectu.

Now let us come to these circumstances that are indispensably requir'd to speak well; they are handed down to us by Saint Basil, Saint Ambrose, Saint Bernard, and many other Holy Men; the first and chief of which is to consider very well before hand what we are to say. This Lesson is taught us by Nature it self, who has so order'd that our Ears shou'd be always open, and ready to receive every sound; but has wisely plac'd our Lips and Teeth as a double barrier, for the defence of our Tongue: Thereby teaching us, to be forward and ready in hearing, but very moderate and reserv'd in speaking, according to what Saint James prescribes, * *Let every one be quick to hear, but slow to speak.* The Anatomy and Structure of the Tongue, teaches us the self same thing; it has two veins or branches in it, one of which goes to the Heart, the source from whence all our passions proceeds; the other mounts to the Brain, the seat of reason. The first is to move, dependant of the second; that reason may over-rule Passion. Saint Austin made the self same remark, when he advis'd us, † *To call our words to the Test, before we speak 'em;* that reason might first correct and polish our thoughts, before they come to the Tongue. 'Tis in this, that the Scripture places the difference betwixt Wise Men and Fools; when it says, * *The Heart of a Fool is in his Mouth, but the Mouth of a Wise Man is in his Heart.* Because the Heart of a Fool suffers it self to be carry'd away with the violence of his Tongue, and permits it to vent whatever do's occur, acting hereby as if the Tongue and Heart were only one member. When on the contrary, the Wise Man has his Mouth in his Heart; because all he says, has first been seriously consider'd, and found conformable to reason; he making his Tongue depend upon his Heart, for every word it speaks.

S. Basil, in regul. Brev. 208. & in consil. Mon. ca. 12. Amb. lib. 1. Offic. 12. Bern. de ord. vite & morum insit. ca. 6.

* Sic autem omnis homo velox ad audiendum, tardus autem ad loquendum. Jacob. 1. 19.

† Omne verbum prius veniat ad limam, quam ad linguam. August.

* In ore fatuorum cor illorum, & in corde sapientum os illorum. Eccles. 21. 29.

Saint Cyprian says, that as a temperate Man do's not swallow his Meat before he has chaw'd it very well, so a prudent Man never utters any thing which he has not

Cyprian.

S. Vincent.

before hand seriously weigh'd in his Heart; knowing that rash and inconsiderate Language, is often the occasion of quarrels and dissension. Another Saint advises us to be as long in bringing a word out of our Mouths, as we are in taking Mony out of our Purse to discharge a Debt. How slow and dull are we in opening our Purse? How often do we consider whether the Debt be due, and how much Mony it comes to? Use the same caution in opening your Mouth, says the same Saint. Consider first, whether you ought to speak at all, and then in what manner; and be sure to overshoot your self no more in speaking, than you wou'd do, in paying more than is due to your Creditor. Saint Bonaventure also Counsels us to become Misers in our words, and part with 'em as warily, as they do with their Mony.

† Antequam
verba profes-
ras, bis ad li-
mum veniant
quam semel ad
linguam.

S. Iern. in spec.
Monach.
Ephrem. to. 2.
p. 23, c. 18.

Saint Bernard in this, is more rigorous than Saint Austin, who only requir'd, that every word shou'd be once examin'd before 'twas spoke, but he will have it † *Be call'd twice to the Test of a serious Examin*, before it comes to the Tongue to be utter'd. Saint Bonaventure's sentiment is the same, and the Abbot Amon, as Saint Ephrem tells us, was of Opinion, that we shou'd first communicate our thoughts to God, and tell him what we wou'd say, and what reasons we design'd to make use of in our Discourse; which having done, we might then venture to speak, and by so doing, believe we put God's Will in execution, having consulted him before hand. Here you see the first circumstance of speaking well, clearly layd down; which if well observ'd, all the rest will have good success.

S. Bonav. in
spec. discip.
cap. 5.

The second circumstance recommended to us, is the end and intent of speaking: For 'tis not sufficient to Discourse of what is decent and good in it self; but the design and intent of our Discourse ought equally to be good and virtuous. There are several that talk like Saints, but 'tis only to deceive their Auditors, and make 'em to think 'em to be Devout or Able Men; whereas they manifest their folly by the one, and disguise their hypocrisie by the other.

Basl. in Conf.
monach. ca. 12.

Saint Basl presents us with the third circumstance; which is to consider the Person that speaks, the Person spoke to, and the Company in whose presence we speak. In persistance of which Rule, the Saint gives a great many good documents, in order to instruct Young People, how they ought to behave

behave themselves before Aged Persons; and such as are not in Orders, how they shou'd carry themselves before Priests; alledging these words of Scripture, * *Do not speak much in the presence of Priests and Elders.* Youth, says Saint Bernard, shews it's submission, deference and veneration to Old Age by Silence; that being the greatest testimony of the honor and respect they pay them. Saint Bonaventure renders this still clearer by the following comparison; the fear of God, says he, makes us appear with modesty and respect in his presence, and brings us into favor with him; after the same manner, as Venerable Old Age commands duty and veneration from us, and even obliges us to a respectful Silence, and a modest Behaviour.

The proper time of speaking, is the fourth circumstance, recommended to us by Saint Ambrose, as the chief part of prudence. † *The Wise Man, says Ecclesiasticus, will not speak but in due time, but the impudent and imprudent, observe no order or method in their words.* To make us the more observant of this circumstance, the Holy Scripture gives this high commendations of those that use it, * *A word in season is like a Golden Apple, upon a Bed of Silver.* Where this caution is not us'd, confusion follows, and the best things lose their value, and become disagreeable; for according to the Wise Man, † *A Parable never comes well, or has any force, out of the Mouth of a Fool; because he pronounces it not in due season.* This circumstance extends it self yet farther, and advises us never to interrupt another's Discourse; it being not only against the Rules of common civility, but even of Christianity. * *Interrupt not another whilst he is speaking,* says Ecclesiasticus, having patience till he has done, and then speak in your turn; and the Wise Man gives us still another instruction, when he says; † *He that answers before he understands what is said to him, shews himself a Fool, and deserves to be confounded.* He answers to he knows not what, and therefore meets with a confusion answerable to his folly. He imagines 'em to say what they never dream'd of, which makes his answer impertinent, and tho' he design'd to shew his quickness of apprehension, yet instead thereof he discovers his own extravagance. Saint Basil gives us very good Council upon this point, and advises us to be silent when a Question is ask'd another; nay, suppose that we be engag'd in Company, and some one starts a Question to all in general, we must

* Noli verbosus esse in multitudine Presbyteriorum.
Eccles. 7. 15.
S. Bern. de ord. vite & morum instit.
S. Bonav. de inform. Nov. p. 1. ca. 28.

Amb. de virg. ca. 3.
† Homo sapiens tacebit usque ad tempus: lascivus autem & imprudens non servabit tempus.
Eccles. 20. 7.
* Mala aurea in lectis argenteis, qui loquitur verbum tempore suo.
Prov. 25. 11.
† Ex ore fatui reprobabitur parabola: non enim dicit illam in tempore suo.
Eccles. 20. 22.

* In medio sermonum ne alijcias loqui. Priusquam audias, ne respondeas verbum.
Eccles. 11. 8.
† Qui prius responderet, stultum se esse demonstrat, & confusione dignum.
Prov. 18. 13.

never take it as address'd to us in particular; nor presume to be the first in answering. Humility forbids so great an Arrogancy, as to look upon your self as the best Man in the Company. 'Tis better to be silent till your Opinion be ask'd in particular, and then offer what prudence shall suggest.

Reg. 28. com-
muni.

† Et vocavit
Mariam Soro-
rem suam si-
lentio, dicens:
Magister adeit,
& vocat te.
Joan. 11. 28.
Tract. 4. sup.
Joan.

The tone or manner of speaking, is the fifth circumstance. This is prescrib'd us by our Holy Rule, when it ordains us to speak with such a low Voice as becomes a Religious Man. This is not only a very material circumstance, but is one of the chief parts of Silence; wherefore the Holy Gospel takes particular notice, of the manner of *Martha's* addressing her self to her Sister, upon the coming of our Saviour to raise *Lazarus*, the Text says, † *She call'd her Sister Mary in Silence, and told her that their Master was come, and ask'd for her.* How cou'd she do this in Silence, says Saint *Austin* on this place, when the expressly sayd, *Our Master is come, and asks for you?* Yes, she did it says the Saint, and in Silence; because she spoke softly and with a low Voice. The same happens amongst Religious, who tho' they be together at work, and speak to one another, yet there's no breach of Silence amongst 'em, so long as they speak with a low Voice. Whereas shou'd they change their tone and talk aloud, let their necessity be never so great, 'twou'd not excuse 'em from a breach of Silence. So necessary is it upon all occasions, and in all places to speak softly, and to observe a decorum in our words, that we may appear true Religious, and make our House appear so to. Saint *Bonaventure* esteems it a great fault for a Religious Man to speak loud, and wou'd have us speak so, as to make those only hear us, who are close by us. If any thing presses you to speak to one that is a pretty way off, go to him, it being an injury to Religious Modesty, to speak at a distance, or to call out aloud. The same Saint bids us also speak more softly than ordinary, when 'tis Night, or when we are retir'd to go to rest, for fear of disturbing others; which caution is also to be us'd in the Sacristy, Refectory, Chapter-House, and other places of respect and of Silence.

Bonav. in spec.
discip. pa. 4.
ca. 5.

An ingaging behaviour, and a pleasant and serene countenance, is also reduc'd by Saint *Bonaventure* to this circumstance. We must not put on a grim and austere look; wry mouths, rowling and staring eyes; and the contraction of our nose and eye-brow's must be avoided; we must not shake our head

head, nor use any other light or misbecoming gesture. This is what our Holy Founder commands, in those admirable Rules, which he Writ of Modesty. As to our voice or tone, Saint Ambrose, † *Wou'd have it even, and of an equal and constant strain, without any languishing stops or interruptions, free from all affectation and effeminacy, but grave and masculine as becomes a Man, yet at the same time so govern'd, as neither to appear harsh nor rude. And Saint Bernard is of the same Opinion, when he says, that* * *As a whining and effeminate voice or gestures are not to be us'd, so such as are clownish and unmannerly are equally to be avoided.* A Religious Man ought in all his words, to aim at a happy composition of sweetness and gravity, but most of all when he reprehends another; otherwise his words will gain no credit, and all his labour will be lost. Nay, Saint Bonaventure do's not stick to say, that he who discovers the Passion of Anger in correcting another, shews that he's more ready to afflict, than charitably, to help the party. † *Vice can never teach us Vertue*, Impatience cannot instruct us how to suffer Patiently, and Pride can never teach Humility. Whereas patience and mildness wou'd at once, both have edifi'd and prevail'd upon the offender, far beyond the best Discourse in which the least heat appears. This following and excellent sentence of Saint Ambrose, suits very well to our purpose; * *Tell a Man, says he, his fault, but do not upbraid him, advise him so, that he may perceive his Error; without his receiving the least offence; which is confirm'd* by what Saint Paul advises Timothy, † *In your corrections,* says he, *be mild and gentle, treat Old Men as your Fathers, Young Men as your Brethren; Ancient Women as your Mothers, and Young ones as your Sisters.*

As for all affectation of Language, by which a Man wou'd be thought Learn'd or Eloquent, 'tis extremely to be blam'd, and without doubt, those Preachers who make it their Study, to be Masters of a quaint and elegant style, are very faulty. Their diligence in seeking after proper terms, makes 'em neglect their matter. Their words are empty, and want the force and energy of the Holy Ghost, and lose the fruit they might have hop'd for from their Sermons. Water that is good has no taste, in like manner, good Language shou'd never relish affectation.

To conclude, there are so many circumstances to be observ'd, so many conditions requisite to speak well, that

† Ut vox ipsa non sit remissa, non fræda, nihil femineum sonans, sed formam quandam & regulam, ac sonum vitilem reservans.
Ambr. lib. 1. Offic. ca. 19.
* Sed ut molliculum, nec infractum, aut vocis sonum, aut gestum corporis non probe, ita neque agrestem ac rusticum.
Bern. de ord. vite & morum inst. 2.

S. Bonav. de infern. Nerv.

† Virtus cum vicio non doctetur.
Bonav. ibid.

* Monitio sine asperitate, oratio sine offensione.
S. Ambr. li. 1. Offic. ca. 12.

† Seniores ne increpare, sed obsecra ut patrem; juvenes, ut fratres; anus, ut Matres; juvenulas, ut Sorores.
1 Tim. 5. 1. 2.

'twould be a wonder not to fail in some one of 'em: For this reason, Silence is the securest Harbour we can put into, it protects us from all the inconveniences and dangers, to which our words expose us. * *He who is cautious and careful in his words, frees his Soul from many afflictions,* says the Wise Man. And an Ancient Father assures us, that † *Wheresoever we live, if we keep Silence and are sparing in our words, we shall live in peace.* Seneca also says to his Friend in one of his Epistles, that * *There was nothing more profitable than retirement, and to converse little with others, but much with himself.* All also applaud that frequent saying of *Arsenius*, † *I have often repented to have spoken, but never to have held my peace.* The same is reported of *Socrates*; and the Wise *Seneca* gives the following reason, for what I just now cited out of him; tho' you are not permitted, says he, to speak now, yet you may do it afterwards, but when you have once spoken, 'tis not then in your power to recall it, according to the common saying, * *Words are irrevocable.* — Saint *Hierom* † compares a word when once utter'd, to a Stone cast out of a Man's Hand, which he having once thrown, 'tis not in his power to hinder it, from performing all the mischief 'tis capable of doing; and therefore he advises us to be very wary, and consider seriously before we speak; because afterwards 'twill be too late to do so. This advice belongs to the first circumstance, we spoke of in the beginning.

Let us therefore resolve to stand upon our guard, and with the Royal Prophet be watchful over our Tongue, who sayd, * *I am now determin'd to take care of my ways, that I may not offend with my Tongue.* Saint *Ambrose* Commenting upon these words, says there are some ways, which we may follow safely, and others in which we ought to be very wary and cautious. The first are the ways of God, the others are our own. Those are secure, these lead to destruction, and cause us quickly to lose our selves, unless Silence be our guide and safeguard. When Saint *Pambo* first retir'd into the Wilderness, his ignorance of that way of living, oblig'd him to ask help and instruction of an Old experienc'd Hermit, who had liv'd there for a long time. The good Old Man receiv'd him very kindly, and out of a Charitable condescension to his request, began his instructions from these words of the Prophet, I before cited; *I am resolv'd to take heed of my ways, for fear I should offend*

* Qui custodi-
os (uam &
linguam suam,
custodit ab
angustis ani-
mæ suæ).

Prov. 21. 23.
† In omni lo-
co, si tacitur-
nus fueris, re-
quiem habe-
bis.

* Nihil æquè
prodest quàm
quiescere, &
minimum cum
aliis loqui,
secum pluri-
mum.

Sen. Ep. 104.

† Me ipse
pœnituit dix-
isse, nunquam
autem tacuisse.

Felag. tit. 25.
num. 9. de 3.

Arsenio.

Seneca. apud

Plutar. tract.

21. in fine.

* Manet irre-
vocabile ver-
bum.

† Lapis emis-
sus, est sermo

prolatus: qua-
propter diu

antequam pro-
feratur, cogi-
tandus est.

Hieron. Ep. de

vera virg.

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offend with my Tongue. Here Saint *Pambo* interrupted him, telling him that this one point, was sufficient for the present, cou'd he but well comply with it's Practice. Six Months after, the Old Hermit meeting him, gave him a check, for his not coming all that time to take another Lesson. To whom he reply'd, Father, permit me to confess the truth, and to assure you, that I am not as yet perfect in the first you taught me. Many Years after, some others ask'd him, whether he had as yet Learn'd his Lesson? He return'd this Answer. 'Tis now Five and Forty Years since I first heard it, yet I still find very great difficulty in it's Practice. But 'twas Humility that forc'd *Pambo* to this modest confession; for *Palladius* assures us, that he had got this Lesson so well, and practis'd it so diligently, that he always rais'd his thoughts to God, and consulted him about what he was to say, before he wou'd either speak, or make answer to any one. Which laudable custom drew so many Graces from Heaven upon him, and conserv'd him in that innocency, that being upon his Death Bed, he own'd, that he cou'd not call to mind any one word of his whole Life, which he now repented himself to have spoken. *Saints* in his History tells us of a Holy Virgin, who liv'd in such a continual and rigid Silence, from the Exaltation of the Holy Cross till Christmas, that in all that time she did not speak one word. And Almighty God was so pleas'd with this her Mortification, that he vouchsafed to assure her by a Revelation, that at her Death, she shou'd in recompence hereof, go straight to Heaven without Purgatory.

Saint Mary of
Ognei.
June 23.

CHAP.

C H A P. IX.

Of Detraction.

* Nolite detrachere alterutrum, Fratres. *Jacob. 4. 11.*

† Detractores Deo odibiles. *Rom. 1. 30.*
Abominatio hominum detractor. *Pier. 14. 9.*

* Melius est nomen bonum quam divitiarum multarum. *Prov. 22. 1.*

† Curam habet de bono nomine; hoc enim magis permanebit tibi quam mille thesauri pretiosi & magni. *Mat. 41. 25.*

* **B**RETHREN do not traduce one another, says Saint James the Apostle. † Detractors are odious to God; and abominable to Men, if we believe Saint Paul, and Salomon also, who was the Wisest of Men.

There are some that outwardly seem to take pleasure in hearing a Detractor, but they detest him in their Hearts, and are very reserv'd and cautious in his Company, justly fearing to be treated one Day by him, in the same Unchristian manner he treats others. This alone is sufficient to create in us a horror of this Vice: For what can we imagine worse, than that which is abominable in the sight both of God and Man? But waving this consideration at present, I'll endeavour to make you sensible of the enormity and danger of this Sin, in order to preserve you from ever falling into it. It discovers it's enormity by the ruine of your Neighbours Reputation, which is of greater value than all the Goods of Fortune, as Salomon assures us in these words:

* *A good Name is better than the greatest Riches. † Be industrious in purchasing to your self a good Reputation, which will last longer than all the Treasures of the World.* This makes Divines to say, that the Sin of Detraction so far exceeds the Sin of Theft, as a good Name do's that of Riches. And when they come to consider; whether it be a Mortal or Venial Sin in some particular Cases, they speak of this as of other Sins, which of their own nature are Mortal, and say: For example, that tho' Theft is in it self a Mortal Sin, yet the thing Stolen being of an inconsiderable value, for example an Apple, this extenuates it, and makes it only Venial; so Detraction, tho' it be of it's own nature a Mortal Sin, may prove only Venial, when it's subject is trivial, and of little or no moment.

Here we are to take notice, that Divines reflecting upon the great danger of falling into this Sin, advise us to abstain from

from the least shadow of it, and not to think any thing little, that has any tendency to it, for fear of being deceiv'd in our Judgments, as we are but too often. For instance, suppose one shou'd say a Secular Person has told a Lye, which amounts to no more than a Venial Sin; and at the same time say the same thing, or only relate one single imperfection, of a Religious Man; this last may prove a Mortal Sin, for the Religious Man's Reputation is much more wounded than the Secular Persons is, altho you shou'd have fix'd a greater Crime upon him: For 'tis certain, that the Credit of a Religious Man wou'd suffer more in the Opinion of the World, by having a Lye laid to his charge, than a Secular's wou'd, tho you shou'd charge him with not keeping Lent, and for being a Night walker, and a frequenter of bad Houses. Therefore to frame a true Judgment of Detraction, we must not look upon it barely in it self, but with relation to the ill consequences it draws after it. An example will make this Doctrine evident, 'tis no Crime to be of the Race of a Moor or Jew, yet Divines look upon it as a Mortal Sin, to fix that infamy upon one, who is already a Christian. In the same manner, to say that such a Religious Man has little or no Judgment, or is of a light carriage ('tis the example which Doctors bring upon this matter) is a far greater injury to his Reputation, than to charge a Secular Man with a Mortal Sin, and consequently brings a greater inconvenience along with it, than can be imagin'd. For example, I have a very good Opinion of a certain Religious Person, and look upon him as a prudent sober Man; you on the other side tell me, that he is not the Man I take him for, and that he did this and the other imprudent Action. By this you do him a very great prejudice, since by what you have told me, he has lost the credit he had with me before. When a Religious Man also changes his Convent, and is sent to live in another, ordinarily the first news he tells, is, how much he was disestim'd in the place he left; where, says he, such a one is vain, another fantastick in his Opinion; another troublesome and unquiet; which things, tho they are of no very great moment, yet they lessen the Reputation of the Religious House he came from, and of the Persons in it. Every one may best judge of this by himself, and see if he wou'd not take it extremely ill, to have these things sayd of him, or to pass for such a one, as Detraction has describ'd him to be? The Charity therefore we have for our own,

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ought to be the measure of our Neighbours Reputation: And since we pretend to Perfection, we shou'd never run the risk, even of one painful doubt, whether we have injur'd our Neighbour in the Opinion of another, by what we sayd; or whether the injury be a Mortal Sin or no. Why shou'd we deliberately run our selves into such inconveniences, from which very often we cannot free our selves without great trouble, disquiet and difficulty? If the doubt remains in a Religious Man's Breast, it must needs disturb him so far as to make him resolve not to expose himself hereafter to so cruel an uncertainty for the gaining the whole World. Therefore to free our selves from Scruples, Anxiety and Remorse of Conscience, we must be extraordinarily cautious of speaking even of the smallest faults of others, and take a most particular care to avoid Detraction, to which our Tongue is but too much inclin'd, and to which we our selves are naturally prone. There's this difference betwixt those who aspire to Perfection, and those who never seek after it, that the first think that to be a great Sin, which the second look upon as a light and trivial Imperfection, and by this 'tis easily known, whether a Man apply's himself seriously to his advancement in Vertue or not.

Lib. 5. ca. 6.

Saint *Ignatius* was most particularly careful in hiding the faults of his Subjects, as we Read in the Fifth Book of his Life: For when any disorder happen'd, he never discover'd it to any, but to the Person whose Office it was to see it remedy'd. And in discovering it, he was so tender of the Reputation of the Party concern'd, that he never imparted it to two, if he judg'd one Person's knowing of it, were sufficient to correct it. Let us learn hence to treat our Brethren after the like manner. You see how private and secret Saint *Ignatius* was concerning the least faults of his Subjects, altho' 'twas in his Power to have ordain'd 'em a publick Penance. With how much greater reason ought we to prevent by all means possible, that the greater faults of our Brethren be kept secret, and be never discover'd by us?

+ Erubescant dicere de absente quod cum charitate non possent dicere coram ipso.
In speculo discip. pa. 3. c. 3. ex de inform. Novit. pag. 1. cap. 23.

Saint *Bonaventure* prescribes us an excellent Rule how to speak of the absent in these words: † *Be ask'd to say that of a Man in his absence, which you wou'd not say in his presence*, and hereby let every body know, that for your part their Reputation is at all times secure. This admirable Counsel may be no less serviceable to us in trivial matters, than

than in those of greater importance; and keep us from making any false step, even in the least inconsiderable things, by reason of the false Judgment we often make of 'em, when we think they are of no consequence, or that they are not taken notice of by others, or that they are not known. That Perfection we pretend to, admits not of such excuses as these. This our Holy Founder taught us by his own example; he never spoke of the Vices and Imperfections of others, tho' they were publick, and recommended the same to us to Practice. Let us follow it then, since 'tis full of Wisdom and Piety. Let all Men be Vertuous, Honest, and of good Reputation in our Mouths, and let the World know that our words shall never lessen the Honor or Reputation of any Man.

*In vit. S. Ign.
lib. 5. 6.*

If by chance you have heard of some one's misdemeanour, do as Salomon bids you: * *Have you heard one speak against your Neighbour? Let it dye within you, and find it's grave in your breast, and be assur'd that it will do you no harm, nor stifle you.* The Scripture alludes here, to one that has drunk Poison, who finding great suffocations in his stomach, and most cruel torments in his bowels, is incapable of ease or relief, till he has vomited up all the Poison, and the same Wise Man for farther evidence in this matter, brings these two following comparisons. † *When a Fool has any thing to say, he is seiz'd as it were with the pangs of Child-bed, and he can no more abstain from speaking, than a Woman in Labour from bringing forth. A word in a Fool's Heart is like an Arrow that sticks in the body of a wild Beast.* Whilst the Arrow is in the Wound, the wild Beast tosses and flings about with all it's force, to get it out. In the like brutish manner a Detractor when once he knows any ill of his Neighbour, he can never be at rest, nor enjoy any quiet till he has discover'd it, and made it publick. Let us by no means rank our selves amongst Fools, but let us imitate the Wife, who bury in silence in their Hearts, whatever they hear to the prejudice of their Neighbour.

* Audisti verbum adversus proximum tuum? Commotiatur in te, sedens quoniam non te distumpet.
Eccles. 19. 10.

† A facie verbi parturit facies, tanquam genitus partus infantis. Sagitta infixa ferituri carnis, sic verbum in corde stulti.
Eccles. 19. 12.
C. 12.

Father *Aquaviva* General of the SOCIETY, in the Treatise he compos'd to Cure the Maladies of the Soul, has a particular Chapter about Detraction, where amongst many other excellent things, he gives us this Counsel; that if any one has forget himself so far, as to fall into this Vice, he must not Sleep before he has Confess'd it. And

De industria ad curand. animi morbos, cap. 17.

he subjoyns these two following reasons for it; first, because the thing may be very considerable, and consequently dangerous to Sleep upon, since a Christian ought never to go to rest, without having prepar'd himself to go from his Bed to his Grave. Secondly, Tho' the thing shou'd not be so considerable, yet Confession is not only a remedy for the present evil, whatever it be, but also an antidote against it for the future. This Counsel is not only profitable for us in the case here propos'd, but the Practice of it is likewise highly beneficial in all doubts and troubles of Conscience; and the Authority of so great a Man, ought to be no small encouragement to us of the SOCIETY to make use of it.

C H A P. X.

We are never to give Ear to Detraction.

* Non solum nihil ipsi indicorunt loqui, sed neque aures quidem debemus humilissimi praebere dictis, quia quem delectat audire, alterum loqui provocat; audire quoque quod turpe sit pudori maximo est.
De Ord. vitae, et mor. instit.

* **W**E are not only, says Saint Bernard, to forbear speaking any thing against Charity or good Manners, but oblig'd to refrain even the hearing of such Discourse; because our willingness to hear, encourages another to speak, and we ought to be ashamed to hear what we would be ashamed to speak. Saint Basil says, that Religious Men, one of which is a Detractor, and the other, one that willingly gives Ear to him, ought to be Chastis'd alike by a separation from the Community. He makes their punishment equal; for if the one had not taken pleasure in hearing, the other wou'd not have had that confidence or satisfaction to speak what he did; † Since no Man living is fond of speaking, when he thinks he shall not willingly be heard, or that what he says is disliked.

Here Divines start a Question, and ask, whether the person that willingly hears a Detractor without making any contradiction to what he says, Sin's Mortally? After having made instance of several Cases, they conclude he do's, and instance these following Cases in which 'tis committed: For example, one gives occasion of Detraction, either by encouraging it,

or

† Nemo invito auditore libenter loquitur.

S. Basil. in reg. breviorib. 16.

or asking some Questions which will necessarily introduce it, especially when he's at variance with the party ill spoken of, and thereupon lends a more willing Ear, or when he sees how prejudicial the Discourse may prove to his Neighbour, without preventing it, when in his power to do so. He that looks on, and warms himself, when he might and ought to put out the Fire, Sins Mortally as well as he that sets Fire to a House. The parallel holds, and the offence is Mortal both in a Detractor, and in him that willingly listens to him, when he ought and shou'd prevent him: For Charity obliges every Man to help and succour his Neighbour in any necessity; whereas, he that gives an Ear to Detraction, is so far from being Charitable, that he perhaps approves the Discourse, at least by his silence he seems to do so, nay often applauds it by his looks, which makes the other continue it. There are other circumstances wherein, tho' you are silent, and make no opposition to the Detraction, you commit only a Venial Sin, as when the Detractor is a Man of great Authority, and the respect due to his Rank and Quality will not permit you so much as to put in a word, much less to contradict him. Here Divines observe one thing very particularly, and recommend it to all Religious, which is, that a Superior, or one that has Authority over those that speak ill of others in his presence, is particularly oblig'd to divert the Discourse, and vindicate the Honor of the person injur'd, and the greater his Authority is, the greater is his obligation.

This unanimous Opinion and Determination of Divines, upon this subject, ought to instruct us how to behave our selves in the occasions and circumstances here set down, and make us sensible of the danger which we run our selves into, either of dissembling or saying nothing, out of a timorous compliance, or a very great weakness. The present corruption of this Age, wherein Murmurations and Detractions are the chief Divertisements, and take up the most part of their Entertainments, engages us the more (whose Institute obliges us to Converse with 'em) to represent to them the danger of this Sin, and to fill 'em with a due apprehension thereof, otherwise we our selves may fear, that we may in some manner concur to this Vice, either by proposing a Question, by Silence, which testifies our satisfaction, or by some gesture or motion, which may seemingly approve it. But waving these Scruples (to the end that every

every one may know how far he has offended in this point, and whether his Sin be Mortal or Venial) I address myself to Religious Men, to whom I speak at present, who labor to be Perfect, and who do not only pretend to avoid both Mortal and Venial Sin, but even the least imperfections, and generously aspire to what is best for themselves, and most profitable to their Neighbour. This suppos'd, put the case we shoud be engag'd in Company, where our Neighbours Reputation suffers, and either out of curiosity take some little satisfaction in the Discourse, or out of modesty or weakness let it pass without taking any notice of it, and by this our silence seem to consent to it; pray tell me if this be edifying to the very Detractors themselves? When they see a Religious Man, a Servant of God, whose Profession gives him Authority over 'em, say nothing to the contrary, they look upon his Silence as an approbation of their proceedings, and presently conclude they are lawful. On the other side, if they think their Discourse misbecoming, and still continue it; they shew a disrespect both to you and your Order also, by presuming, you neither have the Courage nor the Vertue to contradict it.

Saint *Austin* declar'd himself an Enemy to all this pestilent kind of Language, by the following Verses, which he order'd to be hung up in his Dining Room:

*Hence hence be gone, Detracting Tongue,
That do's the absent's Honor Wrong.
This Table only those admits,
That innocently use their Wits.*

After this, some Bishops of his acquaintance came to Dine with him, who taking the liberty of speaking too freely of their Neighbour; Saint *Austin* interrupted 'em, saying, if they left not off that Discourse, he must either blot out these Verses, or else rise from Table. This brave Act ought to be our encouragement to leave Detractors Company, unless they give over their Discourse. Saint *Hierom* advises this in these words; † *When you hear any one backbiting another, fly from him as from a Serpent.* What a confusion wou'd this be to the party? For which reason the same Saint adds, * *We ought to do this immediately, that the Detractor being put to confusion, he may learn hereafter to treat his Neighbour better.* This is an incomparable

Quisquis amat dictis absentum rodere vitam:
Hanc mensam vitam novit esse sibi
Possid. in ejus vita.

† Si quem alium detrahentem audieritis, procul fugientes dimittite ut serpentem.
Hieron. in reg. Monach. c. 2.
* Ut verecundia victus, discat de facis aliorum siliere.

able Lesson for us, who whilst we are engag'd in Company, ought either to pray that Detraction may cease, or else presently withdraw our selves.

But in case we cannot put this in Practice, upon account of the respect due to some great Persons present, we are to use a softer remedy, and put on a Countenance that may shew our displeasure. This we are taught by the Holy Ghost in these words; † *As the North Wind drives away Rain, so do's a severe look drive away Detraction:* And by these other words also: * *Hedge your Ears with Thorns, that you may not hear an evil Tongue.* This severe Countenance, these trouble'd and dissatisfi'd looks, this sudden holy change in one that hears another defam'd, are the Thorns that defend our Ears, offend the Detractor, and make him reflect of the harm he has done, by censuring his Neighbours Actions. 'Tis therefore for this reason, that the Holy Scripture bids us not stop our Ears with Cotton, or any thing else that is soft, which may only hinder us from hearing, but make use of Thorns, which may at the same time defend us, and pierce the Censorious Heart, and become a gentle Correction to him, since as the Wise Man says; † *A sober and grave look, chastises a Delinquent,* and gives him a sense of his failings. When any Religious Man sayd or did any thing less edifying in Company, Saint Ignatius if he were there made use of this remedy, and by the severe looks he put on, gave a secret reprehension to the party, and made him sensible he had done amiss. He Practis'd the same, even upon the least imperfections, and when others that were not so quick sighted as he, cou'd not perceive a fault; for he was not content to be always compos'd and Master of himself only, but earnestly wish'd all the World shou'd be so too.

To turn the Discourse by interrupting the Detractor is also another very good remedy against this Evil. In order to do this, we need not wait for a opportunity of speaking; the best time, is to do it out of time. By this the guilty Person and all the Company will easily see the design, and know that a Charitable consideration did this, and made you forbear an open reprehension, for fear of giving the guilty Person a publick confusion. Whereas, if you patiently stay till the Discourse fall off it self, perhaps you'll not have time to speak, and consequently fail of applying a remedy. When a Bull pursues a Man, ordinarily the best way to stop his

† Ventus Aquilo dissipat pluvias, & facies tristis linguam detrahentem.

Prov. 25. 23.
* Sepi aures tuas spinis: linguam nequam noli audire.
Eccl. 23. 28.

† Per tristitiam vultus corrigitur animus delinquentis.
Eccl. 7. 4.

In Vir. S. Ign. lib. 5. ca. 5.

his career, is by throwing a Cloke before him, and hereby let the Man escape. In the same manner, when one is set upon defaming his Neighbour, begin some other Discourse to divert his, and hinder him from proceeding farther. As the Person pursu'd by the Bull is oblig'd to him that threw the Cloke, and by stopping him preserv'd his Life; so the party defam'd ow's the preservation of his Honor and Reputation, to him who kindly interrupted the Discourse.

C H A P. XI.

Against Lying.

† Ante omnia
opera verbum
verax præce-
dat &c.
Eccl. 37. 20.

SALOMON'S advice is this, † *Above all things speak truth.* Methinks there shou'd be no need to recommend this to Religious Men, since truth carries a sufficient recommendation along with it. The World looks upon Lying as a base and unmannerly Vice, and you cannot affront nor dishonor a Man more, then by giving him the Lye. Judge then how great a Crime it must be in Religion, where Reputation and Credit is of greater consequence, and much more tender than in the World? Hence we may infer, how base and misbecoming, a Lye appears in the Mouth of a Religious Man, and consequently that he ought never to be guilty of this Vice, tho' it be even to conceal or excuse his faults. He that will Lye to save his Credit or cover his frailties, is far from being an Humble Mortifi'd Man. By our Rule we are to seek Humiliations, and lay hold of all occasions of Mortifying our selves; whereas, by Lying we here do not only avoid the opportunity of suffering, but even commit a Sin to do so. This sure cannot have any proportion to the state we have voluntarily imbrac'd. Divines teach, that we cannot tell a Lye to save the World; how therefore dare we tell one, rather than be surpris'd in a small fault, or suffer a little confusion? There are seven things which God hates, and a

* Linguam
mendacem.
Prov. 6. 17.

* *Lying Tongue* is one of 'em.

There's

There's another way of Lying, in which we have not a full determinate Will to do so; for example, when in telling a Story we make some little additions to it. These additions whatsoever they are, deviate from truth, which admits not either of any increase or diminution. Notwithstanding this is a fault very frequently committed by most Persons, who naturally love to improve and augment the value of the things they speak of; we are also in the very same manner very apt to exaggerate things; which violent inclination, ought to make us stand so much the more upon our guard.

Saint *Bonaventure* adds, that to exaggerate is very misbecoming Religious Gravity and Modesty; the words of Religious Men ought to be of such Authority, as to find credit independent of any exaggerating terms, which rather serve to lessen, than improve our reputation. The reason of this is; because these extravagant Hyperboles swell things to such a degree, that every one easily discovers the froth and falsity of 'em, and hence it is, that those that thus exaggerate have very seldom any credit at all. Saint *Ignatius* very rarely us'd any words in the superlative degree; because frequently things were thereby exaggerated and made greater, than in reality they were; but he always contented himself to recount things simply as they were, without any amplification at all, and his Modesty was such, that he never wou'd boldly affirm, even what he knew for certain.

'Tis an admirable lesson, which Saint *Bernard*, and many other Saints teach us. † *Never*, says he, *be pertinacious or obstinate in what you affirm or deny; but whether you be for the negative or affirmative, still modestly seem to doubt.* Wherefore express your self thus; if I am not deceiv'd 'tis so, I believe 'tis so, or methinks I have heard some body say so. This way of speaking is prudent, modest, obliging and proper, both for a Christian and a Religious Man; who ought not to be too confident of themselves, nor judge too favorably of their own Opinion. Holy Men that are truly Humble, are wont still to mistrust themselves, and therefore speak always after this manner. *Sirius* tells us of a great Saint, that never answer'd determinately, when he was ask'd what a Clock it was; and being demanded the reason of this, he reply'd, that it was to secure himself from a Lye. And this is another reason why 'tis both Prudent and Religious to leave place for an apparent doubt in your Answers, and never press 'em too home; whereby however the matter stands,

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*In Specul. diff.
cip. p. 3. c. 3.*

*Lib. 5. ca. 6.
ejus videri.*

† Nunquam
pertinaciter
aliquid affir-
mes, vel ne-
ges, sed sint
tuae affirmati-
ones & nega-
tiones dubita-
tionis sale
conditae.
*In formula
honestae vitae.*

*Sur. in Vita
Sancti Domi-
nici Loricati.*

we shall not offend against truth. But if we be very positive in affirming that to be true which (as it often happens) afterwards proves false, we are not only confounded, but sometimes give scandal to the Person we spoke it to, as soon as he has discover'd the falsity. I speak here of things which we look upon as certain: For thou'd we boldly affirm the truth of what we are not fully assur'd of, and which appears to us doubtful, we shou'd tell a Lye, tho' the thing were, as we affirm'd it to be; at least we shou'd evidently expose our selves to the danger of falshood, which is very little less.

† Sit sermo & veridicus, & purus.
Bonav. ubi sup.

* Omnis simulatio, & omnis duplicitas, mendacium est.
Aug. de util. credendi.

Saint Bonaventure goes farther, and says, that † We must be downright and sincere in what we say: For we are not only bound to speak truth, but we are also oblig'd to candour and sincerity. Religious probity and simplicity ought to be a stranger to equivocations and double or doubtful meanings, which Saint Austin says are nothing else but Lyes. * There are some sort of People, says he, who are very unwilling to Lye, yet notwithstanding have a difficulty in speaking truth, and whilst they are in this suspense, they find out evasions, and equivocations whereby they mean and speak one thing, and make you understand another. What I have here sayd, is to be understood of ordinary Discourses (for 'tis certain, that equivocations are both lawful and necessary in some Cases) where dissimulation is not to be permitted, and nothing is to be sayd but what is downright and naked truth, without any equivocation; otherwise we shou'd act contrary to that candour and simplicity, which a Christian, as well as a Religious Man ought to Practice, and what common Civility and Conversation requires of us: For 'tis very certain, that fidelity and commerce amongst Men, receives as great a blow from this dark and double manner of speaking, as it do's from an evident falshood. And were it once permitted in the World, we might bid adieu to honesty and sincerity. Suppose there were a Man giv'n to this fault, tho' he were very honest in other things, yet no one wou'd trust him, nor have anything to do with him, but wou'd stand upon their guard for fear of being deceiv'd by him. Salomon says, † He that speaks Sophistically is to be hated, meaning one that dissembles, equivocates, or uses ambiguous terms, thereby he gains an ill Reputation, and is look'd upon as a faithless and deceitful Man. Let us carefully avoid all kind of doubtful Language, and never give occasion to People to say that of us which as is sayd of

† Qui sophistice loquitur, odibilis est.
Ecc. 37. 23.

of many, that tho they do not Lye, yet they cannot be sayd to speak truth.

C H A P. XII.

That a Religious Man ought to abstain from all kind of jesting and idle talk.

* **D**O not trifle away your time, says Saint Basil, in Childish jests, very misbecoming one that aspires to Perfection. And he also adds, that a Christian who jests and turns things into ridicule, must needs be negligent and very loose in the service of God; since all Devotion and true Compunction of Heart is thereby destroy'd. And he particularly advises us, never to disgrace our selves, who are Religious Men so far, as to play the Buffoon or Jester.

Saint Bernard urges this point home, and says very well, that † *jesting or Railery in a Secular Man's Mouth passes for what it is, but in the Mouth of a Priest 'tis a kind of Blasphemy. His Mouth is Consecrated, and ought to speak what is Holy; in him 'tis a crime to utter a jest, but to accustom himself to them, is a Sacrilege*: For 'tis the same as to apply what's Dedicated to God and his Church, to prophane uses. The Saint still prosecutes this matter with the words of Malachy; * *The Lips of a Priest shall be the Treasury of knowledge, 'tis from his Mouth we must learn the Law of God*; † *Not foolish idle jests and stories. Saint Bernard would not only have* * *All scurrilous jests and drollery (which some pretenders to this art, call by a softer name, and would have it pass for innocent Wit) be banish'd from the Mouth, but from the Ears also*; and bids us (if we chance to fall into Company where 'tis practis'd) to behave our selves as if we were amongst Detractors, by shewing our dislike of it in our looks, and endeavouring to turn the Discourse, by introducing something more grave and profitable. If the very hearing of these trifles be a fault,

S: 2:

what

* Neque in modum parvuli locative-
lis assidue,
quia non convenit, qui ad perfectionem nititur, joculari assidue.

Basil, exhort.
ad filium spir.
in Const. Monach. ca. 13.

† Inter seculares, nugæ, nugæ sunt: in ore Sacerdotis, blasphemiz. Consecrasti os tuum Evangelio; talibus jam appetire illicitum, assuescere, sacrilegium.

Lib. de consid. ad Eugen. 2.

* Labia Sacerdotis, custodiunt scientiam, & legem requient ex ore ejus.

Mal. 2. 7.
† Non nugæ profecto, vel fabulæ.

Bern. ibid.
* Verbum scurrile, quod faciet urbanioris nomine colorant, non sufficit pergrinari ab ore procul, & aure relinquantur est.

Id. ibid.

* *Fœdè ad cæchininos mo-
verit, fœdus
moves.*
Idem ibid.

*Lib. 2. de Pe-
dæ. cæ. 5.
Basil. in Con-
siliis. cæ. 13.
S. Bern. de mo-
do bene viven-
di, ad foror.
Serm. 30.
Bonav. in spec.
discip. pæ. 4.
cæ. 5.*

† *Cum verba
omnia à co-
gitatione, &
morbis ma-
nent, fieri non
potest, ut ver-
ba aliqua mit-
tantur ridicu-
la, quæ non
procedant à
morbis tidi-
culis.*

* *Ex abundan-
tia enim cor-
dis os loqui-
tur.*

Matth. 12. 34.

† *Quale cor
unusquisque
habet, talia
verba loqui-
tur, & talia o-
pera facit.*

*Chrys. hom.
sup. epist. ad
Eph. in illud:
Omnis sermo
malus ex ore
vestro non
procedat.*
Ephes. 4. 29.

* *Scurrilitas,
quæ ad rem
non pertinet.*
Ephes. 5. 4.

what must it be to speak 'em? * 'Tis a shame, says Saint Bernard, to applaud these follies by laughing at 'em, but 'tis a greater shame to be guilty of 'em, and move others to Laughter.

Clement of Alexandria, agrees with the Saints, Basil, Bernard and Bonaventure, by saying, † All our words take their source from our Hearts and Manners; our Tongue discovers both our Thoughts and Actions, and consequently all vain and idle Discourse shews a levity of Mind, and a great inclination to bad Morals. The Gospel tells us, that * The Mouth speaks out of the abundance of the Heart. We know when a Bell is broke, or a Vessel is empty by the found; in the same manner, † We know by a Mans words how his Head and Heart stand affected. Saint Chrysostom upon these words of the Apostle, Let nothing that is ill come out of your Mouth, says, that Such as your Heart is, such are your words and deeds. Saint Ignatius the Martyr, being ask'd, why he pronounc'd the Name of JESUS so often in the middle of his torments? Answer'd, that he cou'd not hinder himself from naming, what was engraven in his Heart; and opening his Breast after his Death, they found this Sacred Name of JESUS Written on both sides of his Heart in Golden Letters. He that loves jesting and drollery has the World and it's follies, not the Name of JESUS Written in his Heart; and hence it is, that such as have an itching desire to break a jest, and to play the Buffoon to make others sport, are so far from being Spiritual Men, that they deserve not the Name even of Religious Men. Father Avila is of the same Opinion, and in his gloss upon these words of Saint Paul, * Scurrility which is always impertinent, says, that it do's not at all become, either Religious modesty or even Christian gravity; and the Author of his Life tells us, that he was never guilty of it himself. Metaphrastes says that Saint Chrysostom never spoke himself, nor permitted any other in his presence to speak a scurrilous or jesting word: And the Ancient Fathers were so averse from this kind of Language, that Saint Basil wou'd have a Religious Man that is found guilty of this fault, shut up in his Cell and depriv'd of all Conversation for a Week together. This Penance was a kind of Excommunication, and made use of to this end, that those who had committed this misdemeanour shou'd not infect others by their bad Company, but live alone to their confusion, and see how little he deserves to Converſe with

with Religious Persons, who do's not behave himself like a Religious Man.

We Read in the Life of Saint *Hugh* Abbot of *Cluny*, that the Archbishop of *Tolouse*, who had formerly been one of his Monks, and was a pleasant and jesting Man, was frequently told of this fault by the Abbot, assuring him, that he wou'd suffer for it in the other World. The Archbishop Dies, and presently after appears to a Holy Monk of *Cluny*, call'd *Seguinus*, with his Mouth all swell'd and full of Ulcers, and begs with many Tears, that he wou'd desire his Abbot *Hugh* to Pray for his deliverance, from those cruel Torments he suffer'd in Purgatory, upon account of his jests, which he had not left off before he Dy'd. As soon as *Seguinus* had told this Vision to the Abbot, he appointed Seven Days Silence to Seven of his Religious, in order to satisfy for the Archbishops fault. One of the Seven Religious broke Silence, which made the Archbishop appear once more to *Seguinus*, and complain that the disobedience of that one Monk was the cause why his release from Purgatory was deferr'd. The Abbot being inform'd of this, and finding that one of his Religious had fail'd in obeying his orders, he commanded another to keep Seven Days Silence. Which being done the Archbishop appear'd the third time to *Seguinus*, in his Bishops Robes with his Mouth perfectly cur'd, and his looks serene and chearful, and having oblig'd *Seguinus* to return his thanks to the good Abbot and his Religious, he disappear'd.

Above all we must have a particular care to avoid all offensive jests, which we often let fall before we are aware of 'em; which tho' they be not premeditated, but only weak and sudden flashes of Wit, yet they are strong enough to wound and injure our Neighbor; because they attack secretly, either his humor which is not too agreeable; or his parts, which are none of the best; or something else, in which he is defective. This is the worst sort of drollery, and the more witty and biting it is, 'tis so much the worse; because it makes the greater impression both in our own, and in the hearers Minds, causing 'em to be remember'd so much the longer. Secular Persons who love to be pleasant and facetious, and are esteem'd Men of parts and good humor, can be chearful without prejudice to any body, and their Company is so easie and agreeable, that Men are glad to meet with 'em, and esteem 'em for making so much Mirth, without putting their Neighbor

Neighbor to the least expence. On the other side, such as are very sharp and biting in their jests, are always hated, and their offensive liberty frequently meets with it's match, lighting upon some one, that revenges, not only himself upon 'em; but even those whom they had abus'd before him. I shall not enlarge my self upon this subject, having sufficiently treated of it in the first Tome; where I spoke of all such Discourses as might procure any disunion, or breach of Charity.

Treatise 4.
Chap. 10. & 11.

C H A P. XIII.

That all our Entertainments and Discourses ought to be of God; with some helps how to make 'em so.

† Omnis sermo malus ex ore vestro non procedat: sed si quis bonus, ad edificationem fidei, ut det gratiam audientibus.
Ephes. 4. 29.

SAINTE Paul forbids us, † *To let any bad Discourse come out of our Mouths, but would have all our Discourse so edifying, that it may inspire Piety into our hearers.* We, who are oblig'd by our Institute to labor for our Neighbours Salvation, as well as our own; ought to take these words of the Apostle, as particularly intended for us; since they concern us so nearly. There's nothing that edifies or produces greater fruit in our Neighbor, than to entertain him with Pious Discourse: For besides those advantages that these Spiritual Conversations carry along with 'em, 'tis certain, that Worldly Persons perceiving that a Religious Man never gives 'em any other entertainment than this, they conceive a high esteem of him, and have a particular veneration for him, believing such a one to be replenish'd with God, who can speak of nothing else, but of him. Whereby those other functions of Charity they have occasion to exercise, either in private or publick, become more efficacious. Saint *Xaverius* is sayd to have done more good by his ordinary familiar Discourses, than by his Sermons. And Saint *Ignatius* in his Constitutions looks upon Pious Discourse, as extremely beneficial

7. p. Conf. c. 4.
§. 3.

Part 3. Treat.
1. chap. 3.

Part. 2. Of Modesty and Silence.

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ficial to our Neighbor, and enjoyns the Practice of it to all; even to the meanest Brother in the SOCIETY.

To perform this with better success abroad, 'twou'd conduce very much to accustom our selves to talk Spiritually at home. Saint Francis oblig'd his Religious to frequent Spiritual Conferences in their Convents, to the end that being well vers'd in this Divine Language, they might make use of it when they met with Worldly Persons. In time of one of these Conferences our Blessed Saviour appear'd to them in the form of an Infant, and by giving his Blessing to all there Assembl'd, shew'd how grateful such Pious Entertainments were to him. The SOCIETY of Jesus, still keeps this Pious Custom on foot, by appointing several meetings to the Novices, which admit of none but Spiritual Discourse: And also after the end of the Novitship, we frequently practice the like Spiritual Conferences, thereby to render our selves the better able to spake this Language of Saints: And besides all this, we have also an express Rule, which enjoyns us, to mingle Spiritual Discourses in our ordinary Conversations.

1. p. l. i. Chr.
S. Franc. c. 10.

Reg. 42.

Saint Bernard gave a severe check to some of his Religious, who in his time were not observant of this custom, and objecting to them the Practice of the Primitive Christians, crys out, † *How much difference is there betwixt us and those holy Men, who liv'd in Saint Antonies Days? They no sooner met, but they began to speak of God. The desire they had to feed their Souls, made 'em even forget for several Days to give any food to their Bodies. * And in this they observ'd a due order; for the nobler part ought to be serv'd in the first place. But our meeting together, to use the Apostles words, is not to Eat the Lords Supper; because no body asks after this bread of Life, and no body also thinks of giving it. Not a word of the holy Scripture is heard amongst us, nor any discourse tending to the Salvation of our Souls; but all our discourse is fill'd with jests and laughter, and with vain, airy and idle words. But that which is worst of all, this neglect is commonly mask'd with the name of Prudence and Charity; and the contrary, look'd upon as a want of breeding and ill manners; and those Persons who love to speak of God and good things, censur'd as Melancholy and ill bred People, whose Conversation deserves to be avoided. † Surely this sort of Worldly Charity and Prudence, destroys all that which is truly Christian. For how can that be true Charity, which*

† O quantum distamus ab his qui diebus Antonis extiterunt Monachi! In Apolog. ad Guillel. Abb.

* Et hic erat rectus ordo, quando digniori parti prius inserviebatur. Nobis autem convenientibus in unum, ut verbis Apostoli utar, iam non est Dominicam cœnam manducare. Panem quippe celestem nemo qui requirat, nemo qui tribuat, nihil de scripturis, nihil de salute agitur animarum, sed nugæ & risus & verba proferuntur in ventum. Ibid.

† Ista charitas destruit charitatem, hæc discretio diff-

is

cretionem
confundit.
Quæ enim
charitas est,
carnein dilige-
re, & spiritum
negligere?
quæ discretio
totum dare
corpori, & a-
nimæ nihil?
Ibid.
*Tauler. in in-
fis. c. 28.*

*S. Bern. in ser-
mon. vita.
S. Bonav. in
Spec. Discip.
P. 3. c. 3.*

Reg. 42.

† Qui tenet
aratum, &
qui gloriatur
in iaculo, sti-
mulo boves a-
gitat, & con-
versatur in o-
peribus eo-
rum, & enar-
ratio ejus in
filiis tauro-
rum. Cor su-
um dabit ad
versandos sul-
cos.
Eccli. 38. 26.

is obsequious to flesh and blood, and neglects the Soul? Or how can that be call'd Prudence, which obliges the body by injuring the mind? To glut your body, and let your Soul starve, is no less foolish than cruel, and therefore far from being Charitable. Taulerus recounts a Vision which happen'd to a holy Man, in which our Blessed Saviour himself complain'd of Six defects which he found in his Servants; one of which was, that they entertain'd themselves with trifles in their ordinary Recreations, and seldom spoke of him, which he resented very much. Let us from hence take warning, and endeavour never to deserve the like reproach.

Saint Bernard and Saint Bonaventure teach us in the following words, how to edifie our Neighbour by good Discourse. Consider, say they, before you go to speak with your Neighbour, what matter may be most profitable, and edifying, whilst you Converse with him. Having done this, we shall always be provided of some subject or other, and by finding a handsome occasion of bringing it in, divert other Discourse less becoming. Our Holy Rule advises us also to this, and certainly it ought not to seem painful and troublesome to us, who are Religious, to comply with so necessary a duty, prescrib'd us by our Rule, and taught us by our Profession, in order to help Secular Persons so much the better to Discourse of Pious matters, and to leave off all prophane and idle talk. This will also make us able to divert any impertinent Discourse, and introduce what's more solid and substantial in place of it, without giving offence to any one, in which a great deal of Prudence and Discretion may be shewn.

The Love of God and Heavenly things is the third means or help to this wholesome Practice. Were we but once Masters of this Love, we shou'd never be weary of talking Spiritually, nor think it tedious to hear others do so: For how can that be painful which we love? No, 'twou'd bring an unknown blessing, and bring such a comfort along with it, as we never yet experienc'd. Take notice how sollicitous a Marchant is about his affairs; how feelingly he talks of 'em at all times, and in all places, and with what satisfaction he hears others speak of buying and selling, and of all kind of Traffick. † *He that drives the Plough, and holds the Plough staff in his hand, says Salomon, talks of nothing but his Oxen and their labour; and all his thoughts are employ'd about Tilling the Ground.* Infinite, every one loves to speak of his

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own Profession. Perfection is what we profess, for this we left the World, and if we either Love God or the Profession we have imbrac'd, 'tis certain we shall find very great satisfaction in Spiritual Discourses, and never want matter to supply them. 'Tis a good sign when we love to speak of God, but a bad one, when we do not. Saint John says, † *The reason why People speak so much of Worldly things, is, because they are of the World themselves.* Saint Austin in his Comment upon these words of Wisdom, * *Thou hast fed thy People with the food of Angels, and giv'n 'em bread from Heaven ready made without any labor of theirs, containing all pleasantness of taste, and all the most curious palate can desire,* says, that this Manna which the Children of Israel Eat in the Desert, was such, that to the good it tasted like whatsoever they lov'd, and fully satisfi'd 'em, but the bad they found not that tast in it, they desir'd; otherwise they wou'd not have importun'd Almighty God for another sort of Diet in these words; † *Who will give us some flesh to eat? Now have we cause to remember the fish we had for nothing in Egypt. How can we forget the Melons, Leeks, Onions, Garlick and Cucumbers we had there? Now we are ready to faint and starve, having nothing but a little Manna.* This kind of People did not only fail in finding all that variety of tast the Manna had in it, but they look'd upon it as very insipid, and even loath'd it, otherwise they wou'd never have languish'd after the flesh-pots of Egypt, since the good found all manner of sweetness and content in it, desir'd nothing else, and never so much as thought of their Egyptian fare. This difference amongst the Israelites is still found amongst Religious Persons. The good find an incomparable satisfaction in speaking of God and Heavenly things, this is their Manna full of a delightful tast, God is their all, and in him they find all things they wish for. The tepid and imperfect, find no gust at all in it, nay, they find it unpleasant, and therefore reject it as such, and contenting themselves with the Leeks and Garlick of pittiful and frivolous talk, loath the Heavenly Manna of Pious Discourse. * *Happy the Tongue, says Saint Hierom, that knows no other Language but that of Saints! † Do not give ear to vain and insignificant discourse, says Saint Basil, but if any thing is brought out of Scripture, or concerns your Souls welfare, listen to it, and dwell upon it. Let the very mention of things of the World be bitter unto you, but think it a comfort to hear*

Tom. I I.

T

discourses

† Ipsi de mundo sunt: ideo de mundo loquuntur.

Joan. 4. 5. Lib. 1. ad inquis. c. 2. & c. 16. in illud:

* Angelorum esca nutritivum populum tuum, & paratum panem de celo prae-stiti illis absque labore, omne delectamentum in se habentem, & omnis laboris suavitatem.

Sap. 16. 20.

† Quis dabit nobis ad vescendum carnes? Recordamur piscium quos comedabamus in Aegypto gratis: in mentem veniunt cucumeres, & pepones, portique, & cepe & allia. Anima nostra arida est, nihil aliud respiciunt oculi nostri nisi Man.

Num. 11. 4. 5. 6.

* Felix Lingua, quae non novit nisi de divinis tenere sermones, tu magnopere ne attendato: sed si quae ex divinis litteris ad salutem animae perti-

nentia memo-
rare addieris.
Acerba gustatu
tibi ea sunt,
quæcumque
de mundanis
rebus memo-
rentur; con-
trahæ favo-
rellis assimi-
lis quæ à pie-
tatis colenti-
bus vitis nar-
rantur.
Basil. Sermon. de
venunt. sæculi
spiritus et spir-
itus perfect.

discourses of Devotion and Piety. A faithful Servant of God is not able to suffer, much less be present, at the vain entertainments of the World; he loves to discourse of God, and treat of Spiritual things, and hence it is, that in all the bad accidents and afflictions which happen unto him, he scorns to seek for comfort in the Worldly delights, his trust and confidence is in God, and in him he finds it. The discourse of Worldly affairs only augment his pain, and he finds no satisfaction but in hearing and speaking of God, who is the object of his love. 'Tis reported of Saint Catherine of Sienna, that she never was weary with speaking her self, or hearing others speak of God. On the contrary, she took a particular satisfaction in it, as being the best preserver of her strength and health, and the greatest ease and comfort she found in sickness and troubles; and there were a great many more Saints, whose practice was conformable to Saint Catherine's.

CHAP. XIV.

Of another weighty reason, that proves the great importance of Spiritual Discourse.

THE necessity of Spiritual Discourse arises not only from our Neighbor's good and edification, but also from our own advancement in Vertue, one of it's effects is to inflame our Hearts with Divine Love, like to those two Disciples, who going to *Emmans*, and discoursing of the Passion of our Saviour, confess'd, that † *Their hearts were all on fire whilst he spoke.* This we find sometimes by experience when we come from a Company where Piety and Devotion were the sole entertainment; which leaves in us deeper impressions of Vertue, than ever we met with at a Sermon. Saint Thomas of Aquine's Discourse, when ever he convers'd with any body of what rank soever, was always Pious, and conducing to their Salvation. Which was the reason that after

† Nonne cor
nostrum ar-
dens erat in
nobis?
Luc. c. 24. 32.

after he left 'em, he cou'd easily recollect his thoughts, fall to his Prayer, or Meditate upon the sublimest points in Divinity; for his Discourse being of God, it did not leave any troublesome Ideas behind it to divert his fancy. 'Tis admirable to read in the Life of Saint *Xaverius*, how well he knew to joyn Action with Contemplation, and Retirement, with the business and affairs of his Neighbor. In the greatest throng of business and weighty affairs, which lay upon his hands, in his continual Travels both by Land and Sea, in his greatest labors and dangers, he never wanted an Interior Act of the Presence of God; was always recollected and compos'd in the Exterior; and even to all he dealt with, he was affable and obliging even to a wonder. But he had no sooner dispatch'd his business with his Neighbor, but at the same instant he became fervorous in Prayer and familiarly treated with God. No Exterior Employments ever alienated his Mind from God, which made it the more easie for him to return to his Devotions he had left, for the good of his Neighbor. But if we neglect to keep our Minds steady upon God, and instead of talking Spiritually, speak of vain and unprofitable things; when we are employ'd in the service of our Neighbor, we shall find a great deal of difficulty to bring our selves peaceably back again unto Prayer and Meditation. Our Holy Founder sayd, that our Conversation with our Neighbor wou'd prove edifying to him, and advantageous to our selves, so long as we carry'd the Spirit of God along with us. On the contrary, 'twou'd be scandalous to our Neighbor and dangerous to our selves if we acted either according to the humor, or the principles of the World. Saint Bernard says, † *That bad Discourse desiles the Mind, and we easily reduce that to practice, which we hear with pleasure.*

*In eius Vita
l. 6. c. 5.*

*In Vita S. Ignat.
nat. l. 3. c. 3.*

† Vanus sermo cito poluit mentem, & facile agitur, quod libenter auditor.

Bern. de modo vivendi ad sor. Serm. 30.

I do not deny but that there may be a necessity sometimes of our condescending in Company, and complying with our Neighbor, which notwithstanding is to be so prudently contriv'd, that it may oblige them to a compliance with us. But we must not let them go too far, nor suffer 'em to begin and end what Discourses they please, but keep 'em within compass, and by little and little first draw them into Pious Discourse and then to God. We need not be long in doing this, nor is it necessary to expect for favorable overtures; this perhaps wou'd make it too late to find any opportunity, and nothing wou'd be heard but vain and unprofitable

table Discourse, whereby you wou'd have the confusion not to have cast in all the while so much as one word of Heaven. Let us endeavour to make all Men know we are true Religious Men, by suiting our Actions with our Profession; and that we do not come to treat with our Neighbors upon account of Secular business, and of spending our time vainly, but to increase God's Glory, and forward their Salvation. If they do not like these proceedings in us, they need not give themselves the trouble to send for us. Saint *Ignatius* when he receiv'd Visits and found persons dispos'd to spend some time idly and talk vainly, he wou'd perhaps admit 'em once or twice, but if he saw they continu'd, he wou'd take the liberty to begin a Discourse about Death, Judgment and Hell, saying, that if they took pleasure in hearing it, they wou'd make good use of it, and it might help 'em to save their Souls, but if on the contrary they were displeas'd at it, they wou'd not at least make themselves uneasy by a third Visit.

Ubi sup.

L. lib. 83. quest. 9. 71.

† Omnia omnibus factus sum.

1 Cor. 9. 21.

Rom. 12. 15.

* Si tamen, ut ad auxilium, & non ad æqualitatem miseriz valeat.

Ubi sup.

Saint *Austin*, wou'd have us obliging and complying with all the World, thereby to gain it, as Saint *Paul* did, † *By making himself all to all*; with the afflicted he griev'd (for there is no greater comfort to a Man, than to see another kindly share in his affliction, by a tender concern for him) with those that were merry he was pleasant, and he sympathiz'd with the feeble and weak. The same Saint, having sayd this, gives us this caution not to comply more with our Neighbor than what the present necessity requires, for example, so to solace and comfort him as to free him from the present misery he suffers, but never to venture so far, as to fall into the like troubles our selves. For clearing of this point he brings the following comparison very fit to our purpose.

* Observe how one Man stoops to help another up that is fallen, he do's not throw himself down, nor do's he fall as the other did, but fixes his feet stedfast, that the other may not pull him down, and only bends so far as is necessary, to help the other up. Thus we are to deal with Secular Persons, we must stoop a little to their inclinations, and comply with their humor so far, as to be able to gain 'em to God; but at the same time we must so stand our ground, as to compass our design and avoid falling into the same inconvenience with 'em. Therefore let us firmly persuade our selves, that nothing is more edifying to our Neighbor, than Spiritual Discourse. Perhaps we may meet with some one or other

other to whom it will not be altogether so grateful at first, but when he comes afterwards to close with us, he'll esteem us the more for it, finding now, that we have no other concern than for the Salvation of his Soul. Whereas shou'd he once perceive that we trimm'd and rack'd about to comply with him, and took pleasure in Worldly Conversation; he wou'd perhaps shew us the same kindness as he wou'd a Secular Person, but he wou'd have a very slender esteem of our Devotion, whereby our Authority wou'd be lost, and all hopes of doing good upon that Persons Soul quite cut off. Let us therefore in imitation of our first Fathers strive to advance the reputation of our SOCIETY. When Persons came to pay a Visit to Saint Francis Borgia, and began to talk of vain and unprofitable matters, the Saint, tho' he cou'd not avoid being with 'em, yet he gave not attention to their Discourse, but kept his heart continually fix'd upon God; insomuch, that some of the Fathers who were present, told him he committed mistakes upon that account, and gave Answers that were nothing at all to the purpose, to whom he reply'd, that he desir'd to appear stupid and uncivil, rather than to lose his time: For he counted all for lost which was neither given to God, nor spent in his service. *Cassian* has something like this of the Abbot *Maguer*, who had obtain'd of God to be freed from drowsiness and sleep in time of Spiritual Conferences, whether 'twas Night or Day, but that he might immediately fall asleep upon hearing any vain and Secular Discourse.

Lib. 4. c. 4.

Cassian. de instit. reclus. l. 5. c. 29.

Let us conclude this Treatise with the advice which Saint Bernard gives to all Religious Men. † *Let a Religious Man, says this Saint, behave himself so as he may truly edifie all that see him, and that no body, who shall either hear or see him can doubt of his being Religious.* Saint Paul sayd the same to *Titus* in these words, * *In all things you do, shew your self as an example of good Works, in soundness of Doctrine, integrity of Manners, and in a prudent Conduct.* In fine, be upright and irreprehensible in your words, that your Enemies may be confounded, not having any thing to lay to your charge. Let us follow the Counsel of these two Holy Men, let us aim at such an exemplary and edifying conduct in all our proceedings, that not only our friends may have nothing to object against it, but that it may also silence all those that are envious and Enemies to us, who finding nothing in us to carp at, they may have no other occasion of anger against us but this, that they can find nothing to reproach us withal.

There

† Sic in cunctis se habeat, ut edificet videntes, & nemo dubitet, cum viderit eum, vel audierit, quin verè sit Monachus.

In Speculo

Monach.

* In omnibus te ipsum præbe exemplum bonorum operum, in doctrina, in integritate, in gravitate, verbum sanum, irreprehensibile: ut is, qui ex adverso est, veretur, nihil habens in alium dicere de nobis.

Tit. 2. 7. 8.

*Plot. 1. 1.
Moral.*

There was one that told an Ancient Philosopher, that he heard another speak very ill of him, to whom he made this Answer, *I'll live so, says he, that no body shall give credit to what he says.* Thus we ought to live, that is, our Words and Actions ought not only to be blameless, but in case any body shou'd speak ill of us, endeavour that the whole conduct of our Life may be a convincing argument, that what they sayd was false: Since our Deeds, not our Words are the best Answer, to a Detractor; and soonest stop his Mouth.



THE

THE THIRD TREATISE OF HUMILITY.

CHAP. I.

*Of the Excellence of Humility, and the
need we have thereof.*

* **E**ARN of me, says our Saviour, for
I am meek and humble of heart. And
Saint *Austin* hereupon says, that *The*
whole Life of our Saviour upon Earth
was a continual Lesson of Morals, but
that he propos'd his Humility for our
special imitation. To comprehend well
the excellence of this Virtue, and the
need we have thereof, we are to consider, that the Son of
God descended from Heaven to teach it us, not only by his
Words, but more especially by his Actions; and that his
whole Life was nothing else but a long example and living
model of Humility. Saint *Basil*, to prove this proposition,
run's over all the Life of our Saviour, and after having
examin'd the chief circumstances thereof, from his very Birth
to his Death, shew's, that all his Actions teach us particu-
larly

* Tota vita
Christi in ter-
ris disciplina
morum fuit;
sed præcipue
humilitatem
suam imitan-
dam proposuit
dicens: Disci-
te à me, quia
mitis sum, &
humilis corde;
& invenietis
requiem ani-
mabus vestris.
Aug. lib. de
verb. rel.
Matth. 11. 29.

*Serm. de Hu-
mil.*

larly the Vertue of Humility. He wou'd be Circumciz'd as a Sinner; Fly into *Agypt* as too weak and unable to resist; be Baptiz'd with Sinners and Publicans; as one of them. When the People wou'd honor and make him King, he hides himself; when they wou'd Cloath him with reproaches, he shews himself. Men praise him, and even the Devils themselves do so too; by the Mouths of the Possess'd, and he commands 'em silence. They load him with affronts and injuries, and he answers not a word. After all this, to recommend Humility to us (as it were by his last Will and Testament) he condescends, towards the end of his Life, even to wash his Disciples Feet, and infine, Crowns so many examples by the most shameful Death of the Cross. † *He empty'd and stript himself of all things*; says Saint Bernard, *to shew first of all by his Example, what he was about to teach by his Words.* But why O Lord, shou'd so great a Majesty stoop so low? 'Tis * *That none shou'd henceforth presume to magnifie themselves upon Earth.* Man has from the beginning been so extravagant as to let himself be carry'd away by vanity; but now, as the same Saint Bernard adds, † *'Twould be an insufferable impudence for a Worm to swell with Pride, when the Majesty of the Eternal God has humbl'd, and made it self as nothing.* The Son of God, equal to his Father, takes the form of a Servant, he will be humbl'd and despis'd; and I, who am but Dust and Ashes seek to be honor'd and respected.

'Tis with reason therefore, that the Saviour of the World says, that he is Master of this Vertue, and that 'tis of him we ought to learn it; since neither *Socrates*, *Plato*, nor *Aristotle* ever knew how to teach it. For when they valu'd themselves upon other Vertues, as Fortitude, Temperance and Justice, they were so far from being humble, that they aim'd at nothing therein but at Reputation and Vain-glory. 'Tis true, that *Diogenes* and some others, who made open Profession of contemning whatever the World esteem'd, seem'd indeed to despise the World, and themselves too; but in that very thing, they only sought Vain-glory too, tho' in a way different from others, all of 'em have been reproach'd to have done so; and so did *Plato* reproach *Diogenes*. *Plato* had, it seems, invited him with some other Philosophers to Dinner, and order'd the place where they were to be treated, to be hung with rich Tapestry, *Diogenes* thereupon came all over dirty, pull'd down one piece of the Hangings, and fell a walking to
and

† Exinanivit semetipsum, ut prius præfaret exemplo, quod erat docturus verbo.

Serm. I. de Naziv. Dom.

* Ut non apponat ultra magnificare se homo super terram.

Psal. 9. 39.

† Intolerabilis enim impudentia est, ut ubi sese exinanivit majestas, ibi vermiculus inflatur, & intumescat.

Ubi sup.

and again upon it. *Plato* ask'd him what he meant, * *I* *trample*, quoth he, *the Pride of Plato under foot, You did indeed, answer'd Plato, but with greater Pride.* But so far have the Philosophers been from coming up to know what was a true contempt of one's self, in which Christian Humility consists, and what the Virtue of Humility is, that they were not acquainted with so much as the name of it. 'Tis a Virtue peculiar to Christians, which was never taught before **JESUS CHRIST** Preach'd it up.

Saint *Austin* remark's, that with it he began his admirable Sermon on the Mount, † *Blessed are the Poor in Spirit*; by which words are understood the Humble, as not only Saint *Austin* but Saint *Hierom*, Saint *Gregory*, and several others affirm. Our Saviour begins, continues, and ends his Sermon with Humility, he teaches us nothing else in the whole course of his Life, and 'tis that which he will have us learn particularly of him, * *He says not*, continues Saint *Austin*, *learn of me to make Heaven and Earth, to Create all Visible things, to work Miracles, to raise the Dead, but learn of me to be Meek and Humble*; for a solid Humility, as the same Saint adds, *is much more powerful than a puffing up haughtiness*, 'tis better to be humble and serve God with fear, than to work Miracles. The first is an even and sure way; the other very difficult and dangerous.

To speak now more particularly of the need we have of this Virtue; so great it is, that without it, we cannot hope to advance one step in the way of Perfection. † *Humility*, says Saint *Austin*, *must precede, accompany and follow all the good we do, for from the very moment, that Pride enters, it destroys all other Merit*; and spoils any action whatsoever, be it never so holy in it self; nay, 'tis for that very reason, that Pride and Vain-glory are the more to be fear'd; for other Vices spring from ill Actions, but Pride usually proceeds upon good ones; * *So that we are consequently to have, a greater care of Pride in our good Actions, lest by a too great desire of praise, we come to lose the fruit of all we have done that was praise-worthy.*

It is easie for us, if we will, to keep our selves from other Vices, they have certain marks which discover 'em, they are accompany'd still with other sins, but Pride ranks it self usually in the midst of good works, and continually lay's snares to destroy them.

* Calco Platonis fastum, Calcas, sed alio fastu.
Tertul. in Apolog. § 32. c. 15.
Aug. lib. de 3. Reg. c. 10. § 3.
14. & l. 8. de Trin. c. 7.

† Beati pauperes spiritu, quoniam ipsorum est regnum celorum.
Matth. 5. 3.
Ieron. in Daniel 3. Greg. Moral. 6. c. 16.

* Dilecte à me, non mundum fabricare, non cuncta visibilia & invisibilia creare, non incoerre, non succutere, & ipso mundo mirabiliora facere, sed quoniam mitis sum, & humilis corde. Potentior enim & tutior solidissima humilitas, quam ventosissima celsitudo.
De verb. Dom. in Evang. Ieron. Matib. serm. 13.
† Nisi humilitas omnia quaecunque bene facimus & praeceperit & committitur & consecuta fuerit, jam nobis de aliis bono facto gaudentibus, totum exortum de manu superbia.

Ephes. 56. ad Diocor.

* Vitia quippe cetera in peccatis, superbia vero etiam in recte factis timenda est. Idem. ibid.

Let us suppose a Christian steering a happy course in the Sea of the World, and thinking of nothing but Heaven, whither he intends from his very setting out; on the sudden comes a puff of Pride, a desire to please Men, a vain complaisance of himself, and he unhappily perishes thereby in the midst of his Voyage. Saint Gregory and Saint Bernard say, † *That he who treasures up other Vertues without Humility, do's no otherwise than throw dust before the Wind, the first puff blows all away.*

† Qui sine humilitate virtutes congregat, quasi in ventum pulverem portat.
Bern. de ord. vit. & mor. Iulij. c. 7.
Et serm. ult. ex parvul.

C H A P. II.

That Humility is the Foundation of all other Vertues.

* Humilitas est sanctitatis fundamentum.
Cyp. de Nativ. Christi.

† Primavictus Christianorum humilitas.
Hier. ep. ad Rufin.

* Humilitas est fundamentum cuiusque virtutum.

Bern. Serm. 1. de Nativ. Dom. Greg. lib. 34. Moral. ca. 33. & l. 27. co. ult.

S AINT Cyprian says, that * *Humility is the foundation of Sanctity*; Saint Hierom, that † *'Tis the first Christian Vertue*; Saint Bernard calls it * *The foundation or preserver of Vertues*, and all three in fine agree, that 'tis the Basis of the rest: Wherefore Saint Gregory sometimes calls it, *The Mistress and Mother, and sometimes the Spring and root of all other Vertues*. This Metaphor of the root, do's above all suit most exactly with it, and explains very well the proprieties and conditions thereof; for first of all says Saint Gregory, just as a flower draw's all it's freshness and beauty from the root, and quickly fades as soon as 'tis gather'd, so, if any Vertue whatsoever be but separated from the root of Humility, it withers presently, and is quite lost; moreover, as the root lies deep under ground, and is trodden under foot, and has ordinarily neither beauty nor smell, yet is nevertheless the principle, both of the Plants life and nourishment; so Humility is the cause, that he who is humble, loves to lie hid as it were, under ground, to be trod upon and despis'd; it shun's noise and splendor, and seeks only the obscurity of retirement, nevertheless 'tis this which in it self presents, and gives continual growth to all other Vertues. Lastly, as a Tree must be

be well rooted to the end it may bear well and last a great while; and as the further the root is in the Earth, the longer it lasts and bears more fruit, according to the words of *Isay*, † *It shall shoot it's root downwards, and bear fruit upwards*, so to the end that other Vertues shou'd thrive and fructifie in our hearts, 'tis necessary, that Humility be well rooted there, and the deeper the root is, the more they will still increase and grow stronger. To conclude therefore where we begun; Humility according to the Doctrine of all the Holy Fathers, is the source, foundation and root of all Vertues: As * *Pride is the beginning and origine of all Sins*, according to the words of the Wise Man.

But some perhaps may urge, how can Humility be the Foundation and Spiritual Edifice of all other Vertues, since 'tis certain, that Faith is the foundation thereof; and that according to the words of the Apostle, † *None can lay any other foundation besides that already lay'd, which is JESUS CHRIST*; Saint *Thomas* answers this Objection very well. Two things, says he, are requisite to lay the foundation of a House well; first, the Earth must be well open'd, all that which is light and sandy must be thrown out, and it must be dug, till it be found hard enough to build upon. In the second place, after it has been well dug and the sand clear'd; we must begin to lay the first Stone, which together with the others that are plac'd in the same ranck makes the principal foundation of the Building, this is, continues the Saint, a representation of what Humility and Faith do in a Spiritual Building.

Humility open's the ground, diggs the foundations, and throw's out all the sand, that is to say, the weakness of human force, for we must not build upon our own strength, which is but a quick-sand, and which you must remove, by having a diffidence in your self, and in digging always till you find sure and solid ground to lay the first Stone, * *And that Stone is JESUS CHRIST*, who is the chief foundation of all the Building. But because for the well laying of this foundation Stone, we must first of all dig with Humility; 'tis for that reason that Humility is also call'd the foundation of this Edifice, now if Humility opens the ground well, if it searches well into the knowledge of our own nothingness, if it throws out all the quick-sand in us, I mean, all the confidence we have in our selves, to lay there the foundation Stone JESUS CHRIST; the Building which

U 2:

shall

† Micet radicem deorsum, & faciet fructum sursum.
4 Reg. 19. 30.

* Initium omnis peccati est superbia.
Ecclef. 10. 15.

† Fundamentum enim aliud nemo potest ponere, præter id quod positum est, quod est Christus Jesus.
1 Cor. 3. 11.
1. Tb. 2. 2. g.
161. art. 5. ad 2.

* Petra autem erat Christus.
1 Cor. 10. 4.

shall be rais'd thereon shall never be shaken, neither shall the Winds or the Waters be ever able to overthrow it, because the foundations thereof are solid, but if we build without Humility, all the Edifice will quickly fall to the ground, because 'twas built on the sand: For all Vertues which are not founded upon Humility are no true Vertues, but are only Vertues in appearance; Saint *Austin* speaking of those of the Antient Romans and Philosophers, asserts, that they were not true Vertues, not only because they were not animated by Charity, which is that which gives Spirit and Life to all other Vertues, but because they had not the foundation of Humility. For in Fortitude, Justice, Temperance, and all other their Acts of Vertue, they sought only Worldly esteem and reputation, so that those were but empty Vertues in them, and rather the Ghosts or Phantom's of Vertues than real ones; treating likewise particularly of those of the Antient Romans, he says, that as they were Vertues only in appearance, so God rewarded 'em with the good things only of this World, which also are only apparent goods. If therefore you desire, that real Vertues shou'd raise up a Spiritual Edifice in your Souls, endeavour first of all to lay a solid foundation of Humility. † *You aspire*, says Saint *Austin*, *to great things, begin with little ones; you desire to erect a very high building; think first of all of the foundation of Humility. The foundations are always dug proportionably to the designed weight of the building; and the higher one intends it, the deeper must the foundations thereof be lay'd.* The heighth must answer to the depth, so that you cannot raise the Edifice of Evangelical Perfection which you intend to build, but proportionably to the depth of Humility you shall give to the foundations. 'Tis related of Saint *Thomas of Aquine*, that speaking of Humility, he was wont to say, that whatever good works one may do, who lives to be honor'd, shuns contempt, and suffers it with chagrin, he is a great way off from Perfection, because all his Vertue has no foundation.

† Magnus esse vis? A. minime incipere. Cogitas magnam fabricam construere celsitudinis? De fundamento prius cogita humilitatis. Quamvis quisque vult & disponit superimponere molem edificii, tantò altius fodit fundamentum.
Aug. serm. 10. de verb. Domini.

C H A P.

C H A P. III.

*Wherein by running over the principal Vertues,
is explain'd more particularly how Humility
is the Foundation of 'em all.*

TO shew yet more clearly the truth of this Holy Maxim, that Humility is the foundation of all other Vertues, and how necessary this foundation is for us, I shall now in few words run over the principal ones.

First of all, Faith stands in need of Humility, I speak not of Infants who receive Faith in Baptism, without exercising any A& thereof, but of those who have already the use of reason. Faith requires an humble and submissive Spirit, according to Saint Paul, * *Bringing into Captivity every Understanding to the Obedience of Christ.* On the other side, the Spirit of Pride hinders the receiving of Faith, according to the words of our Saviour: † *How can you believe, who give honor to one another, and who seek not the honor which comes from God alone?* Now as Humility is necessary for the receiving of Faith, 'tis so also for the preserving it; for all Holy Writers hold, that Pride is the beginning of all Heresies, which spring up from too great an Opinion of our selves, and our own light, which we prefer before the general Opinion of the whole Church; and this it is which the Apostle points at when he says, * *This know also, that in the last days perillous times shall come, for Men shall be lovers of themselves, covetous, boasters and proud.* Saint Austin observes on this place, that the Apostle attributes the cause of all Heresies and Errors particularly to Pride and Arrogance. Hope is also supported by Humility, because he who is humble, knows his misery and weakness, he is sensible that of himself he can do nothing, and so flies with the greater ardor to God, and fixes all his hope on him. Charity which consists in loving God, is very much increas'd also by means of

* In captivitatē redigentes omnem intellectum in obsequium Christi.

† Car. 10. §. 1. Quomodo vos potestis credere, qui gloriam ab invicem accipitis, & gloriam, quæ à solo Deo est, non queritis? Joan. 5. 44.

* Hoc autem scitote, quod in novissimis diebus instabunt tibi omnia periculosa, & erunt homines seipso amantes, cupidi, superbi.

† Tim. 3. 1.

† Quid est ho-
mo, quia mag-
nificas eum,
aut quid appo-
nis erga cuius
cor tuum?
Job. 7. 17.

* Magnificat
anima mea
Dominum,
quia respexit
humilitatem
ancillæ suæ.
Luc. 1. 46. 48.

of Humility; for one of an humble Spirit seeing that he receives whatever he has from the hand of God, and that he is very far from Meriting it, finds himself stirr'd up thereby to love his Benefactor more and more. † *What is Man, says Job to God, that thou should'st magnifie him, and that thou should'st set thy heart upon him?* Shall I O Lord, remain thus Rebellious against thee, and thou so good to me? Shall I go on still in offending thee, whilst thou continuest to heap thy favors upon me? This is one of the chief considerations which the Saints have made use of to inflame themselves with the Love of God, the more they reflected upon their own unworthiness of misery, the more they thought themselves oblig'd to love him, who had condescended to cast his Eyes upon their meanness. * *My Soul doth magnifie the Lord, says the Holy Virgin, because he hath regarded the lowliness of his hand-maid.* As to the Charity also which we exercise towards our Neighbor, 'tis easily seen how necessary Humility is thereunto; because one of the things which uses to make us so cold to our Brethren is some Judgment we form of 'em to their disadvantage, and the impression we receive of their faults. An humble Man is very far from all this, he looks only upon his own Errors, and never minds those of others, he sees nothing in his Neighbor, but what's good and vertuous, and from thence it comes, that whilst he imagines every one else perfect, and himself alone imperfect, he thinks himself unworthy to live among his Brethren, and so is full of love, esteem and veneration for them; moreover, he who is humble is not angry at having every body prefer'd before him, at having others esteem'd and himself neglected, at the giving great Employments to others, and not bestowing the meanest upon him; there is no envy among the humble, because envy proceeds from Pride; so that where ever Humility reign's you will find neither envy, disputes, quarrels, nor any thing which may cool Fraternal Charity.

Patience, a Vertue so necessary for a Christian, arises likewise from Humility; because he who is humble knows his own faults, and is sensible at the same time, that he deserves all manner of chastisement, wherefore he meets with no Mortifications, which he looks not upon, as less than what he has deserv'd, and instead of complaining thereof, he says with the Prophet Micah, † *I will bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinn'd against him.* A Proud Man complains

† Iram Do-
mini portabo,
quia peccavi
ei.
Mich. 7. 9.

of

of every thing, and suspects still without reason that he is wrong'd, and not treated according to his Merit. On the other side, whatever injury is done to the humble Man he minds it not, nor takes it for an injury, nay, so far is he from imagining that an injury can be done him in any thing, that he still reckons all as a kindness; and however he is treated, he is always satisfi'd, because he believes that he is treated better than he deserves.

Infine, Humility causes in us a great disposition to Patience; wherefore after that the Wise Man had admonish'd him who will ingage himself in the service of God, to prepare himself for a great many Mortifications, and displeasures, and to arm himself with Patience; the means he proposes for that end, is to humble himself. * *Humble thy heart,* says he, *and have patience, receive all that shall befall thee, and bear afflictions patiently;* but what Arms do's he give him to defend him from grief, or to make him at least bear it courageously? † *Be patient,* says he, *in your Humility,* that is to say, be humble, and then you will be patient.

Peace also, the Blessing so much desir'd by all the World, proceeds from Humility; and JESUS CHRIST himself reaches us this truth, when he says, * *Learn of me who am meek and humble of heart, and you'll find peace in your Souls.* Be humble and you'll be at peace both with your selves, and your Brethren. † *There are always contentions among the Proud,* says Salomon; but as much as they are expos'd to them, the humble are as far off from 'em. There's but one contest between these, which is always, who shall be lowest, and give the greatest deference or respect to his Companion. The strife between Saint Paul the Hermit, and Saint Anthony was of this nature; 'twas who should break and divide the Bread which the Raven had brought 'em, Paul would have Anthony do it, as being a stranger, and Anthony would have Paul do it as being the eldest; each of 'em sought reasons to yield and give place to the other; 'tis good to have such contests, and as such kind of ones proceed from true Humility, so they do not only trouble and destroy Eternal Peace and Charity, but confirm and nourish it.

Let us now come to the three Vertues which are suitable and essential to a Religious Man, and to which we oblige our selves by those three Vows we make of Poverty, Chastity and Obedience. Poverty is so near related to Humility, that they seem to be two Sisters; and by Poverty of Spirit, which

* Depreme cor-
tuum, & su-
stine. Omne
quod tibi ap-
plicatum fue-
rit, accipe, &
in dolore su-
stine.
Eccles. 2. 2. 4.
† In humili-
tate tua pati-
entiam habe.
Ibid. v. 4.

* Discite à
me, quia mitis
sum, & humi-
lis corde: &
invenietis re-
quiem animabus vestris.
Matt. 11. 29.
† Inter su-
perbos semper
jurgia sunt.
Prov. 13. 10.

which our Saviour pronounc'd as the first Beatitude, some Holy Writers understand Humility, and others, Voluntary Poverty, such as Religious Profess, but bee't as 'twill Poverty must be always accompany'd with Humility; for a coarse and mean Habit gives occasion oftentimes of Pride to him that wears it, and raises in him a contempt of others. Saint Austin therefore was against too mean Habits, and would have the Religious of his Order decently clad. Humility is moreover necessary to hinder us from loving too much our ease, and an abundance of all things, and to make us content with whatever is given us, even tho' it shou'd be unequally divided because we are Poor and profess Poverty.

As for Chastity; we cannot doubt but Humility is necessary to preserve it, after so many Examples which we have in the Lives of the Fathers of the Desert; and after so many shameful falls which have happen'd to Persons of great Perfection in Penance and Solitude; all which proceeded only from want of Humility, and from too great Presumption and Confidence in themselves, and 'tis that which God has usually punish'd by permitting the like falls. Infine, Humility is so great an ornament to Chastity and Purity, that Saint Bernard says, * *He dares take upon him to assest, that the Purity of the Virgin Mary her self had not been agreeable to God without Humility.*

As to the Vertue of Obedience, wherein our Holy Founder would have us particularly signalize our selves; 'tis certain, that he who will not be humble will never be Obedient, and on the contrary, he will never fail to be Obedient, who is truly humble. One may command an humble Man to do any thing, he has no resentment against what you would have him do; he conforms himself intirely to his Superior; nor do's he only submit his Conduct and Actions to him, but even his Will and Judgment. Infine, you never find any contradiction or repugnance in him. But 'tis not so with others.

Now if we consider Prayer, which is the foundation of a Spiritual Religious Life; 'tis certain that 'tis of no effect without Humility, and with Humility it pierces the Heavens, according to the words of the Wise Man. † *The Prayer of him who humbles himself shall penetrate the Clouds, nor will he be comforted, till it mounts up to God, nor will he depart, till the most high looks favorably upon him.* The holy and humble Jewish, shut up in her Closet, Cloath'd with a Hair-cloth,

* Sine humilitate, audeo dicere, nec Virginitas Maria Deo placuisset. Idem. hanc. super Missas. c. 1.

† Oratio humilientis se aures penetrabit; & donec propinquet non consolabitur; & non discedet, donec Altissimus aspiciat. Basil. 55. 21.

cloth, cover'd with Ashes and prostrate on the ground cry's out, † *The Prayer of the humble and meek, has been always pleasing to thee O Lord.* And the Royal Prophet says, that * *God has regard to the supplication of the humble, and despises not their Prayer, † Fear not therefore that an humble Man will be rejected; he will obtain what he asks.* Consider too how agreeable the Prayer of the Publican was to God, he durst not lift up his Eyes to Heaven, nor approach the Altar, but getting into a corner of the Temple he smote his Breast, and cry'd out with an humble sense of himself: * *O my God, be merciful to me a Sinner,* whereupon Jesus CHRIST declar'd, † *That he went down to his House justified, and that the proud Pharisee departed with his condemnation.* We might thus run over all other Vertues, and shew that they all depend upon Humility, so that if you seek a ready way to acquire 'em, and a short lesson how to arrive quickly to Perfection, you have it in two words: Be Humble.

† Humilium & mansuetorum semper tibi placuit deprecatio. *Judith 9. 16.*

* Respexit in orationem humilium, & non sprevit precem eorum. *Psalm. 101. 19.*

† Ne avertatur humilis factus confusus. *Psalm. 73. 21.*

* Deus, propitius esto mihi peccatori. *Luc. 18. 13.*

† Dico vobis: descendit hic justificatus in domum suam ab illo. *Ibid. vers. 14.*

CHAP. IV.

That they whose Profession it is to labor for the Salvation of others, have particular need of Humility.

* **T**HE greater you are, says the Wise Man, the more ought you to humble your self in all things, and you will find Grace in the Eyes of God. Great doubtless is the dignity annex'd to the Profession we make of laboring

* Quanto magnus es, humilia te, & coram Deo invenies gratiam. *Eccles. 3. 20.*

for the Salvation of Souls, and we may truly say, that God has therein call'd us to a very eminent Employment, for we are ordain'd to serve the Church in the same Functions, for which our Saviour chose the Apostles, which are the Preaching of the Gospel, Administration of the Sacraments, and that of his Precious Body and Blood, so that we can say with Saint Paul, † *That he has giv'n us a Ministry of Reconciliation;* for so the Apostle call's the Preaching of the

† Dedit nobis ministerium reconciliationis.

TOME I I.

X

Gospel,

† Et posuit in
nobis verbum
reconciliationis.
pro Christo
ergo legatione
fungimur, tanquam
Deo exhortante
per nos.
2 Cor. 5. 19. 20.

Gospel, and Administration of the Sacraments by which the Grace of Salvation is communicated. † *He has giv'n to us, says he, the Ministry of Reconciliation; we therefore speak as Ambassadors of Christ, and as thō God did exhort you by us.* 'Tis by us, 'tis by those Tongues of Flesh which he has giv'n us, that he is pleas'd to speak to Souls, and touch Men's Hearts, so that we have far more need of Humility, than others; and that for two principal reasons. The first is, that the more sublime our Vocation and Employment are, the more are we expos'd to be attack'd by Pride and Vanity. The highest Mountains lie most open to the Winds. The greatness of our Ministry makes us be respect'd and honor'd by every one, makes us be look'd upon as Saints and new Apostles, and even as Persons who Sanctifie those that approach 'em. There must be a very deep foundation of Humility to hinder so lofty an Edifice from tumbling down; there must be a great stock, and solidity of Vertue, to keep one from falling under so weighty a charge, and 'tis very hard indeed to see one's self universally honor'd, without having a puffed up heart. Few are of a brain strong enough to look down from a very high place, without having their head turn round, and how many have fallen from the height where they were for want of Humility? How many also have been seen to fly as high as Eagles on the Wings of Vertue, and become afterwards no better then Night Birds by reason of their Pride? That solitary Man, who is spoken of in the Life of the Saints *Pacamus* and *Palemon*, who walk'd upon glowing Coal's without burning himself, wrought without doubt many Miracles; but he happen'd unfortunately to grow proud thereupon, and to despise others so far, that looking upon himself as infinitely above 'em, he told 'em, speaking of himself, that he indeed is holy, who walks on Fire without burning himself, for which vanity Saint *Palemon* reprov'd him very severely but without any good effect; for the unhappy Man a little while after fell into Debauchery, and made a very deplorable end. Holy History is full of the like examples.

We have therefore particular need of the foundation of Humility, for without it we run the hazard of falling into Pride, and the greatest Pride of all which is Spiritual Pride. Sainr *Bonaventure* helps to the explication of this Doctrine still further, when he says, that there are two sorts of Pride, a Carnal Pride, which proceeds from Temporal things, and a Spiritual Pride, which proceeds from Spiritual things, and that
this

In Vir. S. Pacom. à Græco in Lat. versa per Celaberr. Abb. le Petit.

this last is much greater, and more criminal than the other; the reason he gives for it is clear; because, says he, the proud Man is properly a Robber, for he takes away what is another's, against the Will of him to whom it belongs, he takes away the Glory which belongs only to God, which God has particularly reserv'd to himself, and which he declares in the Prophet *Isay*, † *He will not give unto another.* He I say takes it away, as much as depends on him, and attribut's it to himself, as a thing proper to him. Now he who is proud of the Goods of Nature, as of his good Constitution of Body, Birth, sharpness of Wit, Knowledge, and all other like qualities, do's without doubt commit Robbery, because all these things belong to God, but since they are Goods but of little value, and as it were useless and refuse moveables, his crime is so much the less; but he who Prides himself in the Spiritual Gifts which God has bestow'd on him, and in the fruit which he produces in Souls thro' his means, he I say is a great Criminal, and robs God of his Glory; he is a notorious Robber, who takes away the most precious Treasures of the House of God, and which God has purchas'd at the price of his Blood and Life. Saint *Francis* was so fearful of falling into this sort of Pride, that he address'd himself often to God in this manner. O Lord, if thou art pleas'd to bestow thy gifts upon me, be thou the Guardian thereof thy self, for I have a diffidence in my self, and I am a great Robber, who may perhaps play the Bankrupt with thee. Let us proceed with the same fear, we have much more reason to do so, than this great Saint, because we are not so humble as he; and let us have a care of falling into so dangerous a Pride. God has put his Treasures into our hands, as things committed to our trust and charge; let us not become Bankrupts thereof; let us not retain any thing of 'em, so as to appropriate it to our selves, but let us faithfully restore whatever belongs to him.

† Gloriam
meam alteri
non dabo.
Isai. 42. 8.

'Twas not without great Mystery, that the Saviour of the World, when he appear'd to his Disciples on the Day of his Ascension, reproach'd 'em first of all, for their incredulity and hardness of heart, and commanded 'em afterwards to go and Preach the Gospel all over the Earth, and gave them power to do Miracles. He gave us to understand thereby, that he who is to be prefer'd to the great Imployments of Grace, ought first of all to humble and abase himself out of the sense he has of his weakness and misery, to the end that even

*Theod. quest.
10. sup. Exod.*

when after that he comes to Miracles, and to soar up to Heaven, he may still remain fix'd and steady in the sense of his own meanness and nothingness, without attributing to himself any thing but his own unworthiness. *Theoderet* observes to this purpose, that 'twas for the same reason, that when God was pleas'd to choose *Moysses*, to be the Leader and Conductor of his People, and to work so many Miracles by him, he commanded him first to put his hand into his bosom, and was pleas'd that he shou'd draw it out again all cover'd over with Leprosy, even that very hand which was to divide the Waters of the Red Sea, and to do afterwards so many other Miracles.

† Habe fiduciam in Domino, & non in hominibus.
Prov. 3. 5.

The second reason why we have more need of Humility than others, is, that thereby we may render our Ministry more useful for the Salvation of Souls; so that 'tis not only necessary for our own Perfection, and to hinder Pride and Vanity from destroying us; but also to win our Neighbor more easily to God, and make greater progress in the Conversion of Souls. Now one of the means that can most conduce thereunto, is Humility; that we may know how to have a diffidence in our selves, and that instead of laying any stress upon our own strength, ability and prudence, we may place all our confidence in God, according to the words of the Wise Man; † *Trust in the Lord with all thy heart, and lean not unto thine own understanding.* The reason of this is, (as I shall hereafter shew more at large) that when diffiding in our selves, we place all our confidence on God alone, we lay all upon him, so that he is oblig'd more particularly to help us. The Conversion of Souls is, O Lord thy work, and not ours; put thy hand therefore unto it, since we can do nothing of our selves. This is that we ought to say to Almighty God, if we wou'd have him bless our endeavours; but when we trust to such means as our own reason furnishes us withal, we then give our selves a share therein; and we cannot attribute any thing to our selves, without taking it from God. 'Tis with this, as with the two Scales of a Balance, when one go's up t'other go's down, whatever we attribute to our selves, we take from God, and thereby we rob him of the Glory and Honor of which he is the true owner; and who knows but this may be often the cause of reaping so little fruit in the Conversion of Souls?

*De 3. cap. 2.
ejus vita.*

We Read in the Life of Saint *Ignatius*, that being at *Rome*, and knowing little of the *Italian* Language, he profited so much

much in gaining Souls by the Christian Exhortations which he made in a plain and gross way, that often when the Exhortation was ended, the Auditors went to throw themselves down at their Confessors Feet; and their hearts were so touch'd with sorrow, sighs and groans, that they cou'd scarce utter a word. The reason was, that he founded all the strength of his Discourse, † *Not upon enticing words of Mans Wisdom, but in demonstrations of the Spirit, and of the power of the Holy Ghost.* Now as he had a diffidence in himself, and put all his confidence in God, God also gave so great a Power and Vertue to all that he sayd, that all his words seem'd as so many burning Arrows, wherewith he pierc'd the hearts of his hearers. How can we tell but that the little profit we make, as to the good of Souls, proceeds from our relying too much on our own light and human endeavours, upon Sciences, the strength of reasoning; the Politeness and Eloquence of a flourishing Discourse, and from applauding our selves thro' a vain complaisance?

† Non in persuasibilibus humanæ sapientie verbis, sed in ostensione spiritus, & virtutis.
scor. 2. 4.

Well, says Almighty God, I will so order it, that you shall believe you have sayd the best things in the World, and the most proper for your purpose, but when you shall find most satisfaction in your selves, and think you have come off best, then shall it be that you shall have least success, and that the words of the Prophet *Osee* shall be fulfill'd in you.

* *Give 'em O Lord; what wilt thou give? Give 'em a miscarrying Womb, and dry Breasts.* That same Name of Father, which is giv'n you, when you are call'd Father Preacher, will be as to your self a vain and useles name, for you shall have no Spiritual Children, you shall have no Milk to give 'em, at least the Milk which you shall give 'em shall not nourish 'em. This is the Chastisement which he deserves, who usurps what belongs only to God, and attribut's it to himself. I say not nevertheless, that you shou'd not study, and weigh exactly all that you are to Preach; but that is not enough, you must also carefully recommend it all to God with Tears, and after you have beaten your head and taken a great deal of pains to examin and digest it, you must still say. † *We are unprofitable Servants, we have done that which was but our duty to do.* And after all, what is it that I can do? I can make a little noise with my words at most, like that of a Musquet charg'd only with Powder; but it belongs to thee O Lord to touch the heart. * *The King's heart is in the hand of the Lord, he turneth it whithersoever*

* Da eis Domine. Quid dabis eis? Da eis vulvam sine liberis, & ubera arentia.
Osee 9. 14.

† Servi inutilis sumus: quod debuimus facere fecimus.
Luc. 17. 10.

* Cor regis in manu Domini: quocumque voluerit inclinabit illud.
Prov. 21. 1.

he

he listeth; 'tis thy part alone O Lord to touch hearts, for how are we able to succeed therein of our selves; and of what effect can all our Discourses be, and all the human means we use for so supernatural an end as the Conversion of Souls without thy Grace? When therefore we think we advance the good of Souls, and things succeed with us, on what do we then ground that vain complaisance in our selves which we give way to, as if that good success were our own work? † *Shall the Axe*, says our Lord in the Prophet *Isay*, *boast it self against him that heweth therewith, or shall the Saw magnifie it self against him that draweth it? As if the Rod shou'd shake it self against him that lifts it up, or as if the Staff shou'd take a pride and exalt it self, which is but a piece of Wood.* This is the Representation of what we are, as to the Conversion of Souls, we are but pieces of wood, who have no motion in our selves, but what it pleases God to give us. We have no reason, therefore to glorifie out selves in any thing; and it is to him alone that we ought to attribute the success of that we do.

He is so jealous, lest we shou'd lay any stress on our own strength, or upon human helps, and will have us so absolutely give him the Glory of every thing, that 'twas for that reason he was pleas'd to choose for the Preaching of the Gospel and Conversion of the World; not Learned and Eloquent Men, but simple Fishermen, and those who were raw and ignorant. * *God hath chosen*, says Saint Paul, *the foolish things of the World to confound the wise, and the weak things of the World to confound the things which are mighty.* Wou'd you know why he has done so? 'Tis, adds the Apostle, *that no Flesh shou'd glory in his Presence, but that according as 'tis written, he that glories, let him glory in the Lord.* If the Preachers of the Gospel had been powerful Princes, and had planted it all over the Earth with an armed force, the Conversion of the World might have been attributed to the terror of their Arms. Or if God had chosen to that end great Orators, who by their profound Knowledge, and piercing and charming Eloquence, had convinc'd the Philosophers, the success might have been attributed to the force of their Rhetorick and Learning, and the Glory of JESUS CHRIST had been thereby so much diminish'd; but he has done otherwise, and wou'd not suffer, that † *The Wisdom and Eloquence of Man shou'd share in Preaching the Gospel, lest the Cross of Christ shou'd thereby be made of no effect.*
Saint

† Nunquid
gloriabitur se-
curis contra
eum, qui secat
in ea? Aut ex-
altabitur ferra
contra eum, à
quo trahitur?
Quomodo si
elevator virga
contra elevan-
tem se, & ex-
altetur baculus
qui utique lig-
num est?
Isa. 10. 15.

* Quæ stulta
sunt mundi
elegit Deus,
ut confundat
sapientes: &
infirma mundi
elegit Deus, &
ea quæ non
sunt, ut ea
quæ sunt des-
trueret: ut
non gloriatur
omnis caro in
conspectu e-
jus: sed que-
madmodum
scriptum est:
Qui gloriatur,
in Domino
gloriatur.
I Cor. 1. 27.
28. 29. 31.

† Evangeliza-
re, non in sa-
pientia verbi,
ut non evacu-
etur crux
Christi.
I Cor. 1. 17.

Saint Austin say's, † *That it having pleas'd the Saviour of our Souls to bring down the Pride of the haughty, made not use of Orators to draw Sinners to him, but that by the means of a simple Fisher-man he has gain'd even Emperors; Cyprian, he adds, was a great Orator, but before that; Peter had been a Fisher-man, and 'twas by the means of that Fisher-man, that not only Orators but Emperors also submitted to the Faith.*

The Holy Scripture is full of Examples, by which we see that God made use of weak Instruments for the execution of the greatest things, to the end he might the better imprint this truth in our hearts, that we ought never to glorifie our selves in any thing, but are to attribute the Glory of all to God alone. This we learn from the famous Victory, which Judith, a weak Woman and all alone, gain'd over an Army of above forty thousand Men. And 'tis this which we are taught by that Victory which David got of Goliath, when very young and with no other Arms than his Sling, he lay'd him on the ground with one blow, and triumph'd over the Philistians; * *That all the Earth shou'd know*, says the Scripture, *that there's one God, who takes care of Israel, and that all this Assembly shou'd find, that 'tis not by the Sword or the Spear that the Lord gives Victory in Battels; but that it proceeds from him alone;* which are the words that God sayd to Gedeon, who had brought together two and thirty thousand Men against the Madianites, that consisted of above a hundred and thirty thousand; he expresses further the same thing, † *You have*, says God, *too many Men with you, to make me deliver the Madianites into your hands.* Let us reflect a little with admiration upon the reason which God gives him. You shall not Conquer, because you have too many Men with you. If he had sayd you will not be able to Conquer, because they have a vast number of Men, and you but a few, that (one wou'd think) had been more conformable to reason; but 'tis not so, that wou'd have been a reasoning after the usual manner of Men; but to reason after God's way, is to say, you will not be able to Conquer, because you are too numerous. And why so? * *For fear*, adds God again, *lest Israel shou'd glorifie it self therein, and say, that 'twas deliver'd by it's own strength.* Wherefore God commands Gedeon to take only three hundred Men with him, and so to Fight the Enemy, and gives him a notable Victory, without having need even of drawing his Sword. The sound of the Trumpets

† Dominus
noster Jesus
Christus vo-
lens superbo-
rum frangere
cervices, non
quæsit per o-
ratorem, sed
piscatorem, sed
piscatore lu-
cratus est im-
peratorem.
Magnus Cypri-
anus orator,
sed prius Pe-
trus piscator,
per quem pos-
tea credider
non solum o-
rator, sed &
Imperator.
Aug. traç. 12.
sup. Joan.

* Ut sciat om-
nis terra quia
est Deus in
Israel. Et no-
verit universa
Ecclesia hæc,
quia non in
gladio, neque
in hasta salvat
Dominus: ip-
sus enim est
bellum.

1 Reg 17. 46. 47.

† Multus te-
cum est popu-
lus, nec tra-
datur Madian
in manus ejus.
Judic. 7. 2.

* Ne glorie-
tur contra me
Israel, & dic-
cat: Moï-
ribus liberatus
sum. Ibid. v. 2.

Trumpets which they carry'd in one hand, and the clashing of the Water-pots, and light of the Torchcs which they carry'd in the other, were the means which God us'd to strike such a panick fear into their Enemies, that breaking their own ranks, they defeated themselves, and kill'd almost every one the other. Now the *Israelites* cou'd not say, that they overcame by their own strength; and that was all the acknowledgment that God design'd to bring them to. If then in Temporal things, wherein there's some proportion between the means which we use, and the end we propose to our selves, between the forces we have, and the victory; God will not have us give the Glory of any thing to our selves, but acknowledge, that the gaining of Battels, and the good success of Affairs proceed from him. If in the order of natural things, neither he who plants, nor he who waters is properly any thing; if 'tis not the Gardener but God alone, that makes the Plants to grow, and the Trees bear fruit; what must it be in the order of Grace, in the Conversion of Souls, in the progress in Vertue, and in all other Spiritual Affairs, where human strength is so bounded, and our measures so limited, that they have no proportion with so high an end?

† Neque qui plantat est aliquid, neque qui rigat; sed qui incrementum dat Deus. 1 Cor. 3. 7.

† Wherefore, neither he that plants, is any thing, neither he that waters, but God that gives the increase. He alone by his Grace can make the Plants, which we cultivate, increase and fructifie; he alone can strike Men with fear and terror; he alone can make 'em detest their Sins, and leave their ill Life: For as for us, what can we do, but make a little sound with the Trumpet of the Gospel? Nevertheless, if we do at the same time keep down our Body by Mortification, and make our light shine before Men by an exemplary Life; we shall do a great deal, for by that means God will give us the Victory.

Let us draw from all this, two Maxim's, which will be of great comfort to us in the exercise of our Ministry, and which will serve very much to render it useful both for our own particular advancement, and that of our Neighbor also. The first is, to have a diffidence in our selves, as has been already sayd, to put all our confidence in God, and to attribute all our good success to him alone. * Let us not be lifted up with any thing, says Saint Chrysostom, but acknowledge our selves to be useles, to the end we may prove useful both to our selves and others; and Saint Ambrose admonishes us, if we will advance the good of Souls, to practice what Saint

Peter

* Nolimus i-gitur extolli: sed & nos dicamus inutil-es, ut utiles efficiamur. Chrys. hom. 38. ad pop. Antioch.

Peter teaches. † If any Man speaks, let him speak as the Instrument only of the word of God; if any Man Minister's, let him do it, as of the ability which God giveth, that God may in all things be glorifi'd thro' JESUS CHRIST, to whom appertains Praise and Dominion for ever and ever. Let us attribute nothing to our selves, let us rob God of nothing, and let us not have any vain complaisance in any thing whatsoever.

† Si quis ministrat, tanquam ex virtute, quam administrat Deus: ut in omnibus honorificentur Deus per Jesum Christum: cui est gloria, & imperium in sæcula sæculorum.

1 Petr. 4. 11.

The second Maxim, which we ought to draw from what has been sayd, and which is very necessary for us, is, *Not to be discourag'd on account of our own weakness and misery*: For who is it, that seeing himself call'd to so high an Imployment, and sublime an End, as is that of Converting Souls, of delivering them from the bondage of Sin, and the darkness of Heresie and Unbelief, who is it, I say, who considering these things, and reflecting upon himself, wou'd not lose courage when he is sensible of the disproportion between his own strength, and so great an undertaking? He may say perhaps, this concerns not me, I have more need to be Converted, than any one; I am very sensible of my own weakness, and I am the least and most incapable of all; but he is mistaken when he reasons thus, 'tis even by reason of his weakness, that God designs him for so great a Work. *Moses* cou'd not be persuaded, that he was the Person who shou'd perform so marvellous an Action, as to deliver the Children of *Israel* out of the Bondage of *Egypt*, so that excusing himself to Almighty God, who gave him that Commission, * *Who am I*, says he, *that I shou'd go unto Pharaoh, and that I shou'd bring forth the Children of Israel out of Egypt?* O my Lord send I pray thee, by the hand of him whom thou wilt send, I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue. Now see what God reply's, † Go, says he, I will be with thy Mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say. The same thing happen'd to the Prophet *Jeremy*, God sent him to Prophecy to the Nations; whereupon he excus'd himself, and sayd: * *Ah Lord, behold I cannot speak, for I am a Child!* And 'tis just for that reason, that thou must go, and 'tis such a one that God seeks, whereas if thou hadst great parts, he wou'd not perhaps have chosen thee, lest thou shou'dst rob him of the Glory of what thou do'st, and attribute it partly to thy self. God seeks out the humble such as cannot attribute any thing to themselves, and by those he brings the greatest things to pass.

Tom. I I.

Y

The

* Quis sum ego ut vadam ad Pharaonem, ut educam filios Israel de Egypto? Obsecro, Domine, mitte quem missurus es. Impedioris & tardior linguae sum.

Exod. 3. 11. & c. 4. 10. & 13.

† Perge, ego ero in ore tuo, doceboque te quid loquaris.

Ibid. c. 4. 12.

* A! a! a! Domine Deus, nescio loqui, quia puer ego sum.

Jerem. 1. 6.

The Holy Scripture tells us, that when the Disciples were return'd from their Mission, the Saviour of Souls seeing the Fruit they had reap'd, and the Miracles they had wrought, he rejoyc'd and sayd, *† I thank thee O Father, Lord of Heaven and Earth, because thou hast hid these things from the Wise and Prudent, and hast reveal'd them unto Babes, even so, Father, for so it pleas'd thee to do.* Happy the simple, happy the humble, and happy they who do not attribute any thing to themselves. They are those whom God raises, 'tis by them that he performs the wonders of his Grace, those he chooseth for Instruments of the greatest things, to work great Conversions, and advance greatly the good of Souls. Let no body therefore lose courage, ** Fear not little flock, for 'tis your Fathers good pleasure to give you the Kingdom of Heaven.* And ye who are call'd the SOCIETY of JESUS, who are at present the weakest and fewest of all, be not discourag'd on that account, for it has pleas'd your Heavenly Father to give ye power of the Souls and Hearts of Men; *† I will be favorable to you at Rome*, sayd JESUS CHRIST, when he appear'd to our Holy Founder as he was going thither, and 'twas from that Miraculous Apparition that our Order, which was then a beginning, took afterwards the Name of the SOCIETY of JESUS. This Name shews us, that it is not only to the Order of Saint Ignatius that we are call'd, but even to the SOCIETY of JESUS, and assures us at the same time of the Protection which he promis'd to our Founder. So that since 'tis JESUS CHRIST who is properly our Head and Leader, we must not be weary nor lose courage in so great an enterprise, as that of the Salvation of Souls, to which it has pleas'd God to call us.

† Consteat
tibi, Pater,
Domine Cæli
& terræ, quia
abscondisti
hæc à sapien-
tibus, & pru-
dentibus, &
revelasti ea
parvulis. Ita
Pater: quoni-
am sic fuit pla-
citum ante te.
Matth. 11. 25.
26.

* Nolite ti-
mere pusillus
grex, quia
complacuit
Patri vestro
dare vobis reg-
num Dei.
Luc. 12. 32.

† Ego vobis
Rome propi-
tius ero.
In ejus vit. li.
2. c. 11.

CHAP.

C H A P. V.

Of the first Degree of Humility, which is to have an Humble Opinion of ones self.

SAINTE *Lawrence Justinian* says, that no body know's well what Humility is; but he who has receiv'd the gift thereof from God, that 'tis of it self very hard to be known, and that there's nothing in which Man deceives himself so much, as in the knowing what true Humility is; You think, says he, that it consists in saying you are a Sinner, and a miserable Creature, if it consisted in that, nothing in the World wou'd be easier, we shou'd all be humble, for we all talk after this rate, and God grant, that we did believe what we say, and that it were not only a way or manner of speaking. You think that it consists also in wearing plain Clothes, and in imploying your self in mean and despicable Offices; by no means, there may still lurk a great deal of Pride at the bottom, perhaps you may pretend this way to distinguish your self from others, and pass for a better and more humble Man than they, and so all may be but a kind of refin'd Pride, not but that these exterior things (as I shall hereafter shew) contribute much to true Humility, when they are made use of as they ought, but after all, it do's not consist therein. † *Many*, says *Saint Hierom*, embrace the shadow and appearance of Humility, but few Humility it self. 'Tis very easie to look down upon the ground, to speak in an humble tone, to fetch a sigh or two now and then, and to own your self a Sinner and a miserable Creature at every word; but say something to these Persons which may in the least touch 'em, and you'll see how nettled they'll be, and how far they are from true Humility. * *Let therefore*, adds *Saint Hierom*, all counterfeite words, and dissembling forms of speaking be layd aside, 'tis Patience that shews a Man to be truly humble, 'tis that, which is the Touch-stone of Humility.

S. Clim. grad. 25. art. 44.

† Multi humilitatis umbram, pauci veritatem sectantur.
Hieron. ep. 2.

* Auferantur omnia signenta verborum: cessent simulati gestus: verum humilem patientia ostendit.
Ubi sup.

† Humilitas
est virtus qua
homo verissi-
mā sui cogni-
tione sibi ipse
visciscit.
*Bern. tract. de
grad. humilit.*

Saint Bernard explain's more particularly in what this Vertue consists, and so gives the definition of it. † *Humility*, says he, *is a Vertue whereby a Man out of a most true knowledge of himself, becomes vile in his own Eyes.* Humility consists not therefore in words, nor in the outside; it consists in the sentiments of the heart, in having a low and mean Opinion of our selves founded on the deep sense we have of our own nothingness, and in desiring to be despis'd by all the World.

*S. Thom. 2. 2.
q. 161. art. 6.
S. Ansel. de si-
militudinibus.
S. Bon. de pro-
cessu Relig.
cap. 22.*

Holy Writers, who have more particularly treated on this subject, lay down several degrees of Humility. Saint *Benedict*, who was follow'd therein by Saint *Thomas*, and several others, reckons twelve, Saint *Anselme* but seven, Saint *Bonaventure* reduces 'em to three, whom I shall follow, both for brevities sake, and to the end that we may have this Doctrine, being contracted to fewer Points, more easily before our Eyes to practice it. The first degree of Humility, says Saint *Bonaventure*, is to have a low and mean Opinion of our selves; and the only means for that, is to know our selves, Saint *Bernard's* definition only comprises these two; and therefore only contains the first degree we speak of. Humility is a Vertue which makes a Man become vile in his own Eyes, that's the first degree; out of a true sense or knowledge of himself, that's the other. And from thence it comes, that some Authors place the knowledge of one's self as the first degree of Humility, and not without reason, but because here we reduce 'em all to three with Saint *Bonaventure*, we reckon the first degree of Humility, to have a mean and low Opinion of our selves, and we look upon the knowledge of our selves as the necessary means to come to this degree. Nevertheless 'tis all one at the bottom, and we all agree, that the knowledge of our selves is the principal foundation of Humility, and of the belief we ought to frame of our selves: For how can we know what we ought to believe precisely of any one, if we know him not? 'Tis a thing impossible, you must first know him, and thereupon you will then be able to frame the Opinion you ought to have of him, 'tis needful therefore that before all things you shou'd know your self to the bottom; after that esteem your self according to what you are, and this you may lawfully do, For you'll be humble enough, as soon as you shall know your self; for you will plainly see how little you are. Saint *Isidore* in his Etymologies says, that the word

† *Superbus*

† *Superbus* in Latin is so call'd, because he whom we stile so, wou'd be esteem'd, above what he is in effect. One of the reasons also which some give for the love which God has for Humility, is, that he loves the truth above all things. Now Humility is truth it self, whereas Pride and Presumption is a meer deceit and a lye, for you are not in effect, what you think you are, nor what you wou'd have others think you to be. If then you wou'd walk in the paths of truth and humility reckon your self for what you are; and surely that's not to require too much of you; for what reason can you have to believe your self any other, then what you are? Nay, what a strange and dangerous cheat wou'd you hereby put upon your self?

† *Superbus* dictus est, quia suum vult videri. *Idem. L. Ethic.*

C H A P. VI.

Of the knowledge of one's self, which is the source of Humility, and the only means to acquire it.

LET us now begin to search to the bottom, what we are, and as it were dig deep into the knowledge of our misery and weakness, so that we may there find the Treasure of Humility. * *One has lost,* says Saint Hierom, *a small piece of Money, and 'tis among dirt and dung, that is found again.* In the Dung-hill and Filth of your Sins and Miseries, you shall find the Jewel of Humility. Now to proceed orderly herein, let us see in the first place what Man is in his natural Being: let this be our first search. † *Have these three things always present in your Mind,* says Saint Bernard, *what you were, what you are, and what you shall be: Now what were you, but impure Seed? What are you, but a Vessel of Excrements? And what shall you be, but rottenness and the food of Worms?* Here is already matter enough to Meditate upon and search into, and with good reason it is, that Saint Innocent

* *Drachma perit, & tamen invenitur in stercore.* Hieron. ad Rufin.

† *Has tria semper in mente habeas: quid fuisti, quia sperma fordidum? Quid es, quia vas stercoreum? Quid eris, quia effusa vermium?* Bern. in form. bon. vit.

† O villis con-
ditionis huma-
ne indignitas!
ô indigna villi-
tatis humane
conditio!

Herbas & ar-
bores investi-
ga: illæ de se
producent flo-
res, & fron-
des, & fruc-
tus, & de te
lendes, & pe-
diculos, &
lumbricos.

Qualis arbor,
talis fructus.

Innoc. Papa. l. 8.
de contemp.
mundi.

* Non enim
potest arbor
mala bonos
fructus facere.

Matth. 7. 17.

† Si diligenter

consideres

quid per os &

nares, cæter-

osque corporis

meatus egre-

diatur, vilis

sterculinium

numquam vi-

ditur.

Bern. cap. 3.

Medit.

* Putredini

dixi: Pater

meus es;

mater mea, &

soror mea, ver-

mis.

Job. 17. 14.

† Quid super-

bit terra & ci-

nis?

Ecc. 10. 9.

* Custos hu-

mililitatis est

recordatio

propræ fœdi-

tatis.

Greg. Moral.

li. 5. ca. 18. &

li. 13. ca. 16.

† Si quis se

exaltat ali-

quid esse, cum

nihil sit, ipse

se seducit.

Matth. 23. 12.

Quia. 4. 3.

† Si quis se

exaltat ali-

quid esse, cum

nihil sit, ipse

se seducit.

Matth. 23. 12.

Quia. 4. 3.

† Si quis se

exaltat ali-

quid esse, cum

nihil sit, ipse

se seducit.

Matth. 23. 12.

Quia. 4. 3.

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se seducit.

Matth. 23. 12.

Quia. 4. 3.

† Si quis se

exaltat ali-

quid esse, cum

nihil sit, ipse

se seducit.

Matth. 23. 12.

Innocent cry's out: † O the vile and miserable condition of Human Nature, behold the Herbs and the Plants, they bring forth leaves, flowers and fruit; and Man's Body breed's nothing but lice, worms and filth; they produce oyle, wine and balm, and send forth a delightful smell, and Man's Body is a sink of stench and ordure. In a word, such as the Tree is, such is the fruit: * For an ill Tree never bear's good fruit.

'Tis a very just comparison which the Holy Writers make of Man's Body, with a Dung-hill cover'd over with Snow, which appears fair and white on the outside, but on the inside is nothing but dirt and filth. † If you do but observe, says Saint Bernard, all the filth that comes out of the Nose, Mouth, and other parts of Man's Body, there's no Dung-hill or Common-sleaz so foul. 'Tis this consideration which mdae Job cry out; * I have sayd to Corruption, thou art my Father, and to the Worms, thou art my Sister and my Mother. For indeed what else is Man but a source of Corruption, and a sack of Worms and Rotteness? What have we therefore to raise our Vanity on? † What can Dust and Ashes be proud of? At least it cannot boast of what we have been speaking of, for we can find nothing there but subjects for the Humiliation and greater contempt of our selves. * The remembrance of the infirmities and miseries of Man is a good preservative of Humility, says Saint Gregory; under that Dung-hill this Plant is kept perfectly well.

But let us search a little further, consider what you were before God Created you; you will find that you were nothing, and that you could not of your self draw your self out of the Abyffe of nothing; but that it was God who by his great bounty drew you thence, in giving you the Being which you have. So that on our side we are nothing, and therefore ought not to esteem our selves more than things which are not; 'tis to God alone to whom we are to attribute whatever we are more than nothing. † If any one, say's Saint Paul, think's himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself. This is a great discovery, which we have made, and enough to enrich us with Humility all our Life time.

But there's yet more to be consider'd, which is, that even after we have receiv'd our Being we do not subsist of our selves. 'Tis not with us as with a House, which the Architect leaves after he has built it, and which stands of it self without any need of his help. We have, after our Creation

and

and at every moment of our Life as much need of God, to preserve our Being, as we had to obtain it; when we were nothing. He continually sustains us with his Almighty hand, to hinder our falling again into the Abyſſe of nothing, from whence he has drawn us; wherefore the Royal Prophet ſays, † *Thou O Lord haſt form'd me, and ſtretch'd thy hand over me.* 'Tis that hand that holds me up, that preſerves and hinders me from falling back into the nothing from whence I came. We do ſo depend on the help of God, and our preſervation is ſo much link'd thereunto, that if he ſhou'd fail us, and withdraw his hand but one moment, we ſhou'd alſo fail in that very inſtant; we ſhou'd ceaſe to be, and ſhou'd return into our firſt nothing. * *All Nations*, ſays the Prophet *Iſay*, *are before him as if they were not, and counted as nothing.* We alſo ſay of our ſelves every Day, that we are nothing, but 'tis to be fear'd, we ſay it only with our Lips, and underſtand not what we ſay. God grant that we may underſtand and be as ſenſible of it as the Prophet was when he ſayd, † *All that I am is as nothing before thee.* I am indeed nothing of my ſelf; for I was nothing, and what I am, I hold it not of my ſelf. 'Tis thou O Lord who haſt giv'n me my Being, and 'tis of thee that I hold it, and what reaſon can I have to glory therein, ſince I contributed nothing thereunto, and 'tis thou alone who preſerveſt it, and giv'eſt me the power to act? Our Being, Breath and Action, all comes from thy hand; as for us, we can do nothing, becauſe we are nothing of our ſelves. Of what then can we be Proud? Perhaps of our nothing. We have ſayd with the Wiſe Man; *What can Duſt and Aſhes be Proud of?* But we may now ſay, what can nothing be Proud of, which is leſs than Duſt and Aſhes? What reaſon, what occaſion can Duſt have to be puff'd up with Pride, and to believe it ſelf ſomething? There can certainly be none.

† Tu formaſti me, & poſuiſti ſuper me manum tuam. *Pſal.* 138. 5.

* Omnes nationes quaſi non ſunt, ſic ſunt coram Deo; & quaſi nihilum & inane reputantur ſunt ei. *Iſai.* 40. 17.

† Et ſubſtantia mea tanquam nihilum ante te. *Pſal.* 38. 6.

C H A P. VII.

*Of a very proper way to know our selves
and acquire Humility, which is, the
consideration of our Sins.*

LET us go on; let us make a further search, and as it were, still dig deeper into the knowledge of our selves; but what, or where can we dig? Is there any thing beyond nothing? Yes doubtless, there is something, there is Sin which you have added thereunto. And what an Abyſſe is that? It is much greater than the Abyſſe of nothing, becauſe Sin is worſe than nothing. JESUS CHRIST, ſpeaking of Judas, who deſign'd to betray him, ſays, *† It wou'd have been better for him, that he had never been born.* There is nothing ſo vile and deſpicable in the Eyes of God, within the whole extent of exiſtence and nothing, as the Man who is in Mortal Sin, baniſh'd from Heaven, declar'd Enemy of God, and condemn'd to the Eternal Pains of Hell; let us always have this conſideration in our Mind, even when we do not find our Conſcience charg'd with any Mortal Sin: And as for the better knowing of our nothingneſs, we have repreſented to our ſelves during the time when we were nothing; ſo for the further knowledge of our meannefs and miſery, let us remind our ſelves of the time when we were in Sin. Think what a miſerable condition you were in, when having made your ſelf diſagreeable in the Eyes of God, by the enormity of your Sins, he look'd upon you as his Enemy, as a Child of Wrath, and as a Criminal deſtin'd to everlaſting Flames. After that, Cloath your ſelf with confuſion, and proſtrate your ſelf as low as you can, for you ought to believe, that put your ſelf in never ſo low a poſture, you can never render your ſelf ſo contemptible, as he deſerves to be who has offended the Sovereign Good, which is God. This Meditation is an infinite Abyſſe, for till we can ſee in Heaven how great the bounty of God is,

† Vx homini
illi, per quem
filius hominis
tradetur: Bo-
rum erat ei,
ſi natus non
fuisset homo
ille.
Matth. 26. 24.

'tis impossible that we shou'd fully know how enormous Sin is, which makes us Rebels to him, and what punishment he deserves who offends him.

Now did we but think well of this, and search thorowly into our Sins and Miseries, how humble shou'd we be? How little shou'd we esteem our selves, and with what joy shou'd we receive Contempt and Reproach? What ought not he who has been unfaithful to God, to suffer for the Love of him, after he is return'd into his favor? And he who has left God to follow his Passions, who has offended his Creator and Master for a transitory pleasure, and who has deserv'd thereupon eternal punishment; to what injuries and affronts ought he not I say to submit heartily towards satisfying for the Sins which he has committed against the Majesty of God? † *I went astray*, says *David*, (addressing himself to God) *before I was humbl'd by afflictions, but now have I kept thy Commands.* 'Tis that which makes me hold my peace, and not dare to complain, for what I suffer is nothing in comparison of what my Sins deserv'd. Thou hast not punish'd me O Lord according to my deserts, and whatever we can suffer in this Life, is nothing in proportion to what one Sin deserves. Is it not just, that the Sinner who has despis'd God, shou'd be despis'd, that there shou'd be little esteem made of him, who has made so little of his Master, and that the Man who has had the Will and Insolence to offend his Creator, shou'd be punish'd in not being able ever to do any thing that he has the least mind to do?

But there's something more to be search'd into as to this Point; which is, that tho the confidence we ought to have in God's Mercy may give us grounds to hope, that he has forgiven us our Sins; yet nevertheless we have no certainty thereof. * *Man*, says *Salomon*, *knows not whether he deserves love or hatred.* And the Apostle speaking in the same sence; † *I am conscious of nothing*, says he, *but I am not thereby justifi'd*; Now if unfortunately I am not justifi'd, what shall I get for having imbrac'd a Religious Life, and Converted Souls to God? * *Tho I speak with the Tongues of Men and Angels, and have not Charity, I am become as sounding Brass, or a tinkling Cymbal; and tho I have the gift of Prophecy, and understand all Mysteries and all Knowledge, and tho I have all Faith, so that I cou'd remove Mountains, and have no Charity I am nothing: And tho I bestow all my Goods to feed the Poor, and give my Body to be burn'd, and have not*

Tom. II.

Z

Charity,

† Priusquam humiliaret ego deliqui, propterea eloquium tuum custodi vi.
Psal. 118. 67.

* Nescit homo, utrum amore an odio dignus sit.

Eccl. 9. 1.
† Nihil mihi conscius sum, sed non in hoc iustificatus sum.

1 Cor. 4. 4.

* Si linguas hominum loquar, & angelorum, charitatem autem non habeam, factus sum velut aes sonans, aut cymbalum tinniens. Et si habuero prophetiam, & noverim my-

seria omnia,
& omnem
scientiam; &
si habuerō
omnem fidem
ita ut montes
transferam,
charitatem au-
tem non habu-
ero, nihil sum.
Et si distribu-
ero in cibos
pauperum om-
nes facultates
meas, & si tra-
didero corpus
meum ita ut
ardeam, chari-
tatem autem
non habuero,
nihil mihi
prodest.
1 Cor. 13. 1. 2.
¶ 3.

Moral. 11. cap.
11.

† Neatus ho-
mo, qui semper
est pavidus.
Prov. 28. 14.

* De propiti-
to peccato no-
li esse sine me-
tu.
Eccles. 5. 5.

† Prævum est
cor omnium,
& inscrutabi-
le: quis cog-
nosceret illud?
Jerem. 17. 9.

Charity, it profits me nothing. Woe be to thee then, if thou hast not Charity, if thou art not in the Grace of God, for without that, thou art nothing, nay, thou art less than nothing. Not to know whether or no we are in the state of Grace, is a great means to keep us always humble, and make us have a small Opinion of our selves. We know most certainly, that we have offended God, but we have no certainty that God has pardon'd us. Now who dares look up? Who will not be Cloath'd with confusion, and prostrate himself even to the Center of the Earth, whilst he is in this incertitude? This it is which made Saint *Gregory* say, that it has pleas'd God, we shou'd not be certain of his Grace, to the end that we shou'd always have one Grace certain, which is that of Humility. And indeed how grievous soever the fear and incertitude he has left us in, seems unto us, his conduct therein is full of mercy and bounty; 'tis a fear which is profitable to us for the acquiring of Humility, for the preservation thereof, and to hinder us from despising our Neighbor, whatever Sins he may have committed. The thought, that God has perhaps receiv'd him into Grace, and that we know not whether we are in his Grace or not, is indeed a powerful motive to excite us always to do good, without ever being weary, and to make us still walk with fear and humility before God. Wherefore the Holy Ghost by the Mouth of the Wise Man says, † *Happy is the Man that is always in fear*; and he admonishes us in another place, * *Not to reckon our selves too sure as to the Remission of our Sins*. So that 'tis very profitable to have our Sins in our sight, to keep us humble, and in a true contempt of our selves. In which we shall find sufficient matter to be search'd into, and to humble our selves.

Moreover, if we give our selves leave to consider the misfortunes and prejudices, which Original Sin has caus'd, we shall find matter enough to humble us, by reflecting how much Nature has been corrupted in us by Sin, for as a Stone is drawn downward by it's own weight, so are we carry'd by the corruption of Original Sin to whatever concerns our Flesh, our Vanity and our Interest. We have a most lively sense for Earthly things, little or no relish for Heavenly ones. What shou'd Obey in us, Commands; and we are infinite so miserable, that tho' we are Men and Born for Heaven, we have the inclinations of Beasts, and Hearts that tend only to the Earth. † *The Heart of Man is deceitful above all things*;

who

Who can know it, says Jeremy, 'Tis that Wall of the Vision of Ezechiel; the more you dig there, the more Abominations you'll discover. But if we will cast our Eyes next upon our faults, which spring from our own stock or fund; how many Subjects of confusion shall we find there? Whither do's not intemperance of our Tongue carry us; and with what negligence do we keep our Hearts? How inconstant are we in our good designs; how great lovers of our interest and convenience? How eager to do what pleases us? How full of Self-love; how wedded to our own Will and Opinion? How violent in our Passions; how stedfast in our ill habits, and how easie to let our selves be carry'd away to what ever our corrupt inclination prompts us? Saint Gregory Writing upon these words of Job, † *Wilt thou shew thy power against a Leaf, which is carry'd to and fro by the Wind*, says, That it is with reason that Man is compar'd to a Leaf, because just as a Leaf moves at the least breath, so Man lets himself easily be tosd up and down by all the Winds of Passions and Temptations. One while he lets himself be transported with Anger; another while he abandons himself to vain Joy; sometimes Avarice and Ambition torments him; sometimes Pleasure and Sensuality carries him away; sometimes Pride elevates him, and sometimes fear and trouble dejects and casts him down: Wherefore the Prophet *Isay* says very well, that * *We are all fallen like the Leaves, and our iniquities like the Wind have carry'd us away*. The least Wind of Temptation throw's us down, and carries us away, we have no stedfastness in Virtue and good Resolutions; so that here's enough in this matter, wherewith to humble and confound our selves; but they are not only our sins and faults which give us cause to do so, even our good Actions furnish us with occasions enough for that end, if we look narrowly into our selves as to mind 'em curiously, examining with how many faults and imperfections they are ordinarily mingl'd, according to the words of the same Prophet, † *We are all become as unclean, and all our good Works as filthy Rags*. But we have already spoken of that elsewhere, so that there will be no need to enlarge our selves here any further.

Ezech. 3. 8.

† Contra folium quod vento rapitur, ostendis potentiam tuam.
Job. 13. 25.

* Cecidimus quasi folium, universi, & iniquitates nostræ quasi ventus abstulerunt nos.
Isai. 64. 6.

† Facti sumus ut immundi omnes, & quasi pannus menstruæ justitiæ nostræ.
Isai. 64. 6.
In Part 1.
Treat. 3. ch. 6.

C H A P. VIII.

*After what manner we ought to exercise our selves
in the knowledge of our selves, so that we
may not lose courage and confidence.*

OUR misery is so great, the causes, which we have to humble our selves are so numerous, and we are so well vers'd in 'em by our own experience, that methinks we shou'd have more need to be encourag'd not to let our selves be cast down at the sight of our imperfections, than exhorted to use endeavours to be well acquainted with 'em: This is indeed so certain a truth, that all Spiritual Directors teach us, that when we have been searching into the knowledge of our misery and weakness, we shou'd not stop there, lest that prospect may cast us down and make us despair, but that we shou'd immediately pass on to the consideration of God's goodness, and so put all our confidence in him. As the sorrow for having Sinn'd ought not to be so great, as to make us fall into despair; but shou'd be moderated throu' the hope of Pardon, by casting our Eyes sometimes upon the Mercy of God, and taking them off from the view of our Sins, † *Lest he, as the Apostle says, who is in that condition shou'd fall into excessive grief; so ought we not to dwell upon the consideration of our weakness and infirmities, for fear that our courage and confidence shou'd fail us; but after having search'd well into the knowledge of our selves, after having seen, that there's nothing in us, whereupon we can rely, and having learn'd thereby to have a diffidence in our own strength, we ought forthwith to cast our Eyes upon the infinite goodness of God. Thus, we shall not only not lose courage, but shall on the contrary find our selves more animated; because the same thing which serves to cast us down, when we turn our Eyes only on our selves, serves to strengthen us, when we fix 'em upon God; and the more you know your own weakness and the*

† Ne fortè abundantiori tristitia afflicteatur, qui ejusmodi est.
2 Cor. 2. 7.

the little stress you can lay on your self, you'll find your self the more fortifi'd, when you shall Contemplate God, and put all your confidence in him.

But the Holy Writers make here a remark of great importance, which is, that as (for the reason we have given) we must not fix too much upon the consideration of our misery and weakness, but go on to the knowledge of the goodness and liberality of God, to put all our confidence in him; so ought not we to rest altogether upon this last consideration, but return forthwith again to reflect upon our selves and our infirmities. For if we fix and remain upon the contemplation of the bounty and liberality of God, and forget what we our selves are, 'tis to be fear'd, we may fall into Presumption and Pride, by taking occasion from thence, to have too great assurance in our selves, and to walk with too little diffidence and foresight, which has often been the cause of several terrible falls. How many Spiritual Persons have cast themselves down that way, who seem'd to soar up even to Heaven it self by Prayer and Contemplation? How many Saints, and great ones too, have fallen, for having forgotten that they were Sinners, and confiding too much upon the favors which God shew'd 'em? They hazarded themselves upon that confidence and trusted to it as if they had been out of all danger; and therefore they have shamefully fallen. Saint Basil attribut's the fall of *David*, when he made himself guilty of Adultery and Murder, to the presumption which he had once, when God having heap'd his favors and blessings upon him, he let these words slip from him: * *I sayd in my Prosperity, nothing shall ever move me.* But stay a little, God will withdraw his Hand, he'll deprive you of his favors, and then you'll see the consequence. † *Thou hast turn'd thy face from me, and I was grievously troubl'd.* God will leave you to your weakness; you'll fall into a thousand disorders, and you'll know to your cost, after your fall, what you wou'd not know when he favor'd thee with his Grace. The same Saint Basil attribut's further the fall of Saint *Peter*, to the same cause, which was for having too much presum'd upon himself, when he sayd to our Saviour: * *When all shall be scandaliz'd at thee, I'll never be, nay, tho' I shou'd die with thee, I wou'd never deny thee.* So that it pleas'd God to punish his presumption and permit him to fall, thereby to humble, and make him know himself. Wherefore we ought never to lose sight of our selves, or think we are wholly secure in this Life; but considering

* Ego dixi in
abundantia
mea: Non
movebor in æ-
ternum.
Psal. 29. 7.
† Avertisti fa-
ciem tuam a
me, & factus
sum conturba-
tus. Ibid.

* Et si omnes
scandalizati
fuerint in te,
ego nunquam
scandalizabor.
Etiam si oportu-
erit me mori
tecum, non te
negabo.
Matth. 26. 33.
or 35.

considering what we are, we must always have a diffidence in our selves, and stand in fear lest the Enemy we have within, may shew us some trick and betray us.

So that, as we must not dwell too-much upon the knowledge of our weakness and misery, but pass forthwith to that of the bounty of God; so also ought not we to fix there neither, but presently cast our Eyes again upon our selves. This exercise ought to be like *Jacobs Ladder*, which with one end touch'd the Earth, and reach'd up to Heaven with the other; and thus must you go up and down as the Angels did. Mount till you arrive at the knowledge of the goodness of God; but rest not there, for fear of falling into presumption: Go down again forthwith to the knowledge of thy self, and rest not there neither, for fear of being faint hearted, but return up again to the knowledge of God, to place all your confidence in him. In fine, all you have to do is to go continually up and down this Ladder.

*In her Dialog.
chap. 67.*

Thus Saint *Catharine* of *Sienna* says she us'd to do, to deliver her self from the Temptations of the Devil: For when he to discourage her, endeavour'd to make her believe, that all her Life had been only a counterfeit, she pluckt up her Spirits at the consideration of the Mercy of God, and express'd her self thus: I confess O my Creator, that all my Life has been nothing but darkness, but I will hide my self in the Wounds of *JESUS* Crucifi'd; I will bathe my self in his Blood, which will wash off all my Sins, and I will rejoyce in my Creator and my God: † *Thou shalt wash me O Lord, and I shall become whiter than Snow.* On the other side, if the Devil by a contrary Temptation try'd to puff her up with Pride, by representing to her, that she was already Perfect, and that she had no further need to bewail her Sins, or to be afflicted; she most profoundly humbl'd her self, and thus reason'd with her self: What! Unhappy Creature that I am! Saint *John Baptist* never Sinn'd, he nevertheless fail'd not to do severe Penance; what then must I do, who have committed so many Sins, and never acknowledg'd and bewail'd 'em as I ought? The Devil then inrag'd, to see so much Humility on one side, and so much Confidence in God on the other; he thus cry'd out, Curs'd be thou, and they who have so well Instructed thee, I know not where to attack thee; if I cast thee down to make thee lose courage, thou raisest thy self again by Contemplating the Mercy of God; and if I exalt thee, thereby to possess thee with Vanity, thou cast's thy self down

† Lavabis me,
& super nivem
dealbabor.
Psal. 50. 9.

down by Humility even to the bottom of Hell. After this, he let her alone, seeing he came off so shamefully from all the assaults he made upon her. Thus ought we to exercise our selves, on the one side we must have great diffidence and fear, on the other, much confidence, joy and courage; a great deal of diffidence in our selves, and a great deal of confidence in God. These are the two Lessons, which a Holy Man says, that God gives every Day to his Elect; one to consider their own faults; and the other, to consider the goodness of God, who with so much bounty and affection pardons 'em.

C H A P. IX.

*Of the advantages found in the Exercise
of Self-knowledge.*

TO stir us up more and more in the Exercise of the knowledge of our selves, I shall here speak of some considerable advantages which are found therein. I have already touch'd upon one very important, which is, that this knowledge of our selves is the Basis and Foundation of Humility, and the necessary means to acquire, and preserve it. An Antient Father of the Desert being ask'd, how, true Humility was to be acquir'd; he reply'd, ** In reflecting upon one's own faults only, and not looking upon those of another.* 'Tis by this Self-knowledge of one's self, that true Humility is acquir'd, 'tis by sounding our selves, that 'tis found; and this alone ought to suffice to make us apply our selves to this exercise; because 'tis so much our interest to acquire Humility.

But the Holy Writers proceed further, and say, that the humble sense and knowledge of our selves, is a more certain way to arrive at the knowledge of God, then the most profound Study of all other Sciences; and the reason which Saint Bernard gives for it, is, that this Science being more sublime than the other, leads us also streighter to God.

Saint

** Si tua tantummodo, & non alterius mala consideres.
Ruf. li. 3. Vir. SS. Patr. num. 171.*

Bern. de grad. hum. & in ferm. bonifia vita. 4

Saint *Bonaventure* says, 'Tis this which the Saviour of the World would have us understand by the Curing of the Man who was Born Blind, when rubbing his Eyes with a little Dirt, he gave him at the same time both the sight of the Body, to see himself, and that of the Soul to know and adore God.

† Sic Dominus nos cecos natos per nostrum et Dei ignorantiam illuminat: lumen unde nati sumus, linendo super oculos nostros, ut primum incipimus nos ipsos cognoscere, deinde ipsum illuminatorem nostrum credendo prone adorare.

Bonav. processio
5. Rel. c. 18.

* Memento homo quia pulvis es, et in pulverem reverteris.
Gen. 3. 19.

† Opposita juxta se posita magis elucescunt.

† *That it is*, continues he, *that being born blind, and ignorant of God and our selves, the Lord enlightens us in rubbing our Eyes with the Clay of which we are compos'd to the end that we may begin first to know our selves, and then Adore with a lively Faith him from whom we have receiv'd light.* 'Tis this also which the Church teaches us in the Ceremony which it practices at the beginning of Lent, of putting Ashes on our foreheads, saying, * *Remember O Man that thou art Dust and shall return again to Dust:* For he do's thus put before our Eyes what we are, to the end that by the knowledge of our selves, we may come to know God, to Repent for having offended him, and to do Penance for our Sins. So that Self-knowledge is a means to come to the knowledge of God, and the more a Creature shall consider the Dust he is Originally made of, the more will he know the greatness and loftiness of God, according to the Axiom, † *That nothing gives us a better knowledge of things that are opposite to one another, than to place 'em by one another.* White never appears and shines more, than when it is plac'd near to Black. Now Man being extremely little, and God extremely great; are opposite to one another, and therefore the more Man knows himself and understands that he is nothing of himself, but Misery and Sin, the more sensible he is what the goodness and mercy of God is, to Love a thing so vile and despicable as Man is.

But what this consideration still further produces, is, that the Soul by this means is inflam'd more and more with the Love of God, not being able to cease in giving him thanks for so many benefits, which he bestows on so miserable a Creature, nor to leave off wondering that Men having so much difficulty in bearing with one another, God should not only have the goodness to bear with them, but that he should himself say, * *That 'tis his delight to be and converse with the Sons of Men;* wherefore the Psalmist could not forbear to cry out with admiration; † *What is Man that thou should'st be mindful of him? Or the Son of Man that thou should'st take so much pleasure to Visit and Communicate thy self so familiarly to him?* For this reason 'tis, the Saints study'd to

know.

* Deliciae meae esse cum filiis hominum.
Prov. 8. 31.
† Quid est homo, quod memores ejus? Aut filius hominis, quoniam visitas eum?
Psalm. 8. 5.

know themselves, that thereby they might come to a greater knowledge and love of God. 'Tis for this reason that Saint *Austin* was wont to say; † *O my God, who art always the same let me know my self, and I shall know thee!* 'Tis this which made Saint *Francis* cry out Night and Day; *Who art thou, my God, and who am I!* And lastly, 'tis by this means that so many Saints have arriv'd to so great a knowledge of God. This way therefore is very infallible; because the more you humble your self in the knowledge of your self, the more will you be exalted in the knowledge of God, and the more you increase in knowing God, the more will you profit in knowing your self; because the Heavenly light pierces into the most secret and hidden corners of the Heart, and makes us find out subjects of confusion, even in such things as appear best in the Eyes of the World. Saint *Bonaventure* says, that as when the Rays of the Sun enter into a Chamber, we immediately discover a thousand Atom's, which we saw not before; so when our Heart is touch'd with the Rays of Divine Grace the Soul perceives even the least Imperfections, sees a thousand faults in those things which seem perfect to such who are not enlighten'd with so bright and piercing a light as this is.

† Deus semper idem, nov-
verim me, no-
verim te!
Lib. de vita
beata.

Sic & cor
radiis gratiæ
illustratum, et
tiam minima
videt.
ubi sup.

This is therefore the cause why the Saints are so humble, and have so small an esteem of themselves, and that as they increase in Sanctity, they increase in Humility, and in a Contempt of themselves. The more God enlightens 'em, and communicates himself to them, the more they perceive that they have nothing of their own, but nothingness and Sin; and the more defects this Self-knowledge makes 'em discover in themselves, the more they believe there are still to be discover'd; and that they see but the least part of 'em. In fine, as they are persuaded, that the goodness of God exceeds all the knowledge they have of it, so they are also convinc'd, that their own wickedness far surpasses all the knowledge they have thereof: For as by whatever knowledge we have of God, we can never comprehend him, but there always is something in him to be more and more known and admir'd; so whatever knowledge and contempt we may have of our selves, there always rests something more to be despis'd, and therefore we can never arrive to know intirely the excess of malice and misery. This is no exaggeration, 'tis a pure truth; because it being certain, than Man is of himself but nothing and Sin, it is consequently certain, that he can never humble himself so much as these two qualities deserve.

Tom. I L.

A. a.

We

We Read of a Holy Woman, that having begg'd of God the Grace to know her self; and having obtain'd it, she had so much horror of her deformity and misery, that unable to suffer further the sight thereof, she Pray'd again, that he wou'd hide some part of it from her, lest she shou'd be too much cast down. Father *Avila* tells us also, that he knew a certain Person, who had often desir'd the same thing of God, and that God having one Day open'd his Eyes, to let him see his misery; he was struck thereupon with so much horror, that he cry'd out. Take away O Lord for thy mercies sake this Looking-glass from before me, I am not able to support any longer the sight of so abominable an Object.

*M. Avila tract.
3. de spiritib. 3.
p. 104.*

From hence also it is, that this holy harred and horror of themselves arises in the Servants of God. Of which we have already spoken elsewhere: For looking upon themselves as Enemies to God the more they come to know his goodness, and to love him, the greater aversion they have for themselves, according to the words of *Job*, † *Thou hast set me as a mark against thee, so that I am become a burden to my self.* They see that they have in them the root of all sorts of evil, which is the corrupt inclination of the Flesh, from whence proceed all Sins, and the knowledge of all this makes 'em rise up and revolt against themselves. Wherefore is it not just also to abhor him who has made you quit so great a good as God himself, for a Pleasure of so short a continuance? Him who has made you deserve Hell, and put you in hazard to lose everlasting Glory, and that for ever. Him who infine has been the cause of so much evil to you, and will be so continually. Now, 'tis you your self, who are an Enemy to God, to your self, an Enemy to your own good and Eternal Salvation.

*Tom. 1. Treat.
1. chap. 4.*

† Quare posuisti me contra-
rium tibi, &
factus sum mi-
hi metipsum gra-
vis?
Job. 7. 20.

C H A P. X.

That the knowledge of one's self, instead of making us lose courage, adds new strength.

THERE's yet another advantage in this Self-knowledge, which is, that it do's not only not beat down or diminish our courage, as might easily perhaps be imagin'd, but on the contrary, it raises and fortifies it, and the reason of this is, that a Man cannot know himself, without seeing that he cannot rely or lay any stress upon his own endeavours, so that he comes to have such a diffidence in himself, and to put his whole Confidence in God alone, whereby he becomes capable of all things, nor do's it properly belong to any but those, who thus know themselves, to undertake and execute the greatest things; because as they attribute all to God, and nothing to themselves, so God gives 'em his helping hand, makes it his own business, and is pleas'd to work wonders by very weak instruments, * *To shew*, as the Apostle says, *the Riches of his Glory upon those Vessels of Mercy, he had before prepar'd for his Glory.* 'Tis to make his Glory appear the more that he puts the Treasures of his power and strength in the frailest Vessels, and therefore when this great Saint Pray'd to be deliver'd from the Temptations which tormented him: † *My Grace is sufficient for thee*, says our Lord to him, *for my Power appears most in weakness*: For as the greater and more dangerous the disease is, the more Honor the Physician gains by Curing it; so the greater our weakness is, the more the powerful Hand of God is shewn. Thus Saint *Austin* and Saint *Ambrose* explain this passage, and 'tis for this reason, that God do's powerfully assist those, who knowing themselves, have a diffidence in their own strength, and place all their confidence in him; whereas he leaves always those who presume upon themselves, and confide in their own strength and ability. Saint *Basil* also says, that we some-

* Ut ostenderet divitias gloriæ suæ in vasa misericordiæ, quæ præparavit in gloriam. Rom. 9. 23.

† Sufficit tibi gratia mea: Nam virtus in infirmitate perfectitur. 2 Cor. 12. 9.

Aug. li. 4. de Trin. ca. 1. & Ambros. in ep. 2. ad Cor. ca. 11.

times find by experience, that on some certain principal Feasts, where we expected to have more then ordinary Devotion and Fervor we feel less, because we had too much confidence in our own Preparations. To the contrary, God heap's sometimes upon us the most sweet consolations of Heaven, when we think least thereof, to make us sensible that fervor of Devotion, is a pure Grace and Mercy of God, and not an effect of our own endeavour and Merit; so that as the knowledge of our misery serves rather to raise our courage than to cast us down; because it makes us put all our confidence in God; and 'tis this the Apostle wou'd expresse by these words, * *When I am weak, I am strong*; that is to say, as Saint *Austin* and Saint *Ambrose* explains it, When I humble my self, in the knowledge of my weakness and nothingness, then it is, that I am elevated and exalted, and the more infirmity and weakness I discover in my self the more I find my self strengthen'd in the sight of God, in whom I have put all my hope and confidence.

We may learn from hence. that neither certain discouragements, which we feel sometimes as to our Spiritual advancement, nor certain diffidences which we sometimes have, that we shall never be able to overcome our corrupt inclinations, acquire Perfection, or acquire our selves of the functions which Obedience may call us to, proceed not from Humility. And some may perhaps go farther yet, and say, they are not fit to be Confessors, Missioners, and the like; Nevertheless there's very often nothing but Pride in such Discourses as these; because that which makes us talk thus, is, that we then look upon our selves, as if the execution and success of these things were to depend on our own strength, instead of turning our Eyes upon God as we ought to do, in whom we shall be sufficiently encourag'd and strengthen'd. † *The Lord is my Light and my Salvation, whom then shall I fear? The Lord is the Protector of my Life, of whom shall I be afraid? If a whole Army stands against me I will not fear; and in the greatest heat of the battle I will hope in him. * Tho I should walk in the midst of the shades of Death, I will apprehend nothing, because thou art with me.* Let us admire with what variety of words the Holy Prophet expresses here the same thing. The whole Book of Psalms is full of these sentiments, and thereby he shews us. how much confidence he had in God, and how much we ought to have. † *By the help of my God I will leap over a Wall.* Nothing will be able to oppose me;

* Cum infirmor, tunc potentior sum.
2 Cor. 12. 10.
Et cum humilior, tunc exaltior.
Aug lib. 4. de Trin.
Amb. ubi sup.

Et erit Dominus fiducia ejus.
Jerem. 17. 7.

† Dominus illi natio mea, & salus mea, quia timebo Dominum protectorem vitæ meæ, à quo tripido: Si constiterit adversum me castra, non timebitur meum. Si exurgat adversum me praelium, in hoc ego sperabo.
Psalm. 27. 1. 3.
* Si ambulavero in medio umbræ mortis, non timebo mala: quoniam tu mecum es.
Psalm. 124. 4.
† In Deo meo transgrediar murum.
Psalm. 17. 30.

me; he it is, who to overcome Giants makes use of Men, who are but as Grasshoppers in comparison of them; * *In his Name it is that I will crush Lions and Dragons.* † *'Tis he who teacheth my hands to War, and gives me strength to break a Bow of Steel:* And we shall indeed be strong enough with his Grace and Assistance.

* *Monstra quædam filiorum Enac de genere giganteo: quibus comparati, quasi locustæ videbamur.*
Num. 13. 34.
 † *Qui docet manus meas ad prælium: & posuit ut arcum æreum, brachia mea.*
Psal. 17. 35.

C H A P. XI.

Of some other advantages which accompany Self-knowledge.

ONE of the chief things which we can do on our side to oblige God to Communicate his favors, and to shew his Graces more abundantly upon us, is to humble our selves at the sight of our own weakness and misery. The Apostle therefore says, * *I will glory willingly in my infirmities, that the Power of JESUS CHRIST may dwell in me:* And Saint Ambrose Writing upon the words of the same Apostle, † *I take pleasure in my infirmities,* says, that if a Christian ought to glory, he ought not to do it but in Humility, whereby he becomes greater in the sight of God. Saint Austin also applies to the same subject these words of the Royal Prophet: * *Thou O God didst send a plentiful Rain, whereby thou didst confirm thine inheritance, when it was weary.* When do you believe, says he, that God will pour down upon his Inheritance, which is the Soul, the plentiful showers of his Grace? When it shall become weak, or weary, that is, when it shall be sensible of it's weakness and infirmity; then God shall strengthen it, and shall heap his gifts and favors upon it. As the more a poor Man lay's open his sores and misery, the more he moves Compassion and Charity; so the more a Christian humbles himself before God by the acknowledgment of his infirmity and weakness, the more he moves the Mercy of God to have pity on him, and to communicate to him abundantly the inexhaustible Treasures of his Grace;

† 'Tis

* *Libenter igitur glorior in infirmitatibus meis, ut inhabitet in me virtus Christi.*

† *Placere mihi in infirmitatibus, Ibid. 10.*

* *Pluviam voluntariam feregre gabis Deus, hereditati tuæ: infirmata est, tu verò perfecisti eam.*
Psal. 67. 10.
Aug. lib. 4. de Trin. cap. 8.

† Qui dat lassio
virtutem: &
his, qui non
sunt, fortitudi-
nem & ro-
bur multipli-
cat.
1/2i. 40. 29.

† 'Tis he who giveth Power to the weary, and to them that are weak he increaseth their force and strength.

To comprehend in a few words all the advantages and profit which may be drawn from this exercise, I say, that Self-knowledge is an universal remedy for every thing; so that to the greatest part of the Questions which are ask'd us in our Spiritual Conferences, as whence proceeds such and such a disorder, and what remedy may be apply'd to it? We may always answer, that it proceeds only out of the want of Self-knowledge, and that this wou'd be the best remedy for it. If you ask me for example, whence comes the rash judgment you so freely make of your Brethren? I'll tell you, from a want of Self-knowledge, for if you attend well to the knowledge of your self; you'll have business enough to consider, and deplore your own misery, without casting your Eyes curiously on that of others. If you ask me, whence comes it that you are Satyrical in your Discourse? I must make you the same Answer, for if you knew your self well, so as to reckon your self the least of all, and every one else your Superior, you wou'd not have the confidence to speak to them at that rate. If you ask me from whence arise bad excuses, and those complaints and murmurings which are so ordinary, as why have not I such or such a thing; why am I treated at such a rate? 'Tis certain that all that, proceeds from the same cause. If you wou'd know from whence comes the trouble and excessive oppression which you find when you are tormented with certain Temptations, and that discouragement which you lye under when you see how often you relapse into the same faults, the Answer will always be; because you know not your self: * For if you had but Humility, and knew well the deceitfulness of your own Heart, you wou'd not trouble your self and lose courage. But on the contrary, you wou'd wonder that there happens no worse to you, and that you fall not oftner, and you wou'd not leave off praising and blessing God who sustains you with his Hand, and save you from the disorders you wou'd infallibly fall into without him. Out of a Common-thoar of all sorts of Vices, what can come out but Vice? What can be expected from a Dung-hill but noysom Exhalations, and from so cursed a Tree, what can we promise our selves, but cursed Fruit? What wonder is it, that the Wind carries away the Dust, says Saint *Anselme*, speaking on that passage of the Prophet, * *He remembers that we are Dust.* If therefore you seek means to become Charitable towards

* Recordatus
est quia pulvis
sumus.
Ezal. 102. 14.

towards your Brethren, to be Meek, Submissive, Patient and Mortifi'd in every thing, you'll find a remedy for all your Maladies, in the knowledge of your self.

We Read of Saint *Francis* of *Borgia*, that being one Day in a Journey, he was met by one of his Friends, a Man of Quality, who seeing him destitute of all the Conveniencies which he enjoy'd before in the World, he fell a pitying of him and begg'd him to have a little more care of himself; the Saint answer'd with a chearful Countenance and holy Dissimulation thus, let not the condition in which you see me in the least trouble you; I am not so unprovided of all things as you think; for I always send a Harbinger before me, who takes care to have every thing ready for me. The Person asking him who was that Harbinger? 'Tis, reply'd the Saint, the knowledge of my self, and the consideration of the pains of Hell which I have deserv'd for my Sins, and with this Self-knowledge, whereever I arrive, and whatever bad Lodging-I find, I always think I am better treated than I deserve.

The Chronicles of the Order of Saint *Dominick* tell us, that one of their Religious, a great Servant of God, discour-
 sing one Day with Saint *Margaret*, who was of the same Order, told her among other things, that he had often begg'd of God to shew him the way which the Antient Fathers had walk'd in, to make themselves amiable in his Eyes, and to obtain all the favors they had receiv'd, and that one Night he Dream'd, that a Book Written in Golden Letters was lay'd before him, and that a Voice awaken'd him, saying, *Arise, and Read*. Then rising immediately, he Read in that Book these Divine words; The Perfection of the Antient Fathers consisted in Loving God; in despising themselves, and in neither Judging or Contemning any Body. And so the Vision, forthwith disappear'd.

C H A P. XII.

Of what Importance it is to Practice the knowledge of our selves.

FROM all that we have sayd, may be gather'd how important it is, to practice the knowledge of our selves. *Thales*, one of those, whom Antient *Greece*, call'd the Seven Wise Men being ask'd, which of all the Natural Sciences was the hardest to be acquir'd, answer'd, that it was that of ones self, because Self-love do's continually obstruct that knowledge. From whence came that so famous saying among the Antients, *Know thy Self*. And another Philosopher understood the self same thing, when intending to give a short Lesson of Wisdom he was wont to say, *Live at Home*. But laying aside the Instructions which the Pagan Philosophers have given upon this subject, let us come to those which have been left us by the Christian Philosophers, who are much better Masters than the others in this matter. Saint *Austin* and Saint *Bernard* say, that the knowledge of one's self is the most sublime and useful of all Sciences that have ever yet been discover'd. Men, say's Saint *Austin*, esteem very much Sciences which teach 'em the disposition of the Heavens and the Earth, and which give 'em the knowledge of the motion of the Heavens, the course of the Planets, their Influences and Virtues; but Self-knowledge is a more sublime and useful Science. The other Sciences puff us up, and destroy us, as Saint *Paul* say's, but this Humble's and Edifies us. The Spiritual Directors therefore do very much recommend this exercise whilst we are at Prayer, and blame as an abuse, what some Persons do, who passing slightly over their faults, which are painful to them to look upon, spend a good deal of time upon some Pious Meditation, in which they find comfort and delight. They are asham'd to find themselves so disagreeable, and imitate an ugly Woman, who dares not see her self in a Looking-glass.

† But

Diog. Laert. in Thal.

Nosce teipsum.

Tecum habita. Paul. Mannt. apophteg. p. 567. S. 8.

Aug. lib. 4. de Trin. in prim.

1 Cor. 8. 1.

† But if thou didst but behold O Man, what thou art, says Saint Bernard speaking as in the Person of God, thou woud'st be disagreeable to thy self, and pleasing to me, but because thou see'st not thy self, thou art agreeable to thy self, and displeasest me. The time will come when thou shalt neither please thy self nor me; thou shalt not please me, because thou hast sinn'd; thou shalt not please thy self, because thou shalt be the cause of thy Eternal Destruction.

† O homo, & te videres, tibi displiceret, & mihi placeret! sed quia te non vides, tibi places, & mihi displices. Veniet tempus, cum nec mihi, nec tibi placebis. Mihi, quia peccasti: tibi, quia in æternum ardebis.
Eern. de inter. dono.

Greg. Moral. li. 12. c. 11. & li. 34. c. 16.

Saint Gregory speaking of this, says, that there are a sort of People who think themselves Holy as soon as they begin to serve God, and do some Virtuous Actions; and they are so intent in looking upon the good which they do, that they quite lose the sight of the Sins that they have committed, nay, and sometimes they see not even those which they do commit. But the Elect, and such as are truly good do the contrary; for abounding in Virtue and good Works they look only on what is evil in 'em, and have their Eyes continually on their own faults and imperfections. 'Tis easie to see the consequence, which this different manner of viewing one's self brings with it; for it happens from thence, that some whilst they humble themselves at the sight of their faults, preserve the Virtues which they have, and others whilst they glory in the good they perceive in themselves, lose both it and themselves also by their Pride. Thus some make so good use of what ill they have in 'em, that they profit thereby; and others make such bad use of the good they have, that it turn's to their disadvantage. What happen's in Eating, is a Representation of what we say. How good soever the Food may be, it will do harm, if one Eats thereof with excess; and on the contrary, however dangerous some Poysons are, they may serve for a Remedy and Antidote, when they are well prepar'd and taken as they ought to be. When the Devil, as the same Saint say's, raises Vanity in you, in representing to you your good Works; set the remembrance of your Sins against that Temptation. Thus the Apostle us'd to do, when fearing lest the great Revelations and Miracles which God had wrought by him, thou'd cause too much Vanity in him; * He call'd to mind his having been a Blasphemer, his having Persecuted and injur'd the Servants of JESUS CHRIST, and sayd, † I am not worthy to be call'd an Apostle, because I have Persecuted the Church of God. Against such Attacks there's no better Counter-battery and Counter-mine than the reflection on our Sins past.

* Qui prius blasphemus fui, & persecutor, & contumeliosus.
† Tim. 1. 13.
† Non sum dignus vocari Apostolus, quoniam persecutus sum Ecclesiam Dei.
1 Cor. 15. 9.

Tom. I I.

B b

Saint

Hieron. in hunc
librum. Inter-
ligz Fili homi-
nis.
Daniel 8. 17.

Saint Hierom Writing on these words of the Archangel Gabriel to the Prophet Daniel, *Hear O Son of Man what I'll say unto thee*, say's; that the Ancient Prophets, such as Daniel, Exechiel and the rest, seem'd to be already Angels by the sublimity of their continual Revelations: For fear therefore that they might be puffed up more than they ought, by forgetting their condition, and believing themselves altogether of an Angelical Nature, the Angel sent from God, put before their Eyes their miserable and frail Original, by calling 'em, *Sons of Men*; to the end, that considering they were but weak and miserable Men like others, they shou'd humble themselves under the knowledge of what they were. We have a great many Examples, both in Ecclesiastical and Prophane History, of several Saints, great Persons, Kings, Popes and Emperors, who us'd still some such means to defend themselves from the attacks of vanity; and who kept one on purpose near 'em, to put 'em in mind from time to time, *That they were but Men*.

Finis vite li. 4.
ca. 1.

When Saint Francis of Borgia was yet a Secular Person, a Holy Man told him, That if he wou'd make good progress in the Service of God, he must let no Day pass without reflecting upon something which might cause in him a shame and contempt of himself; he imbrac'd this Council with so much fervor, that after he had giv'n himself to Mental Prayer, he never fail'd to imploy the first two hours thereof to know and despise himself, and to turn whatever he heard, read, or saw, to his own confusion. Besides this, he practic'd another Devotion, which was, that every Morning when he rose, the first thing he did was to fall down on his Knees and kiss the ground three times, to remind himself, that he was but Dust and Ashes, and that he shou'd again return to Dust and Ashes: And the great and many Examples which he has left us of Humility upon Sanctity, shew plainly what fruit he reap'd from these Exercises of Piety. Let us take the same Council, let no Day pass, without imploying one part of our Prayer in the consideration of something which may move us to a contempt of our selves; and never leave off, till it sinks thorowly, and very deeply into our Soul, and till the continual view of our misery and meanness, has cloath'd us all over with a holy shame and confusion before God. We have great need thus to exercise our selves; for we are naturally so full of Pride, and so inclin'd to the desire of being esteem'd, that if we take not care to humble our selves continually, by the considera-
tion

nion of our weakness; we shall always be exalted above our selves, we being like unto Cork which still lifts it self above the Water, if you do keep it not under by main force. Wherefore we must always keep down this swelling, which the too good Opinion of our selves raises in our Heart, and looking upon our weakness and faults, as the Peacock do's upon it's Feet; beat down that spreading vanity which Self-complaisance raises in us. Let us remember the Parable of the Fig-tree planted in a Vineyard; the Master of the Vineyard would have it cut down, because in three Years time it bore no Fruit, but the Dresser of the Vineyard sayd to him, ** My Lord, pray let it alone for one Year more, till I shall dig about it and dung it; and if it bear fruit, well: But if not, then after that if you please I shall cut it down.* Do you so too, dig well the Earth about the dry and fruitless Plant of your Soul; spread about it the dung of your Sins and Miseries, and so it will bring forth the fruit of Humility and Righteousness.

But to encourage us farther in this Exercise, and to hinder our taking occasion to leave it off, upon ill grounded apprehensions, 'tis good to remark here two things. The first is, that we must not imagine that 'tis an Exercise only for new beginners; for it suits equally with those, who are already most advanc'd in the way of Perfection, since we see that the Saints and Apostles themselves have practis'd it. The second is, that we must not fancy to our selves, that 'tis a sad and Melancholy business, which fills the Mind with disquiet and trouble. On the contrary, it brings with it a great deal of tranquillity and delight, in spite of all the weaknesses and faults which it makes us discover in our selves; and the sense it gives us, that we deserve to be condemn'd and abhor'd by all the World. For when this sense arises from a true Humility, the pain that it gives us is so pleasing, that we would not be without it: For as to certain vexations we sometimes have at the view of our faults and misery, they proceed from the Temptation of the Devil, who would thereby make us on the one side believe that we are very humble, and on the other side, cast us into a dispondency of the Mercy of God, and discourage us from his service. If indeed we were to stick wholly upon the sense of our weakness and infirmity, there would be reason to sink under our sorrow, and to lose all courage; but we must not stop there, we must forthwith pass on to the consideration of God's infinite goodness and mercy;

** Domine, dimitte illam & hoc anno, utque dum fodiam circa illam, & mittam stercorem. Et si quidem fecerit fructum: sin autem, in futurum succides illam. Luc. 13. 8.*

of the Love which he bears us, of what he has suffer'd for us, and therein place all our confidence. Thus what serves to deject us, when we look upon our selves, serves to raise us up again, when we look upon God. In our selves we see nothing but subjects of tears and apprehension, in God we see nothing but subjects of joy and confidence; whilst the excess of our weakness and the multitude of our faults are not able to make us fear his abandoning us; because the greatness of his bounty and mercy which we look upon, surpasses infinitely that of our Misery and Sins. Thus by a profound consideration of these two things, we come to see at the same time, that we ought not to lay any more stress upon our selves than upon weak Reeds, and that we must fix our confidence in God alone according to the words of *Daniel*: † *For we do not present our supplications before thee considering in our own Righteousness, but in thy great Mercies.*

† Neque enim in justificationibus nostris prosterminis preces ante faciem tuam, sed in miserationibus tuis multis. *Dav. 9. 18.*

CHAP. XIII.

Of the Second Degree of Humility, and in what it consist's.

THE second degree of Humility consists in being glad to be undervalu'd. * *Love to be unknown*, says Saint *Bonaventure*, and to be contemn'd. If we were well fix'd in the first degree of Humility, we shou'd have but a little way to get to the second. If we truly had a contempt for our selves, we shou'd not be concern'd that others had so too; but on the contrary, we shou'd be glad of it. Will you have a proof thereof say's the same Saint? Is it not true, that we are naturally glad to have others of our Opinion? If so, why are not we glad to have 'em slight us? 'Tis, because we do not indeed slight our selves, but have too good an Opinion of our selves. Saint *Gregory* upon these words of *Job*, *I have Sinn'd and indeed done amiss, and have not yet receiv'd the punishment which I deserv'd*, say's, that many expresse as much with their

* *Ama nesciri, & pro nihilo reputari. Bonav. Procef. 6. Relig. c. 22.*

Greg. li. Mor. 24. c. 6. in id: Peccavi, & vere deliqui, & ut etiam dignus, non recepi. Job. 33. 27.

their Lips, and speak with contempt of themselves, but when others repeat the very same things, which they have heard 'em say of themselves, or even far less, they cannot bear with it. The reason is, that when they say ill of themselves, they speak not in the Spirit of truth, and according to the sentiments of their Heart, as *Job* did, and they have only an outward form of Humility. They wou'd fain be thought to be humble, but at the bottom they are not, and wou'd only appear so; for if they were really humble, they wou'd not shew so great a resentment for the reproofs that are made 'em, nor take such great care to excuse and defend themselves, and shew so much trouble and uneasiness.

Cassian tells us, that an Abbot call'd *Serapion* had one Day a Visit made him by one Cloth'd like an Hermit, his Countenance and his Discourse was very humble, and he seem'd to have a great contempt of himself; he was continually a telling what a great Sinner he was; that he deserv'd not to breath in the Air, and that he was unworthy the ground shou'd bear him; nor wou'd he sit down any where but upon the Floor, nor let any one wash his Feet. The Abbot falling after Dinner upon some Discourse which related to a Spiritual Life, and desiring to entertain his Guest with some good Counsel, told him with a great deal of sweetness and Charity, that being he was young and lusty, he wou'd do better to stay in his Cell, and rather to live there upon the work of his hands, as the other Hermit's did, than to go up and down as he did. The same Hermit took this advice so bitterly ill, that he cou'd not help changing colour upon it; and then *Serapion* going on sayd, how now Friend, you but just now spoke so ill of your self, and shew'd so much contempt in your own behalf, and you cannot now suffer without being nettld and angry, a bare Advice giv'n you with all imaginable Charity and sweetness; did you not understand that the ill which you sayd of your self oblig'd us to apply to you that Sentence of the Wise Man, † *The just is the first accuser of himself*? Or did you aim at nothing but praise, by your despising your self? Unhappy that we are, says Saint *Gregory*, all that we pretend by our Hypocrisie and Dissimulation is ordinarily the esteem of the World; what appears Humility in us, is sometimes great Pride, and we often seem to stoop before Men, to the end that we may be the more extoll'd and prais'd by them. If this were not so, why shou'd you say that of your self, which you wou'd not have others believe of you. If you say it from

*Cass. col. 18.
cap. 9.*

† Justus, prior
est accusator
sui.
Prov. 18. 17.

the

the bottom of your Heart and in testimony of the truth; you shou'd be glad that you are believ'd; but if you are angry at it, 'tis a sign that by humbling your self you have no other design than to get the esteem of Men. 'Tis that which the Wise Man teaches us, when he says, * *There are those who make as if they humbl'd themselves, and who are inwardly full of Hypocrisie and Pride.* For what greater Hypocritise and Deceit can there be, than to seek the esteem of Men, by the means of humbling and despising our selves? And what greater Pride is there; than that of desiring to pass for humble? Saint Bernard says, That † *The desire to acquire by Humility, the praise of being humble is no Virtue, but 'tis the overthrowing of Virtue; for what is more corrupt and unworthy than to desire to appear better, by the very way whereby thou appear'st worst of all?* To desire that the ill which thou say'st of thy self, shou'd only serve to make others think well of thee. Saint Ambrose speaking of such kind of People, says, * *Several have the Image of Humility, without having the real Virtue, they shew it without, but contradict it within.*

In fine, so great is our Vanity, and the desire we have to be esteem'd is so violent, that we find out a thousand tricks to satisfy our Pride, and whether it be by direct or indirect means, we still endeavour to turn all to our own praise. The Proud says Saint Gregory, when they think they have come off very well in any thing, are wont to desire that they might be shew'd wherein they fail'd, to the end to make others say they have done well. One wou'd think that 'twere Humility in 'em to desire that their faults shou'd be shewn 'em; but 'tis not Humility, 'tis Pride; because they have no other aim therein, but to draw praise to themselves. There are others, who find fault with what they have done, and express how discontented they are therewith; which is only to force the approbation of others, and to have the pleasure to hear 'em say, that nothing cou'd be done better, and that they are to blame not to be satisfi'd therewith. A grave Religious Man us'd to call this sort of Humility, Humility with a Hook, for as we sometimes make use of a Hook to pull things to us which we cannot otherwise reach, so this false Humility is us'd, to hook in as 'twere the praise which we cou'd not otherwise attain to. A Preacher for example, will come out of the Pulpit fully persuaded, that he has done marvellously well, and then will ask some of his Friends to tell him in Charity, wherein he fail'd. To what end is all this dissembling? For

you

* Et qui nequiter humiliat se, & interiora ejus plena sunt dolo.
Eccles. 19. 23.

† Appetere de humilitate laudem humilitatis, non est virtus, sed subversio: quid pervertius, quidve indignius, quam ut inde velis videre melior, unde videtis deterior?
Bern. serm. 16. sup. Cant.
* Multi habent humilitatis speciem, sed virtutem non habent. Multi eam foris prætentant, & intus impugnant.
Ambros. lib. 7. cap. 44.
Lib. Moral. 26. cap. 2.

you do not believe you have fail'd in any thing, nor is it your Intention to be found fault with, but to be commended, and to have others of the same Opinion with your self; 'tis that which you seek, and that which tickles your Vanity. But if any one more sincere than the rest, happens to hint to you some small fault, you are not pleas'd with it, but warmly defend it, and often judge that he who has told you of this same fault has no Judgment, and understands nothing at all seeing he blames that, which seem'd to you to be a very good thought, and extreemly well express'd. Nothing therefore but Pride and Vanity moves you, and the praise of Men is all you seek by this affected Humility. 'Tis also with the same Spirit that we sometimes confess frankly the faults which we cannot hide; so that what we have lost in the Opinion of the World by committing 'em, we may regain by acknowledging 'em. At other times we exaggerate 'em beyond what they are, that the World seeing it impossible, that they shou'd be so great as we say, shou'd conclude that we accuse our selves of what we have not done, and so attribute it to an excess of Humility, and thus by magnifying what is not, we endeavour dexterously to hide what is. In fine, we make use of all tricks and inventions to mask and hide our Pride under the Cloak of Humility.

Thus you may judge, says Saint Bernard, how excellent and sublime Humility is, and on the contrary how shameful and despicable Pride is: † For certainly Humility must be a thing of great value, since even Pride seeks to deck it self therewith, lest it shou'd become contemptible. As on the contrary, Pride must needs be a very shameful thing in it's self, since it dares not appear naked, and is forc'd to hide it's self under the veyle of Humility. For in fine, you'd be asham'd to have it perceiv'd, that you seek to be esteem'd and commended; because you'd pass for a vain and weak Person, which is the meanest Opinion one can have of a Man; and therefore it is, that you try to disguise your Pride under an outward Humility. But why wou'd you be what you are asham'd to appear to be? And why are not you asham'd to hunt after praise, since you are asham'd to be thought to hunt after it? The mischief is not, that any one believes this of you, but that it is really true, and since you'd be asham'd that Men shou'd know it, why are not you asham'd that God shou'd do so, * Whose Eyes behold all our Imperfections?

Form. de grad. humil. cap. 9.

† Gloriosa res humilitas, quæ ipsa quoque superbia palliare se appetit, ne vilescat. Idem ibid.

* Imperfectum meum viderunt oculi tui.

Psalm. 138. 16.

ALL

All this proceeds from our not being well fix'd in the first degree of Humility, and consequently being remote from the second. We must proceed in this business from the Fountain-head; we must begin to know our misery and nothingness, to the end that when that knowledge shall have produc'd in us a contempt of our selves, which is the first degree of Humility, we may raise our selves afterwards to the second. 'Tis not enough therefore to have a contempt of your self, and to speak ill of your self even from your Heart, you must endeavour to arrive to the pitch of being willing that others shou'd think and say of you, what you think and say of your self, and be content that they do indeed slight you. To condemn and speak ill of one's self, says Saint John Climachus, is not to be humble; for who's he who suffers not every thing from himself with Patience? But to receive joyfully the scoffs and ill treatment of the World, is to be truly humble. 'Tis good to speak ill of our selves; to say we are proud, slothful, impatient, negligent and inconsiderate, but 'twou'd be better still to reserve that acknowledgment till others lay those reproaches upon us. Now if you desire indeed that others shou'd think those things of you, and are contented that they shou'd upon occasion say so, you'll then be truly humble.

S. Clim. grad.
21. art. 17.

C H A P. XIV.

Of some steps by which we must ascend to get to the Second Degree of Humility.

SINCE this second degree of Humility, is that which is the most difficult in the practice of this Virtue, I shall divide it, as some Holy Writers do, into four other degrees or steps, so that by little and little, step after step, we may get up to the highest Perfection of Humility that this degree can arrive to. The first step therefore is, not to seek the glory and esteem of the World, but on the contrary, to shun it very carefully. Whole Volum's are full of the examples which an infinity of Saints have giv'n us thereupon, and who were so far from seeking
this

S. Aug. lib. de
similitud.

this esteem, that they avoided Worldly Honors, and whatever cou'd gain 'em any Reputation before Men, as a most dangerous Rock. † Who, as Saint Gregory says very well, *had more reason to exercise dominion over Men than he who Created 'em, yet did not he give example to his followers to fly from honor when offer'd, that, they might by his example reject all offers of worldly favorites?* Was not JESUS CHRIST himself the first who did thus? For knowing that after the famous Miracle of the Five Loaves, the People wou'd carry him away and make him King, he retir'd into the Mountain; to teach us to shun Honors by his own example, thò he had no cause to fear, had he been put in never so high a station. 'Twas by the same Motive, that having manifested his Glory to three of his Disciples in his Transfiguration, he forbade 'em ever to speak of it to any body, till after his Resurrection; and 'twas for this reason also, that in giving sight to the Blind, and in working so many other Miracles; he recommended secrecy to those whom he had Cur'd. His intention thereby was to teach us to shun the esteem and praise of Men, by reason of the danger of conceiving vanity, whereby we might destroy our selves.

The Registers of the Order of Saint Francis tell us of a Holy Religious Man call'd Brother Giles, who hearing of the fall of Father Elias, who had been General of the Order, and who then stood Excommunicated for adhering to the Emperour Frederick the II. an Enemy of the Church, threw himself upon the ground at the news thereof, and lay there a long time, cleaving to the Earth with all his force; who being ask'd why he did so: 'Tis, sayd he, because I see that our Old General is fallen for having been too much elevated, so that I wou'd if 'twere possible, fall as low as the very Center of the Earth. Gerson makes an ingenious application of the Fable of Anteus to the subject we speak of. The Poets feign, that this same Anteus was a Giant and Son of the Earth, who having been thrice thrown down to the ground, whilst he wrestled with Hercules, his strength increas'd every time that he touch'd the Earth. Hercules perceiving this, hoisted him up from thence, and squeez'd him to Death in his Arm's. This is, says he, a figure of what the Devil do's when he fights with us; he endeavours to lift us up very high by means of the esteem and praise of Men, that so he may the more easily overcome us. Wherefore he who is truly humble continually lies low in the knowledge of himself, and is afraid of nothing more than being exalted.

Tom. II.

C c

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† Quis enim principari hominibus tam sine culpa potuisset, quam is qui hos nimium regebat quos ipse creaverat? Sed exemplum est sequentibus: præbens, oblatam gloriam fugit, ut membra ejus discederent favores mundi fugere, &c.
Greg. 1. p.
Pastor. c. 3.
Joan. 6. 15. &
Matth. 14. 23.

Chron. 5. Franc.
p. 1. l. 7. & 5.

* Ut patiat
se contemp
tibiliter tractari.
Vbi sup.

† Omne, quod
tibi applicitum
fuerit, accipe;
& in dolore
sustine, & in
humilitate tua
patientiam
habe.
Eccles. 2. 4.

De Imit. Christi
lib. 3. ca. 39.

Dorothe. in Bi-
blioth. SS. Patr.
tom. 3. dist. 10.

The second step, say's Saint *Anselme*, Is to suffer contempt *With Patience*, that is to say, if it happens that you receive any slight or affront, you must bear it with meekness; for I do not now require of you to desire injuries, to seek 'em industriously, or to receive 'em joyfully; that wou'd be yet too much, and very difficult for you to undertake, I only desire, that upon occasion, you'd indure patiently all that shall tend to vilifie you, according to the words of the Wise Man: † *Take well all that shall happen to you, how great pain soever it may cost you, bear it with patience and humility.* This is a very proper means to acquire and preserve Humility; for as the honor and esteem of the World gives us occasion to let our selves be carry'd away with Pride and Vanity, so whatever turns to our contempt; is an occasion of making us humble; and fortifies and advances us in the practice of that Virtue. Saint *Laurence Justinian* compar'd Humility to a River, which has a great deal of Water in Winter, and scarce any at all in Summer; and indeed, 'tis ordinary for Humility to grow less in Prosperity, and to increase in Adversity.

We have opportunities enough every Day to practice what we say, it only depends on our Will to make use of 'em. Whatever makes for the satisfaction of others, say's a Holy Man, shall succeed well, and nothing that makes for yours: Others shall be heard with admiration, and what you say, shall be of no account; every thing shall be granted to others, and nothing to you; others shall be respected, and you slighted; infine, others shall be imploy'd in business, and you look'd upon as good for nothing. All this do's naturally trouble one; nor will it be a small thing, if you suffer it quietly. Wherefore let every one examin himself; let him run over the different occasions which Daily happen, and see how he behaves himself therein. How do you feel your self, when you are commanded imperiously to do a thing? How do you take the reproof and advice which is giv'n you? How do you find your self within, when you think that your Superior treat's you with little confidence, and shews himself too reserv'd to you? Of so many occasions which Daily occur, whatever humiliation offers it self to you, take it, say's Saint *Dorotheus* as a proper remedy to cure your Pride; Pray for him who giv's it you, as for the Physician of your Soul; and assure your self, that you have not Humility when you take 'em otherwise.

The third step by which you must mount, is, not to be affected or touch'd with the praise and esteem of Men; and this

this is harder to practice than the other: * *For tho' it be ease*, says Saint *Austin*, *to be indifferent as to the commendations we are depriv'd of, yet 'tis hard to be insensible of those which are giv'n us.* Saint *Gregory* handles this matter excellently well, and applying thereunto these words of *Job*, † *If I beheld the Sun in it's splendor, and the Moon in it's brightness, and my heart was secretly overjoy'd*, say's, that looking upon the Sun and Moon with pleasure when they shine, may be interpreted to look upon the glory and reputation, which we have acquir'd in the World, with pleasure and delight; and that *Job* wou'd teach us thereby, that he had no vanity from the esteem and praise of Men. There's this difference, continues he, between the Proud and the Humble, the Proud are always over-joy'd with the praises giv'n 'em, and even with false praises; for they care not what they are in themselves and in the sight of God, but only what they are in the Opinion of Men; therefore when they see themselves esteem'd according to their desire; they are carry'd away with joy and vanity, as having obtain'd all they expected. But he who is truly of an humble Heart, as soon as he sees himself prais'd and esteem'd, he recollects, and cloath's himself with confusion; according to the words of the Royal Prophet, * *When I was exalted, I humbl'd my self and was troubl'd*; † *Nor is it without reason that he is troubl'd*, as the same Saint *Austin* continues, *for he trembles when he reflect's that if the things he is prais'd for are counterfeit, he may be the more severely punished by Almighty God; and if they are true, he may lose the recompence he was to expect, and may one Day hear these words*; * *Thou hast receiv'd thy good things in this Life*; thou hast had the reward of thy good works. So that the praise which gives occasion to the proud, to become more vain and haughty, causes the humble, to humble themselves the more. And 'tis this, say's Saint *Gregory*, that the Wise Man teaches us, when he says, † *As the Silver is try'd in the Crucible, and the Gold in the Furnace, so is a Man by the Mouth that praises him.* When the Gold and Silver is good, the Fire refine's it; when 'tis good for nothing, it consume's it. Praise, says the Wise Man, works the same effect upon Man; if he be pufft up with the Honor giv'n, he is not Gold and Silver of a good Allay; because he cannot bear the Crucible of the Tongue; but if he humbles himself when he is prais'd, he is very fine Gold; because the Fire of praise destroy's him not, but on the contrary purifies

* Et si equam facile est laude carere, dum denegatur: difficile est ea non delectari, cum offertur. *Epist. 64. ad Aurel. Episc.*
† Si vidi solem cum fulgeret, & lunam ecedentem clarescere: & latratum est in abscondito cor meum. *Job. 31. 26. 27.*
Greg. lib. 22. Moral. ca. 5.

* Exaltatus autem, humilatus sum, & conturbatus. *Psalm. 87. 16.*
† Cautus enim consideratione trepidat, ne aut de his in quibus laudatur, & non sunt, majus Dei iudicium inveniat: aut de his in quibus laudatur, & sunt, competens premium perdat. *Idem ibid.*
* Recepi boni in vita tua. *Luce. 16. 25.*
† Quomodo probatur in confessorio argentum: & in fornace aurum: sic probatur homo ore laudantis. *Prov. 27. 27.*

and refines him the more. Make use therefore of this Mark which the Holy Ghost gives thee; to know whether or no thou dost profit in Humility, see whether thou art troubl'd or joyful at thy praises, and thereby thou wilt know, whether thy Humility is true or false.

We Read of Saint *Borgia*, that nothing gave him so much pain, as when he saw that he was honor'd as a Saint; and being one Day ask'd why he troubl'd himself so much for a thing he had no hand in? He, answer'd, that being so unlike to what he was believ'd to be, he fear'd that he shou'd be call'd to a more severe account by God. And this altogether agrees with the passage of Saint *Gregory*, which we just now quoted.

Let us therefore be so fix'd in the knowledge of our selves, that the wind of Man's praise and applause, may not bear us up from the Earth, and make us lose the sight of our misery. But on the contrary, let us then humble our selves the more, and be cloath'd with new confusion, seeing that the praise giv'n us is undeserv'd, and that we are not Masters of the good qualities which are ascrib'd to us; and that infine we are not the Persons the World esteems us, and such as we ought to be.

C H A P. XV.

Of the Fourth Step, which is to desire to be condemn'd, and to rejoyce thereat.

THE fourth step to arrive at the Perfection of Humility, is to desire to be despi's'd by Men, and to take pleasure in being injur'd and reproach'd. * *He who is truly humble, says Saint Bernard, desires to pass for a despicable Person, and not for an humble one, and he rejoyces at the contempt is had of him.* This is that which is most excellent in the second degree of Humility; and therefore it is, as he adds, that the Spikenard, which is a very small Herb, but a very fragrant one, is taken for the Symbol of Humility, according to the words of *Salomon's Song*, † *My Spikenard sends forth it's smell*: For when you have not only a contempt for your self, but

* Verus humilis vult reputari, non humilis praedicari: & gaudet de contemptu sui.
Bern. serm. 16. sup. Cantic.
num. 9.

† Nardus mea dedit odorem suum.
Cant. 1. 11.

but wou'd have others contemn you also, then is your Humility as a kind of Spikenard, whose smell spreads it's self all about.

Saint Bernard observes, that there are two sorts of Humility; one in the understanding, whereby Man considering his misery and lowliness, is so convinc'd thereof, that he despises himself; and believes that he deserves to be altogether contemn'd; the other in the Will, which makes him desire to be despis'd and disesteem'd by all the World.

JESUS CHRIST cou'd not have the first sort of Humility, which is that of the Understanding; because, says the Saint, *He knew himself, † And thinking it no Robbery to be equal with God*, he cou'd not despise himself, nor believe himself worthy of contempt. But he had the second sort of Humility, which is that of the Will and Heart; * *When he made himself of no Reputation, taking upon him the form of a Servant*, and when, for the Love he bore to Men, he was pleas'd to humble himself, and appear contemptible in their Eyes; and therefore he says to us, † *Learn of me who am meek and humble of heart*. But as for us, we ought to have both these two sorts of Humility; for the first without the second is false and deceitful, there being nothing more unjust than to desire to pass for what we are not. He who is truly humble, and has a real disesteem of himself, ought to be pleas'd that others disesteem him also.

'Tis this which our Saviour has taught us by his own Example. Consider with what affection and ardor he has imbrac'd contempt and reproach for the Love of us. He was not contented only to humble himself so far as to make himself Man, and take the form of a Servant, he who is the Lord of Heaven and Earth, but even cloath'd himself with the form of a Sinner, and appear'd as the Apostle say's, * *In the likeness of sinful Flesh*; he took not Sin upon him; because Sin is incompatible with God, but he took the Mark and Character of Sinners: Being pleas'd to be Circumcis'd as a Sinner; to be Baptiz'd among Sinners and Publicans, as if he had been one of 'em; to be put in competition with Barrabbas, and judg'd more wicked and unworthy to live than he. Infine, the eagerness which he had to suffer all sorts of affronts and reproaches for the Love of us, was so excessively great, that he thought it long till he saw the time, wherein inebriated with Love, he was like another Noah expos'd all naked to the Raillery and Insolence of Men.

† *I have,*

Quoniam
sciebat seip-
sum.
Serm. 41. sup.
Cant.

† Non rapi-
nam arbitratus
est esse se æ-
qualem Deo.
Philip. 2. 6.

* Semetipsum
exinanivit for-
mam servi ac-
cipiens.
Philip. 2. 7.

† Discite à
me, quia mitis
sum, & hu-
milis corde.
Matth. 23. 12.

* Deus filium
suum mittens
in similitudi-
nem carnis
peccati.
Rom. 8. 3.

† Baptismo habeo Baptizari: & quomodo coarctor usquedum perficatur? Luc. 12. 50.
* Desiderio desideravi hoc pascha manducare vobiscum. Luc. 22. 15.

† Improperium expectavit cor meum, & miseriam. Psal. 68. 21.

* Saturabitur opprobrijs. Thren. 3. 30.

† Propter quod placeo mihi in infirmitatibus meis, in contumelijs, in necessitatibus, in persecutionibus, in angustijs pro Christo. 2 Cor. 12. 10.
Philip. 1. 7.

* Ibant gaudentes a conspectu consilij: quoniam digni habiti sunt pro nomine Jesu contumeliam pati. Act. 5. 41.

† Incipio Christi esse Discipulus. In eius vita. Cap. 4. Exam. 9. 44. & Reg. 11. Jun.

† *I have, says he, a Baptism of Blood to be Baptiz'd with, and how am I straightned till it be accomplish'd? * With desire have I desir'd to Eat this Pascheover with you:* He thought it long, I say, to see the hour wherein he was to be abandon'd to all sorts of Indignities: To be Buffer'd as a Slave; to be Spit upon as a Blasphemer; to be Cloath'd in White, as a Fool; and with Purple, as a Mock-King: And more than all this, to be cruelly Scourg'd like a publick High way Man; and insfne to suffer between two Thieves, the most shameful and ignominious Death that was then in use. This is what the Divine Saviour of our Souls desir'd so earnestly, and what made him say by the Mouth of *David*, † *Reproach has broken my heart, and I am full of misery.* He loves reproach and ignominy so much, that he expects 'em with the same impatience as others do things which are most pleasing. And therefore *Jeremy* speaking of him, says, * *He shall be satiated with reproaches*, to shew us by this expression the violent hunger and thirst which he had, to indure all sorts of of contempt and affronts, for the Love of us. Now if for the Love of us, the Son of God has desir'd so passionately and receiv'd with so much joy, scorns and affronts, who was worthy of all Veneration; shall we think we do much, we who deserve all manner of contempt, when we shall desire for the Love of him, to pass at least for what we really are, and suffer with pleasure the reproaches and affronts which we deserve? 'Twas that which the Apostle practis'd, when he sayd, † *Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for CHRIST's sake.* And 'tis in the same Spirit, that Writing from the place of his Imprisonment to the *Philippians*, and not being able to contain the satisfaction he had to suffer for *JESUS CHRIST*, he tell's 'em, that 'tis just that they shou'd share in his joy. 'Tis with this Milk that the Saviour of the World nourish'd his Apostles, and that which was the cause, that when they were beaten with Rods by the Command of the Synagogue, * *They departed from the presence of the Council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer contempt for his Name.* And 'tis this, which several Martyrs have imitated, and among others Saint *Ignatius*, when being brought to *Rome* to be expos'd there to the wild Beasts, and seeing himself loaded with all manner of affronts and reproaches by those who led him along, he cry'd out joyfully, † *I begin now to be a Disciple of JESUS CHRIST.* Insfne, 'tis that which our Holy Founder would

would have us imitate, and what he recommends to us in exprefs terms, and that in the moft preffing manner poffible. They, fays he, who fhall enter into the SOCIETY, or who are already of it, ought to examin carefully before God, how important and ufeful it is for a Spiritual Life, to abhor wholly and not in part whatever the World Lov's, and to imbrace and feek ardently whatever JESUS CHRIST has Lov'd and imbrac'd. For as Worldlings, who follow the Maxims of the World, feek earneftly after the Honor, Glory, and Reputation which the World gives; fo they who have renounc'd the World, and truly follow JESUS CHRIST, ought paffionately to defire whatever is oppofite to the Spirit of the World, and ought to take delight to wear the Livery of their Divine Mafter, out of the Love they bear him; fo that to become in a manner like unto him, they ought to wifh themfelves to be run down with injuries, affronts, falfe testimonies, and all forts of ignominy, fo God were not thereby offended, and if the inflicting 'em were no Sin in their Neighbour. All that can be fayd of Humility is compris'd in this Rule. A true quitting of the World, is to Renounce what is moft excellent in the World, which is Reputation and Glory. To wifh for ignominy and affronts, as eagerly as Worldlings wifh for honor and praife, is to be truly Religious, and to be dead to the World. To be truly of the SOCIETY of JESUS, and to become indeed his Companions, is to defire to keep him Company in affronts and reproaches, to put on his Liveries, in feeking after, and receiving injuries and contempt with joy for the Love of him. Thou, O Lord, haft been look'd upon by all the World as a wicked Perfon, and thou war't plac'd as a Criminal between two Thieves, fuffer not therefore that I thou'd pafs for a good Man in the Opinion of Men; for it is not juft that the Servant thou'd be thought better of than the Mafter, and that the Schollar thou'd be preferr'd before his Teacher. But fince the World has perfecuted and despis'd thee, let the World perfecute and defpife me, fo that I may imitate thee in all things, and be truly thy Companion and Difciple. Saint Francis Xaverius thought it very unworthy that a Chriftian, for whom JESUS CHRIST has fuffer'd fo many reproaches, and who ought always to have the remembrance thereof prefent in his mind, thou'd be pleas'd in being honor'd and refpected by Men.

*In ejus vita
lib. 2. cap. 3.*

C H A P. XVI.

That the Perfection of Humility and all other Virtues, consists in performing the Acts thereof with pleasure; and of how great importance this is, for our perseverance in Virtue.

TIS the general Opinion of Philosophers, that the Perfection of any Virtue consist's in performing the Acts thereof with pleasure; and when they speak of the signs whereby it may be known, whether any one has acquir'd the habit of any Virtue, they say, that 'tis known when a Person performs the Acts thereof, *Readily, easily, and with pleasure*. He who has acquir'd the habit of some Art or Science, knows how to reduce that Art or Science to Practice with a marvellous readiness and facility. An excellent Lutaniſt, who understands Musick perfectly well, has no need to prepare himself or to consider how to play what he know's; 'tis so easie to him, that even when he thinks of something else, he plays admirably well. 'Tis the same with those who have acquir'd the habit of any Virtue, they practice it without any pain at all; wou'd you know therefore, if you have acquir'd the habit of Humility? See first of all, if you perform the Works thereof *readily and easily*, for if you feel any repugnance and difficulty in the occasions which present themselves to practice it, 'tis a sign that you have not yet acquir'd the perfect habit thereof; and if to make use of 'em as you ought, you have need of preparations and reflections, those reflections and preparations are indeed a good means to arrive at the Perfection you aim at; but 'tis always a sign, that you are not yet arriv'd thither. When a Man, before he play's upon a Lute, considers where he must sometimes put one Finger, and sometimes another, what string he is to touch, and what Rules have been giv'n him, he do's what ought to be done, to learn how to play well upon the Lute;

Prompté, faciliter, & déstabiliser.

Lute; but it shew's that he has not acquir'd the habit of playing upon it, because he who has acquir'd that, has no need of considering, to be able to play well. Wherefore *Aristotle* says, that † *When a Man is Master of any Art in perfection, 'tis so easie to reduce it to practice, that one deliberates no more upon the means,* and all Philosophers hold likewise, as well as he, that the habit of Virtue appear's not in the Actions which are perform'd with reflection, but only in those which are done without musing thereon; so that in all sudden and unthought of Actions, we act always, according to the habit we have got.

† *Ars perfecta non deliberat, tam sibi facilis est actus suus. Arist. 3. Ethic. ca. 3.*

Nay, they go farther yet; for *Plutarch* speaking how one may know if a Man has acquir'd the habit and Perfection of Virtue, ascribes twelve ways, one of which is by Dreams. If even in a Dream you have no imagination but what is modest and regular, or if when others come upon you, you find even whilst you are asleep that you are troubl'd thereat, and that you struggle to resist 'em, as if you were awake; 'tis a sign that Virtue is deeply rooted in you; because not only the Will, but even the Imagination and Senses, are in you made subject to Reason. Even as Horses, says he, when they are broken and taught well to draw, still go on their ordinary pace, tho' he that drives 'em leaves 'em to themselves, or sleeps: So when any one has perfectly acquir'd Virtue, and has thoro'ly subjected his Senses to his Reason, the Senses remain still under that subjection, even when Reason is dround in sleep. Saint *Austin* teaches us the same Doctrine when he say's, * *Thy Commandments O Lord are so deeply ingrav'd in us, that we resist Temptations even in Dreams.* And indeed there are those, who have so much Zeal for the Law of God, so much fervency for Virtue, and so much abhorrence of Vice, and who are so us'd to resist Temptations when they are awake, that they even resist 'em also, when they are asleep. We Read in the Life of Saint *Francis Xaverius*, that when he was asleep one Night, he struggl'd so much in resisting the impure illusion of a Dream, that by the resistance he made, he threw up a great deal of Blood at his Mouth. This agrees with the explication of Authors, upon the passage of Saint *Paul*, † *Whether we wake or sleep, let us live together with God*; for according to them, these words do not only signify, *Whether we live, or whether we dye*, which is the common exposition of the Interpreters; but they signify also, that they who are very fervent in the service of God, ought

* *Domine, memores mandatorum tuorum etiam in somnis resistimus. Aug. li. 12. de Gen. ad litt. ca. 15.*

In S. Franc. Xaver. vit. lib. 4. cap. 6.

† *Ut five vigilemus, five dormiamus, semper cum illo vivamus. 1 Thess. 5. 10.*

always to be inseparably united to JESUS CHRIST, not only when they wake, but even then, when sleep suspends in 'em all the functions of their Will and Reason.

- The third and principal mark whereby is known whether one has acquir'd Virtue in Perfection, is, when the Acts thereof are perform'd *with delight*, and therein consists properly the Perfection of Virtue in us. Will you know then if you have acquir'd the Perfection of Humility? Examine your self upon the Rule, which we have set down in the foregoing Chapter; see whether injuries and contempt, raise as much joy in you, as the People of the World find, in the esteem and praise of Men. Nay further, you cannot only not be perfect in Virtue without such a disposition, but can scarce persevere therein; perseverance being in a manner utterly impossible, in a thing wherein you take no pleasure. † *The Antient Fathers*, says Saint Dorotheus, held for a constant Maxim, that *what the mind do's not joyfully imbrace, cannot be of any continuance*. You may perhaps keep silence and remain for some time in a great Recollection; but till it proceeds from the bottom of your heart, and that the habit thereof has made it natural to you, so that you take pleasure therein, you'll be in danger of not persevering; *You'll be in a kind of violent state, which consequently cannot last*. Wherefore 'tis of great importance to exercise our selves in Virtue, till it has taken so deep root in us, as to seem natural to us, and to proceed from our inclination, that we may perform the Acts thereof with delight: For so we may be assur'd in a manner to persevere. * *Blessed is he*, says the Psalmist, *whose delight is in the Law of the Lord*. Another Text has it, *He whose pleasure is wholly in the Law of the Lord; he shall be like a Tree planted by the Rivers side, and shall bring forth the fruit of Virtue and Righteousness in it's due season*.

Dolce stabilius.

† Solebant patres & majores nostri asserere, quid animus alacriter non admittit, diuturnum esse non posse. Dorotheus, doctor. seu serm. 10.

Nullum violentum est perpetuum.

* In lege Domini voluntas ejus; & in lege ejus meditabitur die ac nocte. Et erit tanquam lignum quod plantatum est secus decursus aquarum: quod fructum suum dabit in tempore suo. Psal. 1. 2. 3.

C H A P. XVII.

Wherein is more particularly explain'd, what that Perfection is, which we must try to raise our selves unto, in this Second Degree of Humility.

SAINTE *John Climacus* adds another thing to what we have already sayd. Which is, that as the proud, do so much value the esteem of the World, that to acquire it, they falsly attribute to themselves several gifts and advantages which they have not, and give themselves out, to be of greater Birth, Richer, and of more abilities than they are. So they who are extremely humble, so far shew the desire they have to be despis'd by the World, that to make themselves to be so, so much the more, they sometimes give occasion to make some defects and imperfections be believ'd of 'em, which they have not. We have, say's he, an example thereof in *Simcon* the Hermit, who knowing that the President of the Province where he was, mov'd by the Reputation of his Sanctity was a coming to see him, sat down on the Threshhold of his Door, with a piece of Bread and Cheese in his hand, which he fell a Eating with the looks of an Innocent. The President seeing him in that posture, return'd back with contempt of him, but the Hermit remain'd very much contented; because he had obtain'd what he desir'd. We have several other like examples; as that of Saint *Francis*, who to avoid the honor and reception intended him, fell a treading and kneading the Dirt with his Feet; and that of Brother *Junipere*, who was found playing at See-saw on a board with the little Children, with the same design of getting a mean Opinion of himself.

*Clim. grad. 4.
art. 110.*

*Chron. S. Franc.
1. p. l. 2. c. 72.*

Those great Saints did doubtless then consider, that the World had despis'd JESUS CHRIST, who is the Sovereign good; and that the blindness of the World in not having known the true light; nor having honor'd the Son of God, had given 'em such an aversion to the World, and such a contempt

Tom. II.

D d 2

tempt

tempt for whatever it esteems, and so much esteem for whatever it despises, that they thought they were carefully to avoid the being honor'd by the World, and look'd upon their being despis'd by the World with him, and for the Love of him as a great mark of the Love of JESUS CHRIST for them. 'Twas that which made 'em find so much pleasure in reproach and contempt, and that which mov'd 'em to put on so many disguises to draw it upon themselves. 'Tis true, says Saint *John Climacus*, that what the Saints have done therein has been often by a particular Inspiration of the Holy Ghost, and that consequently they are more to be admir'd than imitated, but if we do not imitate 'em in their holy follies, we ought to endeavour at least to imitate 'em in the Zeal, which made 'em commit 'em, and in the ardent desire they had, to be despis'd by the World.

*S. Clim. ubi
sup.*

Una medio-
crum, altera
perfectorum.
*Diad. lib. de
perf. spirit.
cap. 95.*

Tunc anima
velut natura-
lem habet hu-
militatem.
Idem ibid.

Saint *Diadocus* goes further yet, and says, there are two sorts of Humility: The first is the Humility of the indifferent, that is to say, of those who indeed make some progress, but have yet some Battels to give, and are attack'd by the motions of Pride, which they endeavour to overcome by the Grace of God, in humbling themselves. The other sort of Humility, is that of the Perfect, to whom God Communicates his light so abundantly, and gives so great a knowledge of themselves, that nothing seems capable to give 'em any further motion of Pride and Vain-glory. In this estate, Humility is as 'twere natural in the Soul, so that whatever good Works are perform'd, a body has always a mean Opinion of one's self, and believes himself the least of all. Now there's this difference, continues the Saint, between these two sorts of Humility, that that of the indifferent, who have not yet got an intire Victory of themselves, but who feel still some contradiction within 'em, is ordinarily accompany'd with some pain; and that tho' they bear with patience the occasions of Humiliation, they nevertheless receive them not with joy; because the Passions being not fully vanquish'd in 'em, there's always something withip, which still makes resistance. But the Humility of the Perfect, is not only free from pain, but full of joy; because their Passions being wholly overcome, and there being nothing in 'em which makes further resistance, they humble themselves before God with pleasure, and find delight in the contempt is had of 'em. Wherefore, still adds the Saint, they who have only the first Humility let themselves be easily troubl'd by good and bad success, and by all the different accidents
of

of Life; whereas those who have the other kind of Humility, never let themselves be cast down by Adversity, nor elevated by Prosperity; but remain always in the same frame and temper of Spirit, and enjoy a perfect peace and tranquillity, as Persons, whom Virtue has rais'd above all that can happen in the World. Nothing puts him in pain who is glad to be despis'd; for what can do it? Since the scorn of Men, which is the only thing which cou'd vex him, is that which rejoices him. What also can make him lose his quiet if he finds it in the very thing, which one wou'd think cou'd be done to disturb it? † *He who has brought himself to this state*, says Saint Chrysostom, *makes even this World a Paradise, for what can be more happy than a Soul which lives thus; which is always in the harbour shelter'd from all storms, and enjoys it's self in peace?*

Now, 'tis at this height of Humility, which we shou'd endeavour to arrive; and let it not seem impossible to us: For if we will, say's Saint Austin, we can, with the Grace of God, imitate not only the Saints, but the Saint of Saints; since he himself says to us, * *Learn of me for I am meek and humble*, and Saint Peter teaches us also, that † *JESUS CHRIST has suffer'd for us, leaving us an example, that we might follow his foot-steps*. Saint Hierom, upon these words of our Saviour, *If you'll be Perfect*, says, that we plainly see, that we may, if we will be perfect, because JESUS CHRIST says, *If you will*: For if you pretend to be excus'd on account of the weakness of your strength; he that sees the very bottom of your heart; do's he not better know it than you? Nevertheless he says, you can, *if you will*; for he's always ready to help us; and if we will, we can do all things with his assistance, Jacob, as Saint Hierom continues, saw a Ladder which reach'd from Earth to Heaven, upon which there were Angels, who went up and down, and God sat at the top of the Ladder to give, as 'twere, his hand to those who went up, and to encourage 'em by his Presence. Get up this Ladder, endeavour it, by mounting the steps we have shewn you, he'll reach out his hand to help you up to the top. A Traveller who sees a steep place a great way off, believes it not possible to get up thither, but when he comes nearer to it, and sees the beaten Road, he judges thereof after another manner.

† Anima autem, quæ sic se habet, quid potest esse beatius? Quicumque talis est, in portu continuo sedet ab omni tempestate liber, & oblectatur in serenitate cogitationum. Chrysostom. sup. Genes.

* Discite à me quia mitis sum, & humilis corde.

Math. 11. 29. † In hoc enim vocati estis, quia & Christus passus est pro nobis, vobis relinquens exemplum, ut sequamini vestigia ejus.

1 Pet. 2. 21. Hieron. in illud: Si vis perfectus esse. Math. 19. 21. Si dixeris: Vires non suppetunt: qui inspector est cordium, ipse intelligit. Prov. 24. 12.

Genes. 28.

C H A P. XVIII.

Of some means which may be made use of to
arrive at this Second Degree of Humility,
and particularly of the Example
of JESUS CHRIST.

THERE are ordinarily two way's ascrib'd for acquiring of Moral Virtues. One directs us to the reasons which may excite us thereunto; the other, to the practice of the Acts which may make us contract the habit thereof. To begin with the first; I say, that the example of JESUS CHRIST is one of the principal, and most efficacious considerations which we can make use of to become humble, or, in better terms, 'tis the principal and most efficacious of all. All the Life of the Saviour of the World, from his very Birth to his Death, has been a perfect Model of Humility; but among so many examples which he has giv'n us of this Virtue, Saint *Austin* fixes particularly upon the consideration of that which he gave us by washing the Feet of his Apostles upon the Eve of his Passion: He was not contented, says he, with the examples he had giv'n during the whole course of his Life, nor with those which he was quickly a going to give further, and which were, to make him be look'd upon as *The meekest of Men*, as *Isay* says, and according to the Royal Prophet, *The reproach of Men, and the refuse of the People*; † But knowing that his hour was come, that he shou'd pass out of this World to his Father, having lov'd his own which were in the World, he lov'd 'em unto the end, and wou'd give 'em yet a further mark thereof. Wherefore * *Supper being ended, he rises from the Table, lay's aside his Garments, and gird's a Towel about him, pours Water into a Bason, and begins to wash his Disciples Feet; and to wipe 'em with the Towel wherewith he was girded.* What a Mystery of Humility was this, which the

*August de
sanct. Virg.*

Isai. 53. 3.

Psal. 21. 7.

† Sciens Jesus
quia venit ho-
ra ejus, ut
transeat ex
hoc mundo ad
Patrem: cum
dilexisset suos,
qui erant in
mundo, in fi-
nem dilexit
eos.
Joan. 13. 1.

* Coenâ factâ,
surgit, & po-
nit vestimenta
sua: & cum
accepisset lin-
teum, præinxit se. Deinde mittit aquam in pelvum, & cepit lavare pedes Discipulorum, & exter-
gere linteo, quo erat præinctus. *Ibid. 4. 5.*

Apostles

Apostles themselves did not yet comprehend at that time.

† *How O Lord, dost thou wash my feet, say's Saint Peter to him?* Jesus answer'd, *What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter.* After that, he returns to his place, and to explain this Mystery to them, he told 'em, *Ye call me Master and Lord, and ye say well; for so I am; If I then, your Lord and Master, have wash'd your feet, ye also ought to wash one anothers feet; for I have giv'n you an example, that you should do as I have done to you.* What he means by this Mystery, is to teach us to humble our selves, as he has humbl'd himself. And doubtless Humility must be a Virtue of great importancè and difficult to practice, since JESUS CHRIST is not content with so many examples, which he had already giv'n us, nor with so many others which he was about to give; but that knowing well our infirmity, and the Malignity of the humour of Pride, which is so predominant in us, he do's so many things to cure it; and that infinite to make a stronger impression of Humility in our hearts, he yet recommends it to us, as 'twere by a declaration of his last Will.

Saint Austin explaining these words of our Saviour, *Learn of me who am meek and humble*, cry's out, * *O wholesome Doctrine, O Master and Lord of Men, who hast swallow'd Death in a Cup full of the Poison of Pride, what wou'dst thou have us learn of thee? That I am meek and humble of heart. What! Are all the Treasures of the Wisdom and Knowledge which are lodg'd in thee, reduc'd to this? To teach us, That thou art meek and humble of heart. Is it so great a thing to be little, that no body can teach it us except thou, who art so great, takest care thereof? Yea, adds the Saint, so great and difficult a thing it is to humble and make ones self little, that Men cou'd never have arriv'd thereunto; if the great God himself had not shew'd 'em the example; because nothing is more deeply rooted in the heart, than the desire of the glory and esteem of the World; so that no less was requir'd to humble us; and no less remedy than this was requisite to cure the Pride of which we are all sick: † *And if this remedy*, he made use of in making himself Man, and of no account, for the love of us, *cures it not, I know not what else can ever be able to do it.* If the sight of a God humbl'd and despis'd, is not sufficient to make us atham'd of desiring to be honor'd and esteem'd, and to make us wish to be despis'd with him and for him, I know not what can be sufficient. Wherefore*

† Domine, tu mihi lavas pedes? Quod ego facio, tu facis mihi, scies autem postea. Vos vocatis me Magister, & Domine, & bene dicitis: sum etenim. si ergo ego la- vi pedes vestros, Domi- nus, & Magi- ster: & vos debetis alter alterius lavare pedes. Exem- plum enim didi vobis, ut quemadmo- dum ego feci vobis, ita & vos faciat. Joan. 13. 6, 7, 13, 14, 15.

* O Doctri- nam saluta- rem, & magi- strum Domi- numque mort- alium, quibus mors poculo superbiae pro- pinata, atque transiit eis? Quid ut dis- camus a te, venimus ad te? Hucine re- dacti sunt om- nes thesauri sapientie, & scientie, ab- secondi in te, ut pro magno discamus a te, quia metis es, & humilis cor- de sitane mag- num est ebi- parvum, ut nisi a te, qui tam magnus es, fi- eret, dici om- nino non posset?

Aug. lib. de Janis. 2.º. cap. 52.
Hec medi- cina, si super- biam non cu- rat, quod can- ciet nescio. Idem. serm. 1. in Dominu. 1. Quadrag.

Guerry

Guerry the Abbot finding himself forc'd to admire and follow so great an example of Humility, cry's out, addressing himself to God in these words, in which we all ought to address our selves to him: * *Thou hast overcome O Lord, thou hast overcome my Pride, lo, I voluntarily put on again thy Chains, receive me for thy Slave.*

Saint Bernard's thoughts upon this subject, are admirable, the Son of God, says he, consider'd, that two sorts of Creatures, who had been Created capable of Eternal happiness, had destroy'd themselves by having a mind to be like him. God no sooner Created the Angels but Lucifer wou'd be equal to him. † *I will ascend,* says he, *into Heaven, I will exalt my Throne above the Stars of God, I will Sit also upon the Mount of the Congregation, on the side of the North. I will ascend above the height of the Clouds, and I will be like the most High.* At the same time he draws in several others into his Party, but God throws 'em down head-long into Hell.

* *Thou shalt be thrown down to Hell,* says he to him, *to the bottom of the Pit;* and so of Angels of Light, as they were, they become Spirits of Darkness. After this, God Creates Man; and the Infernal Serpent having forthwith convey'd his Poison into him by these words. † *Ye shall be as Gods, knowing good and evil;* Man receives this proposal greedily, breaks the Commandments of his God; and for endeavouring to make himself like unto him, becomes like the Devil. Elifens's Servant having run after Naaman the Leaper, to take the Presents of him, which his Master had refus'd:

* *You wou'd have had share of the Riches of Naaman,* says the Prophet to him, *you shall also have share of his Leprosie, even you and all your Posterity.* God's Judgment against Man is like this, thou wou'dst O Man partake of the Riches of the Devil, that is to say, of his Pride; thou shalt also partake of his Punishment. So that you see Man is lost as well as the Devil, and made like unto him, because he endeavour'd to become like unto God. What will the Son of God do now?

† *I see,* says he, *how jealous my Father is of my honor;* I see that he destroys his most noble Creatures on my account: The destruction of the Angels proceeds from their endeavouring to be like me, Man lost himself also for the same reason, every one insinuates envies me, and wou'd be like me. * *Well then, I will appear to Men under so mean a figure, that whoever shall envy me, and aspire to be like me, shall thereby find his Salvation.* O the excessive greatness of the infinite mercy.

and

* vicisti, Domine, vicisti superbiam meam. Ecce de manus in vincula tua: accipe servum sempiternum.
Ab. Guerricus in calce oper. S. Bern. Bern. serm. 1. Ide Adventu.

† In celum conscendam, super astra Dei exaltabo solium meum, sedebam in monte testamenti, in lateribus Aquilonis. Ascendam super altitudinem nubium, & similis ero Altissimo.
Isai. 14. 13.

* Veritatem ad infernum detrahitis in profundum lacus.
Ibid. ver. 15.
† Eritis sicut dii, scientes bonum & malum.
Gen. 3. 5.

* Nunc igitur accepisti argentum, & accepisti vestes, sed & lepra Naaman adhæbit tibi, & semini tuo.
4 Reg. 5. 26. 27.

† Ecce, inquit, occasione mei Pater creaturas suas amittit.

* Ecce venio, & talem eis exhibeo meipsum, ut quisquis gestierit imitari, fiat ei simulatio ista in bonum.
Bern. ubi sup.

and goodness of a God, who has been pleas'd to come down from Heaven, and make himself Man, to satisfy that inclination and passion we had to be like him; wherefore, from henceforth we may flatter our selves with the hopes to be like him; not falsely, by a Pride that is punishable; but truly, by a Pious Humility.

The same Saint Bernard interpreting these words, † *Unto us a Child is born*; * *Let us endeavour all we can, say's he, to become like this little Child, let us learn of him who is meek and humble of heart, so that it may not be to no purpose for us, that the great God is become a little Child: For if you become not as this little Child, you shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.*

† Parvulus natus est nobis, *Iſai.* 9. 6.
* Studeamus effici sicut iste parvulus: Discamus ab eo, quia mitis est, & humilis corde: ne magnus Deus sine causa factus sit homo parvulus. Quia nisi efficiamini sicut parvulus iste non intrabitis in regnum celorum.
Idem Hom. 3. sup. Missus est.

CHAP. XIX.

Of some Reflections, which may serve to make us Humble.

FROM the beginning of this Treatise we have laid down several Reasons which may excite us to Humility; we have sayd, that 'tis the root and foundation of all other Virtues; that 'tis the way to acquire and preserve 'em; that we shall possess 'em all, provided we have Humility; and several other such like motives as these. But that we may not seem to infer nothing, but from such Spiritual considerations as these; 'twill not be amiss to touch here, upon some more palpable reasons, and more proportionable to our weakness. That thus being convinc'd, not only by Spiritual principles, but also by the light of natural reason, we shall be induc'd more zealously to despise the glory and honor of the World; and to follow the paths of Humility. But 'tis so difficult a thing to do this; that we have need to use all possible means and helps in order thereunto.

Let us begin with examining carefully what really is the Opinion of Men, which do's so disquiet and trouble us; let us look upon, and consider it on every side, so that being able to make a sound and solid judgment thereof, we may be encourag'd

Sen. de Sum.
Bon.

† Nec malam
conscientiam
sanat præconi-
um laudantis.
nec bonam
vulnerat op-
probrium con-
vitiantis. Sen-
ti de Augustino
quidquid libet.
sola me in o-
culis Dei con-
scientia non
accuset.
Lib. 3. contr.
Ep. Peltian.
Lomat. & Lib.
contr. secund.
Manich.

* Bonorum
gloria in con-
scientiis co-
rum non in
ore hominum.
De Imit. Chri-
sti. li. 2. ca. 6.
† Non enim
qui seipsum
commendat,
ille probatus
est: sed quem
Deus com-
mendat.
2 Cor. 10. 18.
* Est superbia
non magnitu-
do, sed tumor:
quod autem
tumor, videtur
magnum, sed
non est sanum.
Serm. 16. de
Temp.

† Laudant eam
in portis opera
ejus.
Prov. 31. 31.

lib. 4. cap. 38.

to despise it, and remain no longer in so great an Error. There are several things, says *Seneca*, which we look upon as great, not because they are really so; but because our weakness makes 'em appear so to us; like the burthens of Ants, which are indeed very heavy in respect of their little Bodies, but are nevertheless in themselves very light. And thus it is, as to the opinion and esteem of the World. But that it may not be so, let me ask you whether the good or bad Opinion which Men have of you, makes you in reality either better or worse?

† No certainly, says Saint *Austin*, for neither praise cures a sick Conscience, nor do's calumny hurt a sound one. Wherefore believe of *Austine* whatever you please, provided that his Conscience reproaches him with nothing in the sight of God; he is satisfi'd. This is indeed the only thing of importance; all the rest is but vanity; because it neither gives nor takes away any thing. * Praise, says the Author of the Imitation of Jesus, adds nothing to the Merit of a good Man, but a good Conscience. No body is more than what he appears in God's sight: † For 'tis not he, say's the Apostle, that esteems himself, who is approv'd, but whom God esteems's.

Saint *Austin* makes an excellent comparison upon this occasion. * Pride, says he, is no true greatness; 'tis only a swelling; and as what is swell'd, seems great on the outside, but is not sound within; so they whom the praise of Men makes proud, seem great, but indeed are not so. The Pride which that praise causes, is no true greatness, 'tis a dangerous swelling. There are, continues he, Sick People who appear fat, and to be in wondrous good plight; but 'tis no true fat, 'tis a swelling and a kind of Dropsie. Thus it is as to the Opinion of Men, it may swell and puff us up; but cannot make us great. Now if this be true, why are we always like Camellions, gaping to suck in the Air to blow or blote us up? For as 'tis far better to be Well and seem Sick, than to be Sick and seem Well; so 'tis also better to be a Good Man, and pass for an Ill one; than to be an Ill Man, and pass for a Good one. What will you get by being thought Virtuous, if you are not really so? Saint *Hierom* upon these words of the Proverbs, † And let his Actions praise him in the Gates, say's, not the vain praises of Men, but your Actions shall commend and witness for you, when you are to appear in Judgment before God.

Saint *Gregory* tell's us, that there liv'd in a Convent of *Iconia* a Religious Man, who was in Reputation of Sanctity, and who above all was reckon'd of exemplary Abstinence and Mortification.

Mortification. Being upon his Death-bed he got all the Religious to be call'd in; who were very much overjoy'd hereupon, hoping to hear something from him which might serve for their Instruction. But he being seiz'd with terror, was tormented in Conscience, and finding himself inwardly forc'd to declare the state he was in, told 'em, that his whole Life had been nothing but disguise and hypocrisie; that when he was believ'd to Fast and Abstain most, he made good Chear in a corner, and that in punishment thereof, he was now deliver'd up to a horrible Dragon, whose Tail was already twisted about his Legs. Behold there it is, cry'd he out on a sudden, now it puts it's Head in my Mouth to snatch and carry away my Soul; and having ended these words, he expir'd, to the great astonishment of all. What advantage had that miserable Wretch gain'd, by passing for a Saint?

Saint *Athanasius* compares those who seek after the approbation and praise of Men, to Children who run after Butterflies; others compare 'em to Spiders, and applying to them these words of *Isay*, † *They have woven Spiders Webs*, say, that as those Insects spend the very substance of their bowels in making Webs to catch Flies, so the proud spend themselves in working continually, to acquire a little light esteem in the World. We Read in the Life of Saint *Xaverius*, that he always shew'd a particular aversion, to the esteem of the World; because, says he, it produces great evil, and hinders great good. And this truth had made so great an impression in his mind, that he sometimes groan'd, and cry'd out, *O Worldly esteem! What mischief hast thou done? What mischief dost thou do? And what mischief wilt thou yet do?*

Athanas. hom. de similitud. cap. 27.

† *Telas araneæ texunt.*
Isai. 59. 5.

Lib. 6. cap. 8. ejus vita.

C H A P. XX.

Of some other Human Considerations which may help to make us humble.

† Non plus sapere quam oportet sapere, sed sapere ad sobrietatem. Rom. 12. 3.

* Stultus factualoquetur. Isai. 32. 6.

† In cælum coniscendam, super astra Dei exaltabo solium meum, sedebō in monte testamenti, in lateribus Aquilonis. Ascendam super altitudinem nubium, & similis ero Altissimo.

Isai. 14. 13. 14. * Invenit quasi nidum, manus mea fortitudinem populi: & sicut colliguntur ova, quæ derelicta sunt, sic universam terram ego congregavi: & non fuit qui moveret pennam, & aperiret os, & ganniret. Isai. 10. 14.

S AINT Chrysostom explaining these words of the Apostle, † *That one is not to think of himself more highly, than he ought, but to think soberly and modestly*, enlarges himself, to prove that a proud Man is not only wicked but a fool, citing thereupon that passage of *Isay*, * *The fool shall utter foolish things*. Wherefore, says he, you shall know him to be a fool, by the follies he shall utter; take notice therefore what extravagant things Pride makes us speak. It made the first proud Creature deliver himself thus. † *I will ascend to Heaven, I will exalt my Throne above the Stars of God, I will sit also upon the Mount of the Congregation, on the side of the North, I will ascend above the height of the Clouds, I will be like the most High*. What more extravagant expressions can be imagin'd? Now hear with what arrogance another boasts to have subjected the whole Earth unto himself. * *My hands*, says he, *has found the strength of the People as a Nest, and I have taken all the Nations of the Earth, as one who takes Eggs that are left therein, and there was none that mov'd a Wing, or that piep'd or complain'd*. Can there be any thing, continues the same Saint Chrysostom, more extravagant than this? He relates also two other examples of such like Discourses, wherein the proud shew so much folly, that you may well conclude, that they really talk like Men who have quite lost their Senses. We see moreover, that as fools make us laugh sometimes by their extravagant words, so the Proud do often the same by their vain Discourses; by their affected Gestures; by their set and haughty Looks; by the study'd gravity of their Gate; by the excessive desire they shew to be esteem'd in all things; and by the great Opinion, they have of themselves, and of all that comes from 'em. This sort of folly is even worse and

more

more shameful, say's Saint *Chrysostom*, than the other; because there is Sin in the one, and none in the other; and thence proceeds another difference which is made between these two; which is, that real fools are pitt'y'd, whereas proud fools do rather move us to laughter and scorn, than to compassion.

'Tis therefore very true, that the proud are fools; and 'tis also true, that we deal with 'em as we usually do with fools; for whatever extravagance a fool utters, we seem to agree to it all, to be at quiet with him; and therefore we will not go about to contradict him; so for the same reason, we are still very cautious not to contradict a vain and proud Man.

Now this disease and folly of Pride, do's so generally reign among Men, that you can hardly speak to them without flattering, and telling 'em things which are false, and which you your self believe to be so. They are so pleas'd to be esteem'd and approv'd of in every thing, that there's no surer way to gain their good will, than to praise 'em; and this is one of the vanities which *Salomon* observes in the World when he say's:

** I saw the wicked buried, who when they were yet alive were in a holy station, and were prais'd in the City, as just Men, but this also is vanity.*

And indeed what vanity and folly is greater, than to praise a Man for a good quality, which 'tis very well known that he has not; nay, oftentimes for what is ill, and what you also know to be so? But the best of it is, that others are convinc'd of the truth, tho' some venture to mince it a little, to please the proud Man; and make what shift they can to avoid a downright lye, whilst they praise him for a thing which they believe not to be praise-worthy. Thus is he treated like a fool, who must be humor'd after this manner: 'Tis known where his disease lies, and that 'tis the greatest pleasure which can be done him, when he has Preach'd for example, or perform'd any other publick exercise, to tell him, that he came off very well, and that every body was wonderfully satisfi'd with him; 'tis nevertheless only to please him, that he is thus dealt withal; or because we have perhaps need of him, and have a mind this way to gain him; but at the bottom, all this serves only to make a greater fool of him; for false praises, keeping him still in his mistake of having done well, cause him to relapse into the self-same faults.

We are very cautious now a days even in speaking what we think; † *Because truth is become odious, and begets Enemies;*

and

Chryf. Hom. 29. ad pop. Anti-och.

** Vidi impios sepultos, qui etiam cum adhuc viverent, in loco sancto erant, & laudabantur in civitate quasi iustorum operum, sed & hoc vanitas est. Eccles. 8. 10.*

† Veritas odium parit.

and because we know that the proud, when they have any charitable advice giv'n 'em, in order to their amendment, shew themselves like Madmen, who spit in the faces of those who bring 'em Physick to cure 'em. Since no body therefore cares to draw ill Will and Quarrels upon himself, we say nothing which may displease him to whom we speak: Nay, we dissemble so well before him, that he having a very good Opinion of himself, he takes the sham, and all false praises that you give him to be true: By this may be seen what folly it is, to reckon upon the praises of Men, since we know they are only Compliments, that is to say, dissimulation and flattery, if not downright lyes.

But let us farther observe, that the proud, as Saint Chrysostom say's, are hated both by God and Man; they are hated by God, according to the saying of the Wise Man, † *Every proud Man is an Abomination to the Lord*, and among the seven things which God hates, he puts in the first place * *A proud look*. The proud too are hated by Men according to these words: † *Pride makes it self be hated both by God and Man, and the heart of the Proud is like the breath of those whose Lungs are corrupted*; no body can come near 'em, or stay with 'em. And certainly the World is even with 'em for their Pride; because People cross and mortifie them in the most sensible part, and in things which are most opposite to what they desire. They seek to be esteem'd and respected by every one; and every one look's upon 'em as fools; they would be lov'd and sought after by every one, and every one hates and thins 'em: They who are above 'em, use 'em thus, because they endeavour to make themselves their equals; their equals also treat 'em after this manner, because they would set themselves above 'em; and their inferiors do the same because they look for that respect from 'em, which they do not at all owe them; nay, there's not so much as a Servant of theirs, but hates 'em, and finds 'em insupportable. In fine, wheresoever we meet Pride, we hate and condemn it. On the other side, the Humble are esteem'd, belov'd and carest'd by all: For as the goodness, innocence and simplicity of little Children, makes every body love 'em, so the same qualities make every body love the Humble; for their easie, sincere and modest way of behaviour, gains the hearts of all; 'tis a Load-stone which attracts affections, and a charm which makes 'em be belov'd by every one.

† Abominatio
Domini est
omnis arro-
gans.

Prov. 16. 5.
* Oculos sub-
limes.

Prov. 6. 17.
† Odibilis co-
ram Deo est &
hominibus su-
perbia. Et sicut
eructant piz-
cordia fortien-
tium, sic & cor
superborum.
Eccl. 10. 7.
☛ 11. 32.

To make an end of convincing you, that 'tis a folly to seek the esteem and approbation of Men, Saint Bernard lay's down a most powerful argument. Either, say's he, 'twas a folly for the Son of God, to have humbl'd and made himself an Object of reproach and contempt as he did; or 'tis a great folly in us, to have so much Passion for the esteem of the World; but 'twas not a folly in the Son of God, tho' it seem'd so to the World, according to the words of Saint Paul: *† But we Preach CHRIST Crucifi'd, to the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Gentils foolishness; but to them who are call'd, both Jews and Gentils, we Preach CHRIST the Power and Wisdom of God.* If then Humility and lowliness was Wisdom in the Son of God; vanity and pride must be folly in us, and we are indeed fools, to esteem so much the glory and reputation of the World.

† Nos autem
prædicamus
Christum Cru-
cifixum, Ju-
dæis quidem
scandalum,
gentibus au-
tem stultitiam;
ipsis autem
vocatīs Judæis
atque Græcis,
Christum Dei
virtutem &
Dei sapienti-
am.
1 Cor. 1. 23. &
24.

C H A P. XXI.

That a most sure way to gain the esteem of Men, is to become Virtuous and Humble.

IF notwithstanding all we have sayd, you cannot yet help loving so vain a thing, as the Opinion of the World is, and the valuing a little smoke; if to defend your own sentiment therein, you say, 'tis a fine thing to be esteem'd of Men, that 'tis of importance for the Edification of your Neighbour, and for several other things; and that the Wise Man himself Counsels you, * *To have a care of your Reputation.* Well then do so in God's Name; I'll grant that you ought to have a care of it, and to endeavour to get an esteem in the World; but give me leave to tell you at the same time, that you deceive your self if you hope to succeed therein, for by the way you take, you'll never obtain what you aim at. The infallible way to be esteem'd by Men, say's Saint Chrysostom, is that of Virtue and Humility: Endeavour to be a good Religious Man, labor to be, and to shew your self the humblest of all, in the way you are in, and in all occasions which

* Curam habe
de bono no-
mine.
Ecclef. 41. 15.

D. Chrysost.
Hom. 29. ad
Popu.

which shall offer themselves, and so you'll gain the esteem of every one, for herein consists the honor of a Religious Man, who has truly renounc'd the World. A plain and course Habit, and a mean Office which throu' Humility he takes upon him, become him as well as rich and fine Cloath's do Worldly People. Nay, he wou'd otherwise be laugh'd at as one, † *Who had begun to build, without being able to finish*; nay, 'twou'd be a shame to him to aim at the esteem and praise of Men; because to fall again into the sentiments of the World, which a Man had quitted at his Entrance into a Religious Life, is a kind of returning back to the World.

Would you see clearly what a shame it is to him, who professes to aspire after Perfection, to desire to be esteem'd of Men? Let but any body know this your design, and you'll find how asham'd you'll be as soon as ever 'tis perceiv'd. We have a very good example hereof in the Gospel. The Apostles walking once at a little distance from our Saviour, so that they thought he cou'd not hear 'em, fell a disputing, * *Who was the greatest amongst 'em*, and when they came home, he ask'd 'em, † *What was the subject of their Discourse upon the way*, but they were so asham'd to find their Ambition and Vanity discover'd, that they all held their peace; *Because*, says the Gospel, *they had disputed who was the greatest amongst 'em*. Then Jesus calling 'em to him, sayd, * *Those who Command others in the World are look'd upon as the greatest*, † *But 'tis not so with you: For he that wou'd be great among you, let him be as the least, and let him who wou'd be chief, be your Servant*. * *He who wou'd be first let him be last and become the Servant of all*. To be great in the House of God, and in a Religious Life, is to be humble, and to make one's self little; and to give place to all, is to raise ones self above all; in this kind of honor a Religious Life consists; for that honor which you seek, is no true honor at all, but rather a subject of confusion; and instead of acquiring thereby the esteem of the World, you make your self despicable; because you pass for a proud Man; which is the worst Opinion can be had of you. You cannot injure your Reputation more, than when you give occasion to make others believe, that you wou'd fain be honor'd and esteem'd; or when you stand much upon your honor, and are touch'd in what relates thereunto.

Upon this account it is, that Saint John Climacus says, that vanity has been often the cause of shame and confusion to the Proud; because it makes 'em do things which discover their

† Hic homo
cepit ædifi-
care, & non
potuit con-
summare.
Luc. 14. 30.

* Quis eorum
major esset.
Marc. 9. 33.

† Quid in viâ
tractabatis?
At illi tace-
bant: siqui-
dem in viâ dis-
putaverant,
quis eorum
major esset.
Marc. 9. 32, 33.

* Principes
gentium do-
minantur eo-
rum: & qui
maiores sunt,
potestatem ex-
ercunt in eos.
Matth. 20. 25.

† Vos autem
non sic: sed
qui major est
in vobis, fiat
sicut minor,
& qui præce-
sor est, sicut
ministrator.
Luc. 22. 26.

* Si quis vult
primus esse, e-
rit omnium
novissimus, &
omnium mini-
ster.
Marc. 9. 34.

De Clim. grad.
22. art. 24.

their Pride, and bring 'em into contempt. They are not aware, that all that they say and do, to make themselves esteem'd and respected, serves many times, only to lay open the vanity of their Pride, and to render 'em despicable by the very means, whereby they pretend to be esteem'd.

Pride, says Saint *Bonaventure*, is a blindness of our Understanding, which is never greater in us, than when we perceive it least; and that is the reason, that a vain Man is mov'd sometimes, to say and do things, which he wou'd be sure never to say or do, if he did but never so little reflect thereupon, nay tho he shou'd consider therein only the esteem of the World, without any regard either to God or his own Duty. How often happens it, that a Man finding himself disquieted; because he has not been regarded; or because some other has been prefer'd before him; and imagining that he has wrong done him, and that his honor is touch'd thereby, and that justice will be done him upon his complaint; he thereupon abandons himself to make a discovery of his whole heart? The effect of all which is, that this very Person is hereupon less esteem'd than he was before; because he is now look'd upon as a Proud Man, since he stands so much upon Punctilios; which is very odious, especially in a Religious Person: Whereas had he lightly pass'd over the business, and had left it to the Superiors liberty, to do what they thought fit, he wou'd no less have gain'd their esteem, than the friendship of every body else.

So that if we consult only prudence, common sense, and even Worldly principles, without any regard to those of a Spiritual Life; the surest way to make ones self be belov'd and esteem'd by Men, is to become really Virtuous and Humble. *Agessilaus*, one of the Wisest Kings of *Sparta*, being ask'd by *Socrates*, how he might get esteem in the World, answer'd, † *You'll gain it by endeavouring to be such a one indeed, as you wou'd be thought to be.* And another time when some body else ask'd him the same Question; *You'll be esteem'd*, sayd he, *if you say only good things, and do nothing else but what is also good.* There's a story also, that a great Philosopher had a Friend, who was us'd in all places to speak well of him, and that this Friend took once occasion to tell him, how much he was oblig'd to him; because in whatever Company he went, he prais'd still his Virtue and Merit; the Philosopher answer'd, that he sufficiently requited him, by living so, that in the praises he gave him, he cou'd not be tax'd of having sayd any thing that was false.

† *Obrinebis, si talis esse studeas, qualis haberi vis.*
Cicer. 2. Offic.

But all this while 'tis not my intent, that you shou'd pursue Virtue, with the prospect only of acquiring esteem among Men; for that wou'd be to pervert and destroy the best thing of the World, by a Motive of Pride. What I say, is, that if you endeavour to be truly Humble, you'll undoubtedly gain esteem, even tho' you seek it not; and the more you avoid being esteem'd, and desire to be despis'd, the greater account will be made of you; for glory is like a shadow, which follows always when you go from it, and is never to be catch'd when you run after it; wherefore Saint Hierom speaking of Saint Paula, says, † *That in skuning glory, she deserv'd glory, which always follows Virtue, as the shadow follows the Body, and flying from those that seek it, seeks those that despise it.*

JESUS CHRIST himself has taught us this way in the Gospel, when speaking to the Pharisees, who chose always the best places in the Assemblies: * *When thou shalt be invited to a Wedding, says he, sit not down in the first place, lest a more considerable Man than thy self be also invited, and that he who invited both of you, comes and says to thee, give this Man place, and thou findest thy self put down with shame to a lower place; but when thou art invited, go and sit down in the lowest place, that when he comes that invited thee, he may say unto thee, friend go up higher; then shalt thou be respected in the presence of all about thee.* The Holy Ghost teaches us the same thing by the Mouth of the Wise Man, when he says, † *Put not thy self too forward before the King, and stand not in the place of great Men, for 'tis far better, that it shou'd be sayd unto thee; come up hither, than that thou shou'dst be put down lower in the Prince's presence.*

To conclude, * *Whoever exalts himself shall be humbld, say's the Saviour of the World, and whosoever humbles himself shall be exalted;* so that you see, that he who is humble and stoop's to others, becomes thereby more esteem'd, not only before God, but Men also; and on the contrary, that he who is proud, and will have the preference every where, exposes himself to contempt and affronts, even by behaving himself after this manner. † *O holy Humility, crys out the great Saint Austin, how different art thou from Pride? 'Twas Pride my Brethren, which threw down Lucifer from Heaven, and 'twas Humility that made the Son of God descend from thence, to take our Flesh upon him; 'twas Pride that drove Adam from Paradise, and Humility that gave the good Thief a place there. Pride caus'd the confusion of Tongues, and Humility reunited*

People

† Fugiendo gloriam, gloriam merebatur, quæ virtutem quasi umbra sequitur, & appetitores sui desertens, appetit contemptores.

D. Hier. in Vit. S. Paula sub Init.

* Cum invitatus fuisset ad nuptias, non discumbas in primo loco, &c. Sed vade, recumbe in novissimo loco: ut cum venerit, qui te invitavit, dicat tibi: Amice, ascende superius: tunc erit tibi gloria coram simul discumbentibus.

Luc. 14. 8. 9. 10.

† Ne gloriosus appareas coram rege, & in loco magnorum ne steteris. Melius est enim ut dicatur tibi: Ascende huc, quam ut humiliteris coram Principe.

Prov. 25. 6. 7.

* Omnis qui se exaltat, humiliabitur, & qui se humiliat, exaltabitur.

Luc. 14. 11.

† O sancta humilitas, quam dissimilis es superbie! Ipsa superbia, fratres mei, Luciferum de caelo deiecit: sed humilitas Dei filium incarnavit. Ipsa superbia Adam de Paradiso expulit, sed hu-

People of different Languages. Pride transform'd Nebuchodonosor into a Beast, and Humility rais'd Joseph not only above all the Egyptians, but even above all the Children of Jacob. Pride caus'd the destruction of Pharaoh; and Humility exalted Moyses.

vit dispersas. Superbia Nabuchodonosor in bestiam transmutavit, sed humilitas Joseph Principem constituit. Superbia Pharaonem submersit, sed humilitas Moysen exaltavit. Aug. Serm. 12. ad frat. in eremo.

militas latro- nem in Paradi- sum introduxit. Superbia gigantum lin- guas divisit, sed humilitas cun- ctas congrega- vit.

CHAP. XXII.

That Humility is the means to acquire inward peace of mind, and that we cannot have peace without Humility.

* **L**EARN of me, for I am meek and humble in Heart, and you shall find rest to your Souls. The peace of mind, which Saint Paul reckons among the fruits of the Holy Ghost, is so desirable and precious a blessing, that one of the strongest reasons to make us humble, and despise the esteem of the World, is that which our Saviour proposes to us in the fore-mention'd words; whereby he teaches us, that Humility is the only means to acquire inward peace. But as every thing becomes more intelligible, by comparing it with it's contrary, so let us see in the first place, with what trouble and restlessness the Hearts of the Proud are tormented, whereby we may the better comprehend the peace and tranquillity which the Humble enjoy. The Holy Scripture is full of passages which shew us, that the wicked have no peace; † *There's no peace*, says the Lord, *unto the wicked.* * *They sayd peace, peace, but there was no peace.* † *They find nothing but trouble of mind and unhappiness wheresoever they go, and they know not what peace is.* Their Conscience is always at War with 'em, and even their very peace, if they have any. * *Is full of bitterness*: But the Proud are above all under a continual disquiet; and Saint Austin gives us a reason for it, when he say's, † *That Pride never go's without envy, and that 'tis by these two things, that the Devil is what he is, a Devil*; so that we may judge what

* *Discite à me quia mitis sum, & humilis corde: & invenietis requiem animabus vestris. Matth. 11. 29.*

† *Non est pax impiis.*

Isai. 48. 22.

* *Pax, pax, & non erat pax.*

Jerem. 6. 14.

† *Constitutio & infelicitas in viis eorum: & viam pacis non cognoverunt.*

Isai. 11. 3.

* *In pace amaritudo amarissima.*

Isai. 58. 17.

† *Quibus duobus malis, hoc est, superbia & invidia, diabolus, diabolus est.*

Aug. lib. de S. Virg. c. 55.

what effects they produce in Man, since they make the Devil to be what he is.

'Tis impossible for a Man, who is possess'd with Pride and Envy, it's inseparable Companion, and who seek's in vain to be honor'd by every body; not to have a Heart full of gall and bitterness, and not to be in a continual agitation of mind; for what can more sensibly disturb a Proud Man, than to see himself despis'd, and others preferr'd before him.

The Holy Scripture gives us an admirable description of the nature and effects of Pride, in the Person of *Haman*; he was the great Favorite of King *Assuerus*; and by him was made Rich, and plac'd above all the Grandees of the Kingdom; he was respected by all, and nothing seem'd wanting to his wishes; yet nevertheless, he was so disquieted, because *Mardecai* the Jew, who sat usually at the Kings Gate, did not rise up and shew him respect when he pass'd by, that he could enjoy no content upon that account, as he confess'd one Day to his Wife and Friends; for after having shew'd the happy condition of his Fortune, the high Place he was in, and the favors he receiv'd every Day from the King; * *Yet all this, I reckon as nothing*, sayd he, *so long as I see Mardecai sitting at the King's Gate*. What trouble and disquiet do's not this express, and what storms do's it not discover which Pride raises in the Breast of Man? According to the words of *Isay*, † *The wicked are as a troubl'd Sea which cannot rest*. So great a rage did he conceive against *Mardecai*; that thinking it too little to be reveng'd on him, he resolv'd to vent his spight against all the Jews; and so got an Edict of King *Assuerus* to put 'em all to Death; and his fury, in the mean time, permits him not to expect the Day appointed for it's Execution. Wherefore having caus'd a Gallows to be set up, to hang *Mardecai* upon, he went to the King to have him dispatch'd; but Divine Providence broke all his measures, cloath'd him with confusion, and brought upon his own head, the vengeance which he contriv'd against so Innocent a Man; for the King not able to Sleep that Night, order'd the Book of Records to be brought him, where all the remarkable things of his Reign were Written, and as they were Read before him, there was a place which shew'd, that *Mardecai* had discover'd a Plot, which had been made against his Royal Person; he then ask'd what Reward *Mardecai* had receiv'd for so considerable a Service, 'twas answer'd, none at all; then the King inquiring who waited without, he was told, *Haman*; whereupon he Commanded that

* Et cum hæc omnia habeam, nihil me habere puto, quamdiu video *Mardecaum* sedentem ante fores regias.
Ester. 5. 13.
† Impii quasi mare fervens quod quiescere non potest.
Isai. 57. 20.

that he shou'd be call'd in, and as soon as he saw him, he ask'd him; what shou'd be done to the Man whom the King wou'd honor? He then thinking that his Majesty wou'd honor no body but himself, answer'd, that he whom the King had a mind to honor, was to be cloath'd with his Royal Robes, and put upon the Horse which the King himself us'd to ride, and have the Crown put upon his Head, and that one of the greatest Nobles of the Kingdom, shou'd hold the Horse by the Bridle and go before him, proclaiming throu' the Streets. *Thus shall he be treated, whom the King pleases to honor.* Go then, sayd the King, take my Royal Robes, and treat *Mardecai* the Jew as you have sayd, who sits at the Gate of my Palace, and look that thou do not fail in the least circumstance thereof. What a Heart-breaking was this, to a Man puffed up with Pride? What more terrible Mortification cou'd be thought of? But he was bound to obey all to a rittle, and to compleat his punishment, he himself was hang'd a little while after, on the same Gallows he had prepar'd for *Mardecai*. This is what one gets by giving way to the motions of Pride and Vanity. And admire, I pray, the occasion which makes *Haman* so mad against poor *Mardecai*, 'tis because he bow's not to him when he passes by. Any little trifle, is enough to trouble the rest of a Proud Man; and to make him pine away continually with vexation. We have great examples thereof in the People of the World, especially those who are in high Posts; whatever touches their Pride, pricks 'em to the quick; the thrust of a Sword wou'd be less sensible to them: And because there's no favor or preferment which can defend 'em from those kind of affronts, therefore they live in a continual bitterness of Heart, and in great agitation and disquiet of mind.

As much will happen even to a Religious Man, if he be Proud; for he'll be sure to take notice, if less esteem is made of him than of others; if such a one is chosen for such or such a business, whilst he is not thought of; and things of that nature will breed, it may be, more spight and disquiet in him than even those of the World feel, when their Vanity is touch'd. How many Religious have thus run the hazard of losing their Vocation? How many have quitted their Convent, thinking they cou'd no longer stay there without exposing themselves to an affront, by not being look'd upon with any consideration? Nay, how many have hereby run the hazard even of their Salvation; for Humility is not only necessary for
Perfection,

* Nisi effici-
mini sicut par-
vuli, non in-
trabitis in reg-
num celo-
rum.

Matth. 18. 3.

Perfection, but very often for Salvation. * *If you become not as one of these little Children, you shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.* With what reason then was Saint Xaverius us'd to cry out? *O esteem of the World, what evil hast thou done, what evil do'st thou do, and what evil wilt thou yet do?*

This may serve to convince us of the truth of one thing, of which we have but too great experience, and that is, that tho' we may be sometimes Sick of Melancholy by an overflowing of the Gall; yet nevertheless that which makes us often fall into this condition, is neither an overflowing of the Gall nor any indisposition of the Body. 'Tis only a motion of Pride, which is a disease of the mind. You are Melancholy, because you believe, that People don't think of, nor respect you. You are Melancholy because you came off ill upon an occasion, and where you reckon'd to have got honor, have met with confusion. That Sermon, that publick Exercise was not applauded as you expected; nay on the contrary, you think you have thereby lost your credit, and that is your real disease. You are Melancholy only throu' Pride; just as you rave and are disquieted throu' Pride, when you are to do some action, upon which your honor depends, and of which you doubt the success. In fine, when a Proud Man is Sick of Melancholy, you must seek for the cause thereof only in his Pride. But it is not so with the Humble of Heart: For as he seeks not the esteem of the World, and is contented with the last place every where; so is he free from all sort of disquiet, and enjoys an intire peace, which nothing can disturb; so that tho' we shou'd not regard our Spiritual welfare, and what tends to Perfection, but consider only our own Interest, and the pleasure of having peace within; that alone ought to suffice to make us Humble; for to live in a perfect tranquillity of mind, is properly to live; and to live in perpetual disquiet, is every moment to die.

Confess. lib. 6.
cap. 7.

Saint *Austin* to this purpose relates a passage of himself, whereby, he says, God thew'd him the blindness and misery he was under; I was, says he, to make a Speech in praise of the Emperor, in which I had mingl'd a great many flatteries, and false praises. But the folly and vanity of the World are so great, that these very praises wou'd not have fail'd to have pleas'd, even those very Persons who knew them to be false. Upon a certain Day therefore when my Head was full of these thoughts, and the uncertainty of coming off well, tormented

me

me to that height, that I was even in a kind of burning Feaver; it happen'd, that passing by a Street in *Milan*, I saw a poor Fellow, who was somewhat Tipsey; looking upon him, I sigh'd, and turning to some of my Friends saying; O! how highly I blame our folly; for in a Profession like ours, where we bend continually under the weight of our Miseries, and where the Goads of our Ambition, force us on still to increase our Burden, we have no other end in all the pains we take, but the getting of a sure and certain joy, which nevertheless we shall never perhaps arrive to, and which this poor Man has compass'd, so that what he has already purchas'd with a little Money he begg'd, I mean a little temporal happiness, we, it may be, seek in vain with great care and labor. 'Tis true, add's that great Saint, his joy was no true joy; but that which I drove at by my Ambition, was yet more false than his, and after all, he was jovial, and I was sad, he was in great peace and tranquillity, and I in deadly disquiet. Now if any one had ask'd me, whether I had rather be joyful or disquieted; I had, doubtless answer'd, I had rather be joyful; and if I had been ask'd yet further, whether I had rather have been as that poor Man was, or as I was my self, I had certainly chosen to have remain'd as I was, tho' I was tormented with a thousand Anxieties. Yet I shou'd nevertheless have made that choice without any ground; for, what reason had I to prefer my self before him? Was it because I was more Learn'd than he? But my Learning caus'd no joy in me; and I thereby sought only to please Men and not to instruct 'em. Without doubt, continues he, that poor Creature was happier than I; not only because he was merry, and I was vex'd with a multitude of cares; but because, the means he us'd, to have wherewithal to buy a little Wine, which had made him so merry, were innocent; whereas I sought to get a vain Reputation by pronouncing Lies.

C H A P. XXIII.

*Of another sort and more efficacious way to
acquire the Virtue of Humility; which
is, to Practice it.*

*Erilis sicut
Dii.
Gen. 3. 5.*

OF the first way or means which is usually propos'd to acquire this Virtue, which consist's in the searching all Divine and Human reasons, which may bring us to it, we have already spoken: But the presumptuous hope which our first Parents conceiv'd, *To be as Gods*, has so deeply rooted Pride in our hearts, that reason alone is not able to destroy it.

In this we are always like those who are naturally fearful; whatever reasons you may give 'em to the contrary, to persuade 'em there's no cause for their fear, they answer, that they see very well, that it is so, and that they wou'd fain take Heart, but that they cannot. I agree with you, cry some, that all you say of the esteem and opinion of the World is very true, and I am thoro'ly convinc'd, that it is only Wind and Smoke, but nevertheless I cannot overcome my self so far, as to slight it; I wou'd fain do it, but I know not how it happens, for whether I will or no, it carries me away and very much disquiets me.

Now just as when we wou'd cure a body of fear, and reason is not sufficient to give him courage, we make him come up close, and touch the things which cause his apprehension; and advise him to go alone in the dark, that he may be convinc'd by his own experience, that what fright's him is only an effect of his troubl'd imagination. So, wholly to cure and disabuse a Man of the impressions which he has of the Opinion of the World, 'tis not enough, say the Holy Fathers, to represent the vanity of it, by solid and convincing reasons, but you must make him Practice Humility, which is the most effectual way we can use to acquire it.

The

Moral Virtues, says Saint Basil, are not to be acquir'd any more than Arts and Sciences, but by Exercise and Practice. To be a good Artist, a good Musician, a good Orator and a good Philosopher; you must exercise your self often in the Actions proper to each of these Professions; because there's no good success to be had, but by exercise thereof; so to acquire Humility and other Moral Virtues, you must Practice the Acts belonging to them, and 'tis only this way that you must get a habit thereof.

Now if any one say's, that Reason and Discourse, join'd with the Instructions and Council of the Scripture, suffice to moderate and govern the motions of our Passions, † *He is deceiv'd*, says Saint Basil, *and do's like a Man who learns all his Life time how to build, or how to coyn Money, without ever actually doing either.* And sure it is, that he who employ's all his time in filling his Head with Rules and Precepts of any Art, without ever reducing 'em to Practice, will never be a good Artist; so 'tis certain, that Humility and other Virtues, will never be acquir'd, without an application to Practice 'em: * *For as those who hear the Law*, says Saint Paul, *are not just before God; but those who Practice it;* so 'tis to no purpose to give Ear to wholsome Instructions, if they are not reduc'd to Practice; for the Practice thereof, is better, than all the speculation in the World. 'Tis true, that all manner of Virtue, and whatever is good in us, must come to us from the Hand of God, and 'tis very certain we can do nothing of our selves; but 'tis true also, that the same God without whom we can do nothing, will have us also co-operate on our part.

Saint Austin upon these words of our Saviour, *If I therefore have wash'd your feet, I who am your Lord and Master, ye ought also to wash one another's feet;* say's, That what Jesus CHRIST wou'd teach us by washing his Apostles feet, is, that we must Practice Humility; 'Twas that, continues he, *O bless'd Peter, that thou understood'st not, when thou wou'd'st not suffer our Saviour to wash thy feet, but he promis'd, that thou shou'd'st understand it afterwards; and see how he teaches it thee; for I have giv'n thee an example,* says he, *that thou may'st do what I have done.* Since therefore we have learn'd Humility from the most high, as that great Doctor of the Church add's, *let us, who are but poor Creatures, praise what the most high has practis'd with such exceeding Humility.* Since the Sovereign and Omnipotent Lord

Tom. I I.

G g

In regul. bre-
vior. 168.

† Is similiter
facit, ut si quis
disceret ædifi-
care, nec un-
quam ædifica-
ret, & ex cu-
dere, & quæ
didicisset, ea in
actum nun-
quam educe-
ret.
Idem in reg. su-
per dispens. 7.

* Non enim
auditores legis
justi sunt apud
Deum, sed fa-
ctores legis ju-
stificabuntur.
Rom. 2. 13.

Aug. tract. 58.
sup. Joan. in
illud: Si ergo
ego lavi pedes
vestros Domi-
nus & Magi-
ster: & vos
debetis alter
alterius lavare
pedes.

Joan. 13. 14.
Hoc est, beate
Petre, quod tu
nesciebas,
quando fieri
non sinebas;
hoc tibi postea
sciendum pro-
misit, ecce ip-
sum est postea.
Exemplum e-
nim dedi vo-
bis, ut ege-
madmodum e-
go feci vobis,
ita & vos faci-
atis. Disci-
mus, fratres,
humilitatem
ab Excelso,
faciamus invi-
cem humiles,
quod humili-
ter fecit Ex-
cellus.

of all things, has humbl'd himself; since the Son of God has condescended so far as to wash his Disciples feet; has liv'd with a submission to all that his Mother and Saint Joseph commanded him; and subje&ted himself to the vilest and lowest services; let us learn from him to exercise our selves, after the same manner, in the exterior Actions of Humility, and hereby we shall acquire this Virtue in Perfection.

Saint Bernard is of the same Opinion, when he tell's us, that † *Humiliation is the way to Humility, as Patience is to Peace of Mind, and Study to Learning.* If you will then acquire Humility, continues he, put your self into the way of Humility, for if you cannot pass over a Humiliation, you cannot arrive at Humility. Saint Austin gives a very good reason, why the exterior Practice of Humility is so necessary to acquire true Humility of Heart; * 'Tis, says he, when you prostrate your self at the feet of your Brother, that humble thoughts are rais'd in your heart, or if those thoughts were there already, they are the more fortifi'd thereby. There's so great a connexion and relation between the outward and inward Man, and they have such a dependence one upon the other, that as soon as the Body humbles it self, humble thoughts are stir'd up in the Heart.

The submission which a Man shews to his Brother by serving him and kissing his feet; by the course Habit which he wear's, and the mean Office he perform's; have all, I know not what in 'em, which stir's up Humility in the Heart, or preserves or increases it, when 'tis already there.

'Tis that which Saint Dorotheus answer'd, when this Question was ask'd him; how is it possible, that the mind should acquire Humility, by means of a course Habit which the Body is cloath'd with? Is it not certain, says he, that the good or ill disposition of the Body, has an influence upon the mind; and do we not see, that when the Body is Well, the mind is otherwise dispos'd, than when it is Ill, and in a different disposition; when 'tis satisfi'd with Meat, than when kept low with hunger: So when a Man is mounted upon a well manag'd Horse, or seated upon a Throne; his mind is more elevated than when he rides upon a Hackney, or sits upon the ground; and when he has rich Cloaths, he is otherwise dispos'd, than when he is poorly clad.

The same observation is also made by Saint Basil; for says he, as rich Cloaths raise proud and presumptuous thoughts in Worldly People, so a plain and course Habit inspires the Servants of

† Humiliatio
Via est ad hu-
militatem, si-
cut patientia
ad pacem, ti-
cet l. etio ad
scientiam. Si
virtutem ap-
petis humili-
tatis, viam
non refugas
humiliationis.
De n. Epist. 87.
* Cum enim
ad pedes fra-
tris inclinatur
corpus, etiam
in corde ipso
vel excitatur,
vel si jam ine-
rat, confirma-
tur ipse hu-
militatis af-
fectus.
Aug. ubi sup.

D. Dorot. doct.
serm. 2. de
humil.

In Regul. fust.
de diss. 22.

of God and Religious Men, with such thoughts of Humility, and with a Contempt of themselves, as if it made 'em really despicable. And as Worldly People, adds the same Saint, love to set themselves off with rich Cloaths, to be thereby esteem'd, so the Servants of God, and the truly humble, are pleas'd with plain and coarse Cloathing, thereby to render themselves the more despicable in the Eyes of Men; and to preserve and fortifie true Humility within themselves. We Read in the Life of Saint *Xaverius*, that he was always very poorly clad, because he wou'd thereby keep himself humble, fearing, that thou'd he put on better Cloathing, he shou'd, as it often happens, be puffed up also with an Air of Pride and Presumption.

Another proof, that exterior Practice contribut's much to acquire Humility of Heart, or any other interior Virtue whatsoever, is this, that Practice makes far greater impressiion upon the Will, than a simple desire; because the Object, when 'tis present, moves us much more, than when 'tis absent; and that which we see, more than what we have by hear-say; thus what we set before our Eyes by Practice, has much more power to move our Will, than the desires we may frame there-
of upon the Idea we have of it. An actual affront for example, which you shall willingly put up, strengthens much more your Patience, than all those which you are able to suffer in your mind and thought. And one Day, in which you are actually employ'd in some mean Office, or put on an old torn Habit, will fortifie you more in Humility, than the spending many Days in framing desires and fancies of the self same things. We experience this every Day in the Mortifications which are in use among us. How passionately soever you may pretend to desire 'em, you'll find always a repugnance, the first time you put 'em in Practice; but the second time, you'll scarce have any difficulty at all. And for this reason the use of publick Penances and Mortifications, formerly Practis'd by many Saints, have been introduc'd into the SOCIETY of JESUS; as a remedy which having been once apply'd, makes a Man afterwards Master of himself, and of all other things which before seem'd very difficult. We may add to this, that according to the Opinion of all Divines, the interior act of any Virtue, is, commonly speaking, much more perfect and efficacious, when 'tis accompany'd with the exterior Practice; so that let the matter be taken as it will; exterior Acts of Humility are always a very great help to acquire the Virtue of Humility.

Now since the same means which serve to acquire a Virtue, serve also to preserve and increase it, we may truly say, that the exterior Practice of Humility, is no less necessary to preserve and increase Humility in us, than to acquire it; from whence it follows, that this exercise, as we have already said, speaking of Mortifications, is of great importance not only to Beginners, but even to those who are far advanc'd in Virtue, as well as to all persons in general.

Saint Ignatius in his Constitutions recommends this mightily to us. † *This is a great help, say's he in one place, to employ ones self with all possible Devotion in those Offices wherein Humility and Charity are most exercis'd.* In another place he says, *We must prevent and overcome Temptations by their contraries; as when we know that any body is giv'n to Pride, he must be employ'd in such vile and mean Offices as we think, may serve to humble him, and so of the rest.* And in another place, *We must, says he, if Obedience enjoins it, readily imbrace those Offices which seem mean and despicable, and to which we have the greatest repugnance; so that Humility and Humiliation, must, as 'twere, go hand in hand in such a manner, that interior Humility which consists in contemptible thoughts of ones self, and a desire of being contemn'd by others, may raise up exterior Humiliation, which consist in shewing one's self outwardly such, as one ought to be inwardly; I say, that as he who is truly humble, has a contempt of himself, and thinks he is unworthy of any honor; so ought all his exterior actions to correspond with these thoughts, and his exterior behaviour, must give testimony of his interior Humility.* Wherefore chuse every where the last place, as our Saviour Counsels, disdain not to converse with the poor and little ones. Exercise you self in the meanest Offices, and you'll see, that that exterior Humility which comes from inward Humility, will serve to increase the source and fountain from whence it springs.

† Magnopere
confect devo-
te, quoad fieri
poterit, ea
munera obire,
in quibus ma-
gis exercetur
humilitas &
charitas.
3 p. Const. c. 1.
§ 13. & 23.
Reg. 4. & 19.
Summarij. &
c. 4. Exam. §.
23. & Reg. 13.
sum.

C H A P. XXIV.

The Precedent Doctrine confirm'd by some Examples.

PETER of Cluny tells us of a *Carthusian*, who (After having led a holy Life, and always so Chast a one, that God had kept him even from the very illusion of impure Dreams) was taken with a Disease of which he Dy'd; but as he was drawing on, and all the Religious of the House were about his Bed, the Prior commanded him, to tell in what things he believ'd he had pleas'd Almighty God most, the *Carthusian* answer'd; what you ask Reverend Father I have great difficulty to answer, and I wou'd never do it, were I not oblig'd thereunto by Obedience. From my Infancy, continu'd he, the Devil still pursu'd and persecuted me, but in proportion to his afflicting me, the Blessed Virgin still comforted me; and as I found my self one Day tormented with stronger and more than usual Temptations, she appear'd to me, and drove away the Devil by her Presence; and after having giv'n me comfort and encouragement to persevere in Virtue; that I may, sayd she, teach you an easie way in order thereunto, and discover something of the immense Treasures of my Son, I'll teach you three exercises of Humility, which if you practice well, will render you acceptable in the sight of God, and give you Victory over your Enemy. You are therefore to humble your self in three things; your Diet; your Cloathing, and your Employment; so that in your Eating, you must desire and seek always ordinary Fare; in your Cloathing the coarsest Habir, and your Employment, those Functions which are the lowest and most humbling. The Blessed Virgin hereupon disappear'd but the Virtue and efficacy of those Holy Words, made then such an impression upon my Heart as to make me Practise ever after what she had taught, and I receiv'd thereby great help and advantage towards my Spiritual advancement.

*Lib. 2. miraeol.
c. 29. et Titelm.
Prandemb. l. 2.
Collat. Sacrat.
c. 33.*

Cassian

Lib. instit. 4.
c. 30. & Collet.
20. c. 1.

Cassian relates, that a holy Old Man call'd *Pinuphius*, having a mind to shun the respects and honors, which were giv'n him in the Monastery where he presided, resolv'd to slip away, and retire to some place, where he might live neglected and without being at all taken notice of. To this end he privately left his own Convent, and knowing that in that part where Saint *Pacomius* liv'd, which was a great way off, Discipline and Zeal did then most flourish, he in a Secular Habit went thither, so that not being known there, he might be treated as a Novice, and no regard had of him. Several Days he stayd there at the Gate, asking with all Humility the Habit, and prostrating himself at the Feet of the Monks; who on purpose shew'd a contempt of him, reproaching him, that after being gluttred with the World, he came to give himself to God in his Old Age; and that 'twas more out of necessity, and to be sure of a Livelihood, than to serve God by his own choice and inclination that he begg'd admision. He was nevertheless at last receiv'd, and made Under-Gard'ner to another Brother, whom he was to Obey in all things. Nor did he only do his Duty herein, with great exactness and Humility, but he endeavour'd moreover to do the most troublesome Work of all the House, and that which others had the greatest aversion unto. In the Night he rose privately, as if he had not Work'd enough in the Day, and put every thing he cou'd in order without being perceiv'd; so that the Religious, who knew not how, nor by whom, all that was done, were hereby every Morning in a very great surprize. Three Years he remain'd in that condition, very well contented with the occasion he had to Work, and also to render himself contemptible, which was the thing he so much desir'd. His own Religious much troubl'd in the mean time at his absence, inquir'd after him in several places, and at the end of three Years when they despair'd of finding him, one of 'em passing by the Monastery of Saint *Pacomius*, little thinking of meeting him there whom he sought after, found him a Dunging the Ground; so that knowing him very well, he threw himself presently at his Feet, to the great wonder of all those who were there present; but when they learn'd who he was, their wonder increas'd, for they knew him well enough by Fame, and begg'd his Pardon for using him as they had done for so long a time. The good Old Man bewailing his misfortune of being thus discover'd by the envy of the Devil, and losing thereby the Treasure he had found in the obscurity of a private Life, was forc'd to return

to his own Monastery where being receiv'd with very great joy by all the Religious, they took great care that he shou'd not get away from em any more. But their precaution was however to no purpose, for he had still so great a desire to become very contemptible, and was so taken with the pleasure he found during the three Years he had pass'd in an humble and private way of Living, that having taken measures privately to get Aboard on a Ship, which was bound for *Palestine*, he found means to steal away once more from his Monastery, and so Embark'd himself therein; but God who takes care of exalting the humble, permitted him, being arriv'd at the Monastery where *Cassien* was, to be known by some of the Religious who went thither to Visit the Holy Land, and thus what he did to render himself contemptible, serv'd only to make him be the more esteem'd and respected.

We Read in the Lives of the Fathers of the Desert, that a certain Hermite having liv'd a long time in the continual exercise of Penance and Prayer, and imagining himself to be already in a great degree of Perfection; fell a Praying one Day, that God wou'd let him know if he wanted any thing whereby he might become more Perfect; and that God intending to humble him, caus'd him to hear a Voice which commanded him to go and find out a Man who kept Hogs hard by, and then to do what he shou'd bid him. He immediately obey'd, found him out, saluted him, and pray'd him to tell him what he was to do to please God. He knowing, it seems by Revelation, what he was to answer, will you do, quoth he, what I shall bid you; the Hermite answering, that he wou'd; take the Whip then, reply'd the other, and go and keep the Hogs. The holy Man desiring ardently to serve God, and to make himself agreeable and more Perfect in his sight, went immediately to do what the Hog-herd bad him. Now as the fame of his Sanctity was spread all over that Country, those who knew and saw him so employ'd, sayd to one another: Have you observ'd, that that good Old Man of whom so many wonderful things have been related, is turn'd Fool, and gone to keep Hogs; his continual Fastings and great Austerities have broken his Brain and turn'd his Head. The holy Old Man who heard all this, took it patiently, and went on yet some Days in the same Employment, till Almighty God seeing his Humility, and the Spirit with which he bore affronts and injuries, commanded him to return again to his own Hermitage.

'Tis

'Tis reported in a Book call'd the *Spiritual Meadow*, that a holy Bishop having left his Bishoprick, where he was much esteem'd and honor'd by every body, went his way to *Jerusalem*, where he was not the least known, and having put on poor Cloaths, he took upon him to serve a Mason. It happen'd in the mean time, that a good Man call'd *Ephraim* who was super-intendent of all the publick Buildings, went to over-look 'em twice or thrice, at a time when the Workmen repos'd; and having all these times beheld upon the Head of the holy Man, who Slept upon the Ground, a Pillar of Fire, which seem'd to reach up to Heaven, he was the more surpris'd; because he saw the Old Man in a very miserable condition and employment. To inform himself further thereupon, he made him be call'd, and ask'd him who he was, the Saint answer'd, that he was a poor Man who got his Livelihood by his Labour. *Ephraim* was not satisfi'd with this answer, but by a secret Inspiration of God, who permitted it shou'd be thus, the more to honour the Humility of his Servant, press'd him a-new with such earnestness, to tell him who he was, that the holy Man unable to deny him any longer, reply'd, I'll tell you, upon condition that you'll never speak of it to any body whilst I am alive, nor ask my Name; the super-intendent consented, and hereupon gave him his Word. The Saint then own'd that he was a Bishop, and that to shun the esteem and honor of the World he had privately quitted his Bishoprick.

Grad. 4. art.
21.

Saint *John Climacus* tells us of a Man of Quality, who liv'd at *Alexandria*, and went to beg to be receiv'd into a certain Monastery. The Abbot thereof believing by his looks and other outward marks that he was a Vain-glorious Man, and one who was yet puffed up with the Pride and Vanity of the World, had a mind to put him into the sure path of Humility, and therefore told him, that if he was resolv'd to carry in good earnest the Yoke of *JESUS CHRIST*, he must oblige himself to exercise Obedience. I am Father very willing, sayd the Gentleman; and I put my self into your hands to do with me, just as the Smith do's with the Iron, which he Forges into what shape he pleases. Since 'tis so, reply'd the Abbot, I'll have you stand at the Monastery Gate as Under-Porter, still prostrating your self at the Feet of all who come in or go out, and begging of 'em to Pray to God for you, because you are a great Sinner. The Gentleman Obey'd most punctually, and after he had liv'd Seven Years in this exercise, and had acquir'd

acquir'd a great stock of Humility, they were willing to receive him into the Monastery, and admit him even into holy Orders; but he having got several Persons, and among the rest Saint *John Climacus*, to intercede that he might finish the course he had begun, in the station where he was, he obtain'd what he desir'd, and seem'd in asking that favor, to have had some foresight of his approaching Death; for in ten Days after it happen'd, that God call'd him to himself; and seven Days after him, the Porter of the Monastery dy'd also; whom the Gentleman, when he was alive, had promis'd, that if he shou'd have any interest in Heaven after his Death, he wou'd make use of it, that he might be quickly his Companion in Glory. This was the reward of his continual humiliations, which had made him so humble, that when the foremention'd Saint *Climacus*, ask'd him; what he still thought of, whilst he practic'd those Acts of Humility? He answer'd, that he was always a thinking how unworthy he was of the Conversation, and even of the sight of the Religious; and that he deserv'd not so much as to behold 'em.

'Tis reported in the Lives of the Antient Fathers, that an Abbot, whose Name was *John*, told a Story one Day, how that a certain Philosopher having a Scholar who had committed a fault, told him he wou'd not Pardon it, till he had for the space of three Years suffer'd patiently, whatsoever bad Language any body shou'd give him; the Scholar consented to it, and being come to the end of the three Years, came to him to have his Pardon; who told him he wou'd not yet Pardon him, unless that during three Years more, he wou'd hire People to give him ill Language; the Scholar again consented to this second triall; and after having compleated that time also, his Master told him that he Pardon'd him, and that now he might go and learn Wisdom at *Athens*, whether he accordingly went: Where going to hear another Philosopher, who still was wont to give bad Language to his new Auditors to try their Patience, upon his entrance he fell a Laughing at that which he also gave him. How now, quoth the Philosopher, I give you bad Language, and do you Laugh? And ought I not to do so, reply'd the other? Since I have giv'n Mony these three Years to hire People to give me such Language, and now I find one that giv's it me for nothing, wou'd you not have me rejoice at this? Come in, reply'd the Philosopher, you are fit for the Study we here make Profession of. So that the Abbot

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concluded from this Example, that Patience was the Gate of Wisdom.

In the Life of Saint *Ignatius*, Father *Maffens* say's, that the Saint going one Day in Pilgrimage from *Venice* to *Padua* with Father *James Lainez*, and both of 'em having nothing but old patch'd Cloaths on, they met in the way a young Country Boy, who seeing 'em thus accoutred came close up to them to view them nearer, and then fell a jeering and laughing at 'em; sometimes at one, and sometimes at t'other, here-upon Saint *Ignatius*, being overjoy'd at what had thus happen'd, stood still, and when his Companion ask'd him why he did not go on, and rid himself of that rude and idle Lad. Why wou'd you, reply'd the Saint, deprive the poor Youth of the Diversion he has met withal? Wherefore he stayd in that posture till the Boy was weary of staring and laughing at him; and he himself receiv'd these scoffs with far greater satisfaction, than the People of the World, do the honors and respects which are shown 'em.

Lib. 4. eius
vita, c. 5.

We Read also in the Life of Saint *Francis* of *Borgia*, that he and Father *Bustimantius*, Travelling together, arriv'd at a very scurvy Inn, where they found nothing to lye upon but a Truss or two of Straw in a little dirty corner. Father *Bustimantius*, who was very Old, and had a defluxion upon his Breast, did nothing but Cough and Spit all Night long; but when he thought still to Spit upon the Wall, he Spat upon Saint *Borgia's* Face, who notwithstanding sayd not a word, nor wou'd not so much as turn away. When it was Day, and the good Father perceiv'd what he had done in the dark, he was so concern'd and confounded, that he was not to be comforted; but the Saint being as joyful as the other was atham'd and troubl'd, sayd, pray Father be not in pain, for I assure you, that there was nothing in the Room deserv'd more to be Spit upon than my self.

C H A P. XXV.

*Of the Exercises of Humility, which are Practis'd
among us of the SOCIETY.*

ONE of the reasons which Saint *Basil* lay's down, to shew that the Life of Religious Men, who live in Community, is preferable to that led in Solitude, is, that that of Hermits is not only expos'd to great dangers, but is depriv'd of those Exercises of Virtues, which are necessary for Christian Perfection, and consequently is less proper than the other, for the acquiring of 'em: For how can he exercise Humility, who meet's with no body before whom he can humble himself? Or how can he perform Works of Charity or Mercy, who has no Communication with others? Or how can he shew Patience, whom Solitude separates from all those who may cross him? But 'tis not thus with a Religious Man, who lives in a Community. The frequent occasions he has to exercise all sorts of Virtues, are a great means to acquire 'em. If you consider Humility, he meets with those before whom he may humble himself: If Charity, he has Objects thereof: If Patience, the Commerce he has with all his Brethren, gives him a thousand occasions to practice that also; and so it is, as to all other Virtues.

All Religious Men in general owe doubtless great obligations to Almighty God for the Grace whereby he has call'd 'em to a Religious Life, which furnishes so many ways to acquire Virtue; and which infine is a School of Perfection; but we of the SOCIETY are more oblig'd to him than all the rest; because (besides the means which are common to us with others) he has giv'n us particular ones, especially in what relates to Humility: For our Constitutions have taken such care herein, and the Rules of 'em are so express, that provided we keep 'em well, we shall never want wherewithal to exercise our selves in Humility. One very profitable Rule,

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3. p. Confir.
c. 1. §. 12. &
reg. 40. & 41.
summaris.

Reg. 9. summ.
c. 4. exem. 9.
§.

for example, is that which injoyns us, to lay open the very bottom of our Heart and Conscience to our Superior, by giving him an exact account of our Temptations, Passions, bad Inclinations, and generally of all our defects and indispositions of mind: For thō this is order'd us upon another score, than that of humbling us (as we shall shew in it's proper place) 'tis nevertheless very certain, that it contributes very much to Humility, and is a great Practice thereof. Another very profitable Rule is that, which, for the making a greater progress in Spiritual things, and for the entering into deeper sentiments of Confusion and Humility, injoyns us to joyce, that all our faults, and whatever is perceiv'd amiss in us, shou'd be carry'd to our Superiors; and that by any one, that thou'd know them our of Confession. Take notice of this, that hereby you may be the more confounded and humbl'd; for this is the end of it's practice. So that if you desire to acquire true Humility, you'll joyce to have all your faults layd open to your Superiors; or if you have already acquir'd it. you your self will go and tell those faults; and desire a Penance for 'em; and as you are the first in knowing 'em, so you'll also be the first in discovering 'em. But we have yet another and greater exercise of Humility requir'd of us, which is to accuse our selves of our own faults in publick. to be thereby the more despi'd; for 'tis only in prospect of that, that you are to do all this; and not that you may be taken for an humble and mortifi'd Man; for then 'twou'd be an Act of Pride, rather than an Exercise of Humility. 'Tis also with the same sentiment, we must receive reproofs, whether they be made in private or publick; being glad in good earnest they are giv'n us, and that every body shou'd be truly convinc'd that what is sayd of us is true. In fine, 'tis with the same Spirit, that we are to undergo all exterior Mortifications, which are us'd among us: As Kissing the Feet of our Brethren; Eating under the Table, or upon our Knees; Lying all along prostrate at the Door of the Refectory, and a great many others; which conduce much to acquire and preserve Humility; provided that we perform 'em with such a disposition of mind, as is necessary to perform 'em well. So that when you Eat upon the Ground; when you Kiss your Brothers Feet, and when you lye all along, for 'em to pass over you; you are then to think, how unworthy you indeed are, to sit at the Table with 'em; how you ought to Kiss the ground they tread upon; and how you deserve to be under the Feet of every one: Nor are you only to think thus
your

your self, but to be willing also, that every body else shou'd think the same of you; and thus you are to entertain your self with such kind of reflections as these, after the example of those holy Men, of whom we have spoken in the foregoing Chapter: For when Mortifications are thus taken, 'tis impossible they shou'd not produce a profound Humility in the heart; but if on the contrary, you perform 'em only outwardly, and without any interior submission of mind, they'll be good for nothing; because as the Apostle teaches us, † *Bodily exercise profits little*, and the doing things without aiming at the end for which they were Instituted, is, to do them only out of form and custom. Wherefore, if after having Kiss'd your Brethrens Feet, and lying all along to have 'em go over you, you shou'd speak rudely and after a surly manner to them, how can you reconcile such a behaviour that so much contradicts it's self, and how can you hinder People from believing, that all that you did was a meer dissimulation and hypocrisy?

Thus have I shew'd you one part of the exercises of Humility to which our Rules oblige us; and tho' I have elsewhere spoken of 'em upon another occasion, yet I had a mind here also to take notice of 'em; to the end that every one may again consider 'em, and so set themselves to the Practice of Humility; for the Progress and Perfection of a Religious Man, consisting in the exact observation of his Rules; the Practice of Virtue to which he is most to apply himself, is that which his Rules prescribe to him; so that if he performs not the exercise of Humility and Mortification, to which they oblige, he may reckon all, which he do's of himself as nothing. We may say as much of all Christians in general, the things in which every one of 'em has most need of Humility, are those, where Humility is necessary to keep God's Commands. If he has no Humility in them, 'twill be to no purpose to have it in other Actions: For if he has not Humility enough to Confess a great Sin, which throu' Shame or rather Pride he hides from his Confessor, and hereby fail's in so essential a point, what will all other Actions of Humility signifie? Since he will be condemn'd for failing in this. 'Tis the same with a Religious Man, in all other things that are of obligation. If you have not Humility enough to discover the bottom of your Conscience to your Superior, thereby to satisfie your Rules; if you cannot indure to be put in mind of your faults, to the end you may mend 'em; if you receive Correction and Penances with trouble and disquiet; if you'll
not

† Corporalis
exercitatio, ad
modicum est
utilis.
1 Tim. 4. 8.

not be employ'd in mean and humble Offices, and submit to all the Functions the SOCIETY has appointed; where's your Humility? Where's that indifferency of Will which your Superiors require of you? And why do they require it of you, if not for things of this nature? Every Religious Man may thus run over with himself, what belongs to the obligations of his Rule, and each particular Person may do the same according to what the Condition and Profession he has imbrac'd require of him.

C H A P. XXVI.

*That we must have a care of saying any thing
that may tend to our own Praise.*

*Basil. serm. de
exerc. Mon.
S. Greg. l. 18.
Mor. c. 7.*

S AINT Basil, Saint Gregory, Saint Bernard, and many other Masters of Spirit, who have layn down Rules for a Spiritual Life, put us in mind of taking great heed lest we say any thing which may turn to our own praise: And this Council agrees with that which good Old Toby gave his Son, when he sayd, *† Suffer not Pride to reign either in your heart or word.* 'Tis this also which the Apostle has taught us by his Example, when having sayd great things of himself, which were necessary for him to utter, for the Glory of God, and Edification of the Faithful; because *He had been taken up to the third Heaven*, he adds, ** But I forbear, lest any Man shou'd think of me, above that which he sees in me, or hears of me.* Saint Bernard examining these words, crys out, *† How well was it sayd, I forbear, or spare to add any more.* The Presumptuous, the Proud, and they who brag of their Actions, are not sparing, for they puff up themselves vainly with what they have; or falsely glory, in what they have not. None but he who is truly humble, is sparing of his words; for fearing that he shou'd be believ'd to be what he is not, he endeavours always not to be known what he is. The same Saint in another place descend's hereupon to particulars, and admonishes

*† Superbiam
numquam in
tuo sensu, aut
in tuo verbo,
dominari per-
mittas.
Tob. 4. 14.*

** Parco au-
tem, ne quis
me existimet
supra id quod
videt in me,
aut aliquid au-
dit ex me.
2 Cor. 12. 6.
† Quam pul-
chre dixit,
Parco! Non
paret sibi ar-
rogans, non
paret sibi su-
perbus, non
jactator actu-
um suorum,
qui vel sibi ar-
rogat quod est,
vel mentitur
quod non est.
Bern. epist. 87.*

nishes us, * *To say nothing of our selves, which may make us pass for Men of profound Knowledge, or of eminent Virtue:* For as soon as ever a thing may turn to our praise, altho it may be true and Edifice our Neighbour, and tho we may have never to good an Intention in telling it, 'tis always dangerous to talk of it. It suffices, that the good Action is yours, without speaking thereof; and you ought always to be extremely reserv'd, lest by declaring the good you have done, you thereby lose all the Merit thereof.

† *A Religious Man must not*, says Saint Bonaventure, *boast, either of his Knowledge, or of what he was, when he liv'd in the World;* infine, what is more misbecoming a Religious Man, than to shew a Vanity upon account of his Nobility, or the Rank which his Relations hold in the World? For what is the Luster of Birth, Grandeur and Dignity, but a little Wind and Smoke? *And* (as a certain Author sayd very well) *do you know what Nobility in a Religious Man is good for? For nothing else, but to be despis'd by him as he do's Riches:* For that which is esteem'd in him, is Virtue and Humility. As to what he was or was not in the World, 'tis reckon'd for nothing; and whoever makes account of these kind of things in a Religious Life, and prizes himself thereupon, shews very much his Vanity, and the little relish he has of Spiritual things; he discovers plainly, that he has not despis'd or truly renounc'd the World: * *For he*, says Saint Basil, *who by a new Spiritual birth, has receiv'd the honour to become the Child of God, is asham'd of his Relations according to the Flesh.*

'Tis ill for any one whosoever to praise himself, nay, 'tis a very old and common saying, that praise sounds very ill, in the Mouth of him who commends himself; and the Wise Man teaches us the same thing, when he says; † *Let another praise thee, and not thy own Mouth.* Now if this becomes every body so ill, it becomes far less a Religious Man, who ought to profess Humility; and that indeed which shoud make all mend this fault, is, that when a Man thinks to make himself esteem'd, he even by so doing, renders himself contemptible.

Saint Ambrose upon these words of the Prophet, * *Behold my Humility, and deliver me*, says, that let a Man be never so little in himself, and reduc'd to never so miserable a condition; provided he has no Pride, nor prefers himself before any body, he is always commendable by his Humility. That makes him be belov'd; that makes him esteem'd; and that recompences

* *Loquens, nihil dicas, unde multum eruditus, multumque religiosus possis utari*
In specul. Mon.

† *Numquam nec de scientia, nec de saculi statu se jactet*
In specul. discip. p. 3. c. 3.

* *Qui natus est ex spiritu, juxta Domini vocem, & potestatem, accipit fieri filius Dei, cum cognitionis secundum carnem pudet.*
Basil. in reg. brevior. 90.
† *Laudet te alienus, & non os tuum: extransus, & non labia tua.*
Prov. 27. 2.

* *Ipse se humilitate commendat.*
S. Ambros. serm. 20.

recompences all other qualities he wants. On the contrary, whatever Merit a Proud Man may have, however Rich, Noble, Powerful, Able and Learn'd he may be, Pride ruins all, and makes him be hated and contemn'd.

*Metaphr. &
Surin in vita
Arfen. & Rof.
l. 9. p. 17.*

In the Life of Saint *Arsenius*, who had been Preceptor to *Arcadius* and *Honorius*, Sons of the Emperor *Theodosius*, and Emperors themselves after his Death, we Read, that whatever Rank he had held in the World, and how much soever he had been esteem'd for his Learning, yet after he had made himself a Religious Man, he was never heard to say any thing which seem'd Haughty, or shew'd any Learning he had. But on the contrary, he liv'd and convers'd with all the other Religious with such a Spirit of Simplicity and Humility, as if he had never known any thing; and he address'd himself usually to the most simple, to learn of 'em a Spiritual Life; saying, that he deserv'd not to be their Scholar in so elevated a Science. 'Tis observ'd also in the Life of Saint *Hierom*, that tho' he was of very great Quality, yet nevertheless there is not so much as one place in all his Works, where he has taken any notice of it.

*De inform. no-
rit. p. 1. c. 35.*

To hinder us from speaking to our own advantage, Saint *Bonaventure* lay's down a very good motive; he persuades says he, that 'tis very hard for you to have any good quality, but others will perceive it; if you take no notice of it your self, you'll be the better lov'd for it, and deserve a double praise; as well for being Master of so good a quality, as for being willing to conceal it. But if you make a shew of it, you'll be laugh'd at, and instead of being esteem'd, and giving Edification, you'll be despis'd, and give Scandal. Virtue is like an excellent Perfume, the more you keep it close, the more 'tis smelt, but if you expose it to the Air, it quickly evaporates and loses it's scent.

*S. Greg. lib. 3.
Dialog. c. 33.*

Saint *Gregory* tells us, how a holy Abbot call'd *Eleutherius*, being once in a Journey stopp'd at a Nunnery, where he was Lodg'd in a Chamber, in which there was a Youth, who was wont to be very much tormented by an Evil Spirit. When it was Day the Nuns ask'd the holy Man, whether any thing had happen'd in the Night to the said Youth. He answer'd, that nothing at all had happen'd, they then told him how the case was with him, and so conjur'd him to take him along with him. The good Old Man having kept him a good while in his Company, in all which time the Devil durst not approach him; this at length bred a vain complacency and satisfaction

satisfaction in him, and not being able to abstain from shewing it, one Day as he was with his Monks; he told 'em, that he believ'd the Devil had tormented this Boy at the Nunnery, only to make sport with the Nuns; by reason he had not had the confidence to come near him, since he had been there, among the Servants of God. Scarce were these words out of his Mouth, but the Devil fell anew to torment the Youth before every body; the Abbot hereupon attributing the cause thereof to his own Vain-glory, fell a Weeping very bitterly; and when his Monks endeavour'd to comfort him, he told 'em, that they shou'd neither Eat nor Drink, till they had obtain'd of Almighty God to restore the Youth to himself; whereupon going all to their Prayers, they ceas'd not, till he was quite Well again. By this example may be seen the aversion which God has to all Words, which tend in the least to the praise of him, who pronounces 'em; nay, even to those which are sayd only in jest, as these of the holy Abbot seem to have been.

CHAP. XXVII.

How we are to Exercise our selves in the second Degree of Humility, by the means of Prayer.

ONE of the most important Rules of the Constitutions of the SOCIETY, is that, which we have spoken of, in one of the foregoing Chapters; wherein our holy Founder tell's us, *That as the People of the World seek earnestly the Honor, Glory and Reputation which the World gives; so, they who truly follow JESUS CHRIST, ought ardently to desire whatever is opposite to this Spirit of the World; thereby to become, in a manner, like their Divine Masters; wherefore they must desire always to be run down with Injuries, Affronts, false Accusations and all sorts of Ignominy.* Nay, he requires further, *That all they, who offer themselves to be Admitted into the SOCIETY, shou'd be Examin'd, whether they truly have such a Desire.* It seem's indeed harsh enough, that a Man who

*Before Treat.
3. chap. 15.
Cap. 4. Exam.
§. 44. & c. 3.
§. 45. & c. 4.
11. Summ.*

has offer'd violence to himself in getting clear of the World, and whose Wounds, which he has receiv'd in it, are still fresh, shou'd be Question'd by so strict and severe a Rule. But this shews what Perfection our Institution requires of us; since 'tis for Admitting those only, who are altogether wean'd from themselves, and truly Dead to the World; and notwithstanding this is very hard, and supposes great Perfection, yet the Rule requires still further, *That shou'd it happen, that any one thro' human frailty, feels not yet this sort of Desire, he is to be Examind, whether he has not at least a longing to have such a one;* and provided he has, and is dispos'd to suffer every thing Patiently on all occasions, it orders him to be Receiv'd. And indeed, what better disposition can be with'd to learn or profit by, than to have a Will to do it? To Learn any Art whatsoever, 'tis sufficient to have really a desire for it, and to apply our selves to it in good earnest. A Religious Life is a School of Virtue and Perfection, wherefore enter into it with an Intention to do your Duty well, and with Almighty God's Grace you'll infallibly succeed therein.

Let us do the same thing as to the Exercise we speak of, and let us proceed step by step: You say that you feel not in your self as yet, a desire of being despis'd, but that you wou'd fain have that desire. Begin therefore, with that desire in your Prayer, to exercise your self in the Virtue of Humility, and say with the Prophet: † *My Soul has long'd, always to desire thy Justifications.* O how far am I from having these ardent desires, which so many have had to be despis'd; but I wou'd fain, O my God, come to the point at least of desiring earnestly to have these desires. Thus will you be in the right way; for this is a good beginning and disposition to obtain 'em. Persever in your Prayers, insist still therein, beg of God to soften your heart; and remain some Day's in such kind of desires as these, which are very agreeable unto him, and which he hears most willingly. * *The Lord has heard the desire of the Poor, he has giv'n Ear to the Inclination of their Heart.* God will quickly give you the desire of suffering something for the Love of him, and to do Penance for so many Sins you have committed; and when he shall have inspir'd you with so good a disposition; can you better employ that desire to suffer, than to be despis'd for his sake? And can you better bestow your Penance, than in making Reparation for your Sins? 'Twas in this Spirit that David express'd himself to his Servants, who wou'd have mov'd him to revenge himself upon

† Concupivit anima mea considerare justificationes tuas, in omni tempore.
Psal. 118. 20.

* Desiderium pauperum exaudivit Dominus: preparationem cordis eorum audivit auris tua.
Psal. 10. 41.

upon Shimei who curs'd him. † Let him alone, sayd he, the Lord for his Cursing me, will perhaps bestow some favor upon me this Day, it may be he will receive the injuries done me, as a part of that satisfaction and Chastisement which my Offences deserve.

But when by the Mercy of God you begin to feel these desires of being despis'd for the Love of him, that thereby you may be made like to JESUS CHRIST; believe not that then the work is done, and that you have already acquir'd Humility: But on the contrary, reckon that you are then to begin to plant, and root it in your heart. You must therefore endeavour not to pass slightly over such desires, but to fix your mind as much as you can upon 'em, and continue a long time in Prayer, till these thoughts become effectual enough to be reduc'd into acts; when you shall arrive so far and seem to bear patiently the occasions of being despis'd, there will yet occur in the act it self several occasions of being despis'd; several degrees and steps will still remain, before you can get to the top of Humility.

In the first place, you must accustom your self to suffer Patiently all the different occasions of Humiliation, which may present themselves; whereby you'll have enough to do for some time; and it may be, even for a very long time. After this, you must go forward, and never stop till you are come to that pass, as to receive contempt and injuries with as much joy, as the People of the World receive Riches and Honors; so that you may truly say with the Prophet, * I have rejoic'd in the way of thy Testimonies, as much as in all sorts of Riches.

'Tis natural for us to rejoyce when we obtain something which we have desir'd, and to rejoyce more or less, as we have desir'd that thing with more or less Passion. Examine your self upon this Rule, you'll thereby be able to judge whether you really desire to be despis'd, and whether you make any progress in Humility. One may use also the same Rule in order to all other Virtues.

But that Humility may make a greater impression upon our heart, by means of Prayer, and that the means thereof may be more advantageous to us, we must in our Meditation descend to the particular causes of Humiliation every Day which may happen to us, we must make a lively representation of 'em to our selves, and so by the prospect of 'em, be encourag'd to form acts of Humility. We must strongly

† Dimitte e-
um, ut male-
dicat juxta
præceptum
Domini: Si
forte respiciat
Dominus af-
flictionem
meam, & red-
dat Dominus
bonum pro
maledictione
hâc.
2 Reg. 16. 11. 12.

* In viâ testi-
moniorum tu-
orum delecta-
tus sum, sicut
in omnibus
divitijs.
Psal. 118. 14.

insist and fix our selves thereupon, till we have intirely overcome the aversion we feel thereunto, and have fully gain'd what we aim'd at: For thus Vice is rooted out of our heart, and Virtue fixes it self therein, and flourishes more and more.

That which Goldsmiths do in Refining Gold, may serve us for a very good comparison and example in this point. When they have Melted the Gold in the Crucible, they throw into it a grain of sublimate; whereupon the Gold begins immediately to rise in great bubbles, till the sublimate is consum'd; and then what boyl'd up, falls again, and the Gold is reduc'd to what it was before: They then throw in a second grain of sublimate, and the Gold begins again to boyl up, but with less force than at first; and as soon as the sublimate is again consum'd, the agitation presently ceases. They then put in a little more of it, which causes only a bare fuming, or heaving, in the Gold. Infine, some more is put in the fourth time, but that works no more effect upon the Gold, than if none at all had been thrown in; because 'tis then wholly Refin'd and Purifi'd; and that is an infallible sign it is so. This represents what we must do in Prayer. Throw in a grain of sublimate; imagine strongly an occasion of suffering some Mortification and Contempt, and if you then begin to fume and be troubl'd; fix your self upon that imagination, till the fervor of Prayer has wholly consum'd this grain of sublimate, till you have master'd what disturbs you, and are become quite calm. The Day after, throw in a new grain of sublimate, and fancy still some greater Mortification and Humiliation; if you then feel that Nature rises and boyl's up in you, continue in the consideration of the affront you think upon, till you have wholly digested it, and are become quite calm; continue afterwards to Practice the same thing several times, and when that grain of sublimate, that lively Idea of an affront or injury, raises no more trouble or fuming in your Breast, and that at the sight of all affronts and injuries which you can imagine, you shall find your self in an equal temper and tranquillity of mind, then you may rest there; for that's a sign that the Gold is Refin'd and Purifi'd, and that the Perfection of Humility is acquir'd

C H A P. XXVIII.

How the Particular Examin of the Virtue of Humility is to be made.

A Particular Examin (as we have observ'd in it's proper place) must be of one single thing at once; because 'tis more efficacious than if it included a great many at a time; and the proper reason why it 'tis call'd Particular, is, because 'tis intent only upon one thing. Now this Practice is of very great importance, and to succeed therein with ease, you must ordinarily divide the Vice or the Virtue, which you pretend to make the subject of your Examin, into several parts. If then, you'll root Pride out of your heart, and plant Humility in the room of it, consider not the thing in general; for Pride and Humility are of a vast extent; for if you propose to your self in general, to be proud in nothing, and to be humble in all things, 'tis a purpose of a far greater extent, than if you undertook two or three other designs altogether; and so by proposing too much, you'll do nothing at all. Descend to particulars; Consider wherein you have been us'd chiefly to fail in Humility, and in what you have been touch'd with Pride; and begin in that very thing to correct your self. Afterwards when you have compass'd one thing; fall upon another, and after that, upon a third, and so you'll by little and little root up the Pride you took, in things you lov'd most; and thereby acquire Humility; but to the end, that you may Examin your self more profitably upon so necessary a Virtue, I shall here run over these several points which may be made the subject of your Particular Examin.

Let us purpose in the first place to say nothing that may turn to our own praise; for since the desire of being esteem'd is so natural, and so rooted in our heart, and that *† Our of the abundance of the Heart the Mouth speak's*, we often happen to speak things which may directly or indirectly turn to our advantage, without thinking thereof. If a body speaks before

1. p. Tr. 7. c.
4. & 5.

† Ex abundan-
tia enim cor-
dis os loqui-
tur.
Luc. 6. 45.

before you of something, in which you have had never so little a hand, and which may be to your honor, you shou'd immediately attribute all the Glory of it to your self, saying, I was concern'd in that business, nay, I was the cause it succeeded so well, and without me it had come to nothing: Reflect that as soon as ever you open'd your Mouth, those that heard you thought, that (tho' you had had a greater share in it) yet you wou'd not have sayd a word, if it had gone ill. Thus many things drop from our Mouths, which we our selves are not aware of till we have sayd 'em, so that 'tis good to use our selves to make a Particular Examin of 'em, to the end that by having an exact care of letting nothing of this nature fall from us, we may overcome this ill habit which is in a manner natural to us.

*Basil. Serm. de
Exercit. Mo-
nast. Ambr.
serm. 20. Hier.
epist. 84.*

For the second Subject of our Examin, let us take what Saint *Basil*, Saint *Hierom*, Saint *Austin* and Saint *Bernard* recommend to us, which is, not to take pleasure in hearing People praise and speak well of us; for 'tis dangerous to take pleasure therein. Saint *Ambrose* says, that when the Devil sees that he cannot have his ends of us, by discouraging us, he endeavours to gain us, by raising presumption in us; when he has set upon us to no purpose by reproaches and contempt; he causes us to be honor'd and prais'd, that he may this way destroy us.

*Date locum
homini Dei.
In ejus vita.
cap. 8.*

In the Life of Saint *Pacemius*, 'tis reported, that when he had a mind to Pray, he was us'd to go out of his Convent, and to retire into a Solitary place; and that often at his return, many Devils went before him with a great deal of bustle, as when People go before a great Prince; and that several of 'em, who seem'd as 'twere to make way for him, cry'd out aloud, *Make room, make room there, for the Man of God*; to try if they cou'd that way, make him fall into some Temptation of Vain-glory. But the holy Man, who knew that all these their tricks were in vain, fell a smiling at 'em. Do you in like manner when you shall hear your self prais'd, or when any thought of Vanity or Self-esteem comes into your head; reckon, that you hear the Devil speak to you; at which time scorn him, and so you'll overcome the Temptation.

*S. Clim. grad.
21. art. 18.*

To this purpose Saint *John Climacus* tell's us a very particular Story, how the Devil once discover'd to an Hermit, the bad thoughts he tormented another Hermit withal, to the end that what the one had most hidden in his heart, being told him by the other, he who was Tempted, shou'd take the other

other for a Prophet and a Saint, that so the praises which he gave him, might be an occasion of his fall. We may gather from hence, how advantageous the Devil must needs believe it is, for him to possess us with some thought of Pride and Self-satisfaction; since to that end, he makes use of so much craft and cunning. Wherefore, 'tis for this reason that Saint Hierom admonishes us, † *If we have a mind to pass on our way towards our own Country, to stop our Ears at the destructive Melody of the Syrens or Maremaids Voices*: For the sound of our own praise is a Musick so pleasing to our Ears, that whatever the Poets have invented of the Singing of the Syrens or Maremaids, comes not near it; but this Musick at the same time is so dangerous to our Soul, that we must stop our Ears, if we have not a mind to be destroyed.

† Non ergo in
patriam retri-
nantes mar-
tires Sirena-
rum cantus
surda debemus
aure pettran-
sire.
Hieron. epist.
24.

S. Clim. grad.
21. art. 42.

Saint John Climacus says, that when we are prais'd, we ought to cast our Eyes upon our Sins, for then we shall find our selves unworthy of those praises, and so they'll serve only to raise in us greater sentiments of Confusion and Humility. And to this second Practise of not taking pleasure in hearing your selves prais'd, you may add another very important one, which is, to take pleasure in hearing others prais'd; wherefore whenever the good which you shall hear of your Neighbors, moves any envy in you; or that which you shall hear sayd of your self, raises any Self-satisfaction in you, be sure to look upon it as a fault.

The third point of our Particular Examin, may be to do nothing to be seen and esteem'd of Men, and of this our Saviour gives us warning in the Gospel, when he say's, * *Take heed, that you do not your good Works before Men, to be seen of 'em, otherwise you'll have no reward of your Father which is in Heaven*. This Examin is very useful, and may be divided into several parts; we may in the first place propose to our selves, not to do things out of Human Respects; afterwards, to do them purely for God's sake; and then to do them very well, as doing 'em really in the Presence of God; and infine, so to do them, that it may seem (as we have sayd elsewhere speaking of the uprightness and Purity of the Intention) that all our Actions, are only a sequel and effect of a motion of Love which carries us away, and moves us to act.

The fourth point of our Examin may be, not to excuse our selves when we are in a fault, for 'tis Pride that makes us (as soon as we have committed one, or as soon as we

* Attendite
ne iustitiam
vestram facia-
tis coram ho-
minibus, ut
videamini ab
eis: alioquin
mercedem non
habebitis apud
Patrem ve-
strum, qui in
caelis est.
Matth. 6. 1.

Part. 1. Treat.
3. chap. 1.

are

† Ad excusandas excusationes in peccatis.

Psalm. 140. 4.
* Si abscondi quasi homo peccatum meum, & celavi in sinu meo iniquitatem meam.
Job. 31. 33.

† Mulier, quam dedisti mihi focum, dedit mihi de ligno, & comedi.

Gen. 3. 12.
* Serpens concepit me, & comedi. Ibid.

are reprov'd for it) stand upon our defence; and 'tis Pride that furnishes us with words, † *Even to add excuses to excuses as to our Sins.* Upon this passage of Job, * *If I have cover'd my Sin as a Man, and if I have hidden my Iniquity in my bosom,* Saint Gregory weighs very much the Words, *As a Man*, saying, that 'tis the nature of a Man to hide and excuse his Sin, and that 'tis a thing which he derives from his first Parents. Scarce had Man Sinn'd when he went to hide himself behind the Trees in Paradise, and when God reproaches him for his disobedience, he immediately lays the fault thereof upon his Wife. † *The Woman*, says he, *which thou gavest to me for a Companion, gave me of the Fruit of the Tree, and I did Eat thereof.* The Woman then lays the fault upon the Serpent, * *The Serpent*, says she, *beguild me, and I did Eat.* God Examens 'em upon their Sin, says Saint Gregory, to the end that acknowledging and confessing it, they might obtain Pardon thereof; but he Questions not the Serpent thereupon; because he intends not to Pardon him. But they instead of humbling themselves, by the acknowledgment of their fault; increase it, by excusing it; for they seem to endeavour in a manner, to throw the fault upon God himself. *The Woman which thou hast given me*, says one, *made me Sin*; which was as much as to say, that if God had not given her for a Companion to him, it would not have happen'd. *The Serpent which thou hast Created*, says the other, *has deceiv'd me*, as if she would also say, that she had not Sinn'd, if God had not Created that Serpent, and plac'd it in the Garden.

They let themselves be persuaded, says Saint Gregory, that they shou'd be like unto God, and seeing that they cou'd not make themselves like unto him, by participation of the Divinity, they endeavour to make him like themselves, by the participation of their fault; whereby intending to excuse it, they aggravate it. Now, all Men being descended from 'em, they all feel this fault of their Fore-fathers, and from hence it is, that as soon as ever they are reprov'd for a fault, they immediately seek a thousand excuses to hide it; nay, often are not content only to excuse themselves, but to lay it upon their Neighbour.

A holy Writer compares those, who are always excusing themselves, when they are reprov'd, to a Hedge-hog, which as soon as one go's to touch it, turns it self into the form of a Bowl, and thrusts out it's Prickles on all sides;

so that you cannot touch it, without pricking your self; † *You cannot come to the sight of it's body, without first seeing your own blood.* Even so is it with those, says he, who excuse themselves; if you think of touching 'em never so little, or of telling 'em any fault they have committed, they bristle up and defend themselves like the Hedge-hog, and sometimes do as 'twere Prick you, by telling you, that you your self have also need of being corrected; sometimes in thewning you, that there's a Rule which forbids the reproving your Brother; and sometimes insine, by observing that others commit greater faults, and have nothing at all sayd to them. All this proceeds only from an excess of Pride; for we wou'd fain hide from the Eyes of Men, whatever is defective in us; and we are less concern'd for having committed faults, than for having them discover'd, and thereby have the good Opinion lessen'd, which People had of us; and this is the reason why we hide 'em with so great care, and excuse 'em with so much artifice and obstinacy. Nay, we sometimes meet with a sort of People, so far from having the Spirit of Mortification, that when you say not one word to them of their faults, anticipate all you can say, and prevent before-hand, whatever you can accuse 'em of. They'll tell you if they have done such or such a thing; 'tis for such and such a reason; they are never, upon any occasion, at a loss for an excuse; but what is it that disquiets, and makes 'em thus uneasy? 'Tis Pride indeed that torments 'em; 'tis that which disquiets 'em before you speak to 'em; and makes 'em defend themselves before you attack 'em. 'Tis fit, that they who find themselves subject to this temper, shou'd be very intent in examining themselves hereupon, till they have overcome the desire they have to hide their faults; and are become so much Masters of themselves, as to be glad, that since they have committed 'em, others shou'd believe 'em, and that they shou'd make satisfaction, for what they ought to believe themselves; that so they may be in a manner punish'd for 'em. I'll yet go further, and say, that when you are reprov'd even for a thing which you have not done, 'tis always good not to excuse your self; for when your Superior has a mind to find the truth; he'll know how to do it, and it may be, he even knows it already, but intends to try your Humility; and see how you'll receive a reproof.

To take a care of letting our Imagination rove too freely in Proud thoughts, wherein it often strays; is, in the fifth place, another very useful sort of Examining; for sometimes our

Tom. I I.

K k

fancy

† Ut prides vi-
deas sangui-
nem tuum,
quam corpus
suum.
P. Damian.

fancy exalts us to think of the first and most important employments; sometimes it sends us into our own Country to Preach with wonderful success; sometimes we imagine we Teach in the Publick Schools, and defend our Conclusions with a general applause; and a thousand such things as these come into our head. Now since all such stuff proceeds from inward Pride, which being unable to contain it's self, breaks out into these extravagant kind of thoughts, you must take no less care in suppressing 'em, than in rejecting those against Purity, Charity, or any other Christian or Religious Duty.

The sixth subject of this Particular Examin; may be to reckon every body above us, according to what our Rule enjoins, which prescribes the stirring up our selves to Humility, by preferring our Brethren before our selves; by imagining 'em, as if they were indeed our Superiors; and by respecting 'em outwardly with a Religious frankness and simplicity, as far as the condition of each of 'em can well permit; for tho' there ought to be an exterior difference between Persons, according to the difference of their condition, yet as to what concerns interior Humility, our Holy Founder who call'd our SOCIETY the least of all Orders, will also have every one of us look upon himself as the least of all his Brethren, and this is founded upon the sentiment of the Apostle, ** Who will have every one thron'd Humility believe others to be above him*; this Examin will be very profitable, provided we do not rest in the sole speculation thereof, but endeavour really to behave our selves towards our Brethren, with the same Humility and Respect, as if they were all our Superiors; for if we did look upon 'em really as such, we shou'd be very far from speaking to them with so much sharpness and roughness as we do; we shou'd have a care of saying any thing to them, which might displease and mortifie 'em; we shou'd not judge of their conduct with such freedom and rashness; and we shou'd not be so easily offended, at the manner of their speaking or treating us. In the Examin therefore which we shall make, we ought to observe all these things, and correct 'em, as so many faults.

For a seventh point of this Particular Examin, we may make a purpose to bear quietly all occasions of Humiliation, which may be offer'd us. You have been us'd, for example, to be offended when a sharp word is giv'n you, when you are haughtily or imperiously commanded to do any thing, when you think that you are not regarded so much as others.

Let

* In humilitate superiores sibi invicem arbitantes.
Philip. 2. 3.

Let then the subject of your Examin be, a Resolution to bear quietly all these kind of things, and all others which may tend to a Contempt of you; and be persuaded that you cannot make a more proper and profitable Examin than this, to acquire the Virtue of Humility; for besides it's being a very Wise precaution, against whatever may happen to you at all times, 'tis also a very efficacious way to raise you by degrees, to the highest pitch of Virtue and Perfection. You may then propose to your self in your Examin, first, to bear with Patience all these things; afterwards to bear 'em easily and without repugnance; and lastly, to receive 'em with joy, and to be glad at the being despis'd; wherein (as we have already said) consist's the Perfection of Humility.

In the last place we may employ our Particular Examin in making both Interior and Exterior Acts of Humility; obliging our selves to frame so many in the Morning, and so many in the Evening; beginning at first with a few, but increasing every Day the number, till we have acquir'd a perfect habit of Humility. What I now say of this Virtue, may be easily apply'd to all other Virtues; and thus the address and care which we shall use in dividing our Enemies, and falling upon 'em separately one after another, will make us get a speedier and easier Victory.

CHAP. XXIX.

How Humility may consist with the desire of Reputation.

A Doubt that ordinarily occurs concerning Humility, and which is of great importance to solve, that we may hereupon know how to behave our selves, is, whether according to the common Opinion of all the holy Fathers, we ought to with to be contain'd. And the Objection against it, is, how, if we are despis'd, we shall be able to bring forth fruit for the good of Souls? For to make an impression by

*S. Basil in Reg.
viri. 185.*

*Bern. Serm. 42.
sup. Cantic.*

† Non nun-
quam etiam
sancti viri de
bonâ suâ opi-
nionē gau-
dent; sed cum
per hanc ad
meliora pro-
ficere audien-
tes pensant,
nec jam de
opinione suâ,
sed de audito-
rum gaudent
utilitate; quia,
aliud est favo-
res querere, &
aliud de pro-
fectibus exul-
tare.
*Lid. 22. Moral.
cap. 5.*

what we say, and to gain credit with our Auditory, we must be in esteem with 'em; so that upon this account it seems even necessary to desire the esteem of Men. Saint *Basil*, Saint *Gregory* and Saint *Bernard* throuly and solidly handle this Question, and the solution they give to it, is, that tho' the great danger we run by being honor'd and esteem'd by Men, ought to oblige us to avoid such honor; and tho' when we regard only our own particular, we ought to with always to be despis'd; yet we may nevertheless under the notion of God's greater Glory and Service, desire their Approbation, and seek their esteem; wherefore Saint *Bernard* say's, 'tis true, that in regard to our selves, we shou'd always be willing to have others know us to be what we are, and that we shou'd know our selves too, that is to say, how full of weakness and defects we are; but that in respect of others, 'tis not convenient it shou'd be so; and thus we may be sometimes permitted to with, that they may not know our faults, for fear they may be scandaliz'd thereby, and so hinder'd in their Spiritual Proficiency. But we must understand this with simplicity of Spirit, and not practice it but with great Prudence, and with an Eye still upon God; for these kind of Truths are subject to great abuse and inconvenience, when they are not understood as they ought to be. The same holy Fathers further explain this Doctrine to us, to take away all pretence of making ill use of it. † *It happens sometimes*, says Saint *Gregory*, *that good People rejoyce at the good Opinion which others have of 'em; but that is, when they believe they can thereby do more good upon their Souls; and then they do not so much rejoyce at the esteem is had for themselves; as at the benefit of their Neighbour*: For there's a great difference between seeking the applause of Men, and rejoycing at the Salvation of Souls. 'Tis one thing to Love the esteem of the World for it's own sake, and to regard nothing therein but one's own satisfaction, and the pleasure of Glory; which is always Criminal; and another thing, to seek this esteem upon account of a good Motive, as that, of the Advantage and Salvation of our Neighbour; for that cannot but be very commendable. 'Tis therefore permitted to desire the esteem of Men, provided it be for the Greater Glory of God, and their Edification, and thereby to be able to work the more good upon their Souls; because 'tis not then to Love ones own Reputation; but the advantage only of our Neighbour and the Greater Glory of God. In this manner, when a

Man

Man has an aversion to Physick, and takes a Potion for his health, 'tis his own health which he loves, and not the Potion; so he, who at the same time that he despises the esteem of the World in his heart, seeks it, as advantageous to the Service of God, and the good of Souls; seek's the Glory of God, and not his own Reputation.

Let us now see how it may be known, whether (when one rejoices at the esteem of Men) 'tis purely for the Glory of God, and the advantage of his Neighbour, or whether Vanity or Self-love have not a great share in it; for 'tis a very nice Point, in which all the difficulty of this affair consists. Saint Gregory teaches us how to clear it, and says, that * *When one rejoices at the esteem of Men, it must be with such a regard only to God, that at the very same moment, that this esteem serves no further, for Gods Glory and the Salvation of our Neighbour, it ought rather to be a pain than a joy to us.* So that if we look no further than our own selves, we ought to desire always to be despis'd, and receive with joy all occasions to that purpose, as having met with what we sought for; for 'tis never permitted to desire the Approbation of Men, or to be glad to have it, except with a regard to God, and the advantage of our Neighbour.

* Quia in re,
necesse est ut
cum audienti-
um utilitati
non proficit,
mentem no-
stram, fama
laudabilis non
elevet, sed fa-
tiget. Ibid.

We Read in the Life of Saint Ignatius, that he us'd to say, if he had but giv'n way to his fervor, he shou'd have run about the Streets Naked, and all over Dirty, thereby to pass for a Fool; but the excess of his Charity, and the ardent desire he had, to be useful in the Conversion of Souls, repress'd those Motions; and oblig'd him, still to behave himself with such a gravity and decency, as was proper for him; his Inclination was nevertheless to be despis'd; nor did he only imbrace all occasions with pleasure, that he might be so, but he even sought 'em with great earnestness; now this will easily be known, by knowing upon what Motive, you are glad to be esteem'd and valu'd by Men; whether 'tis for the Love of your self, and for your own Glory; or for the Glory of God, and the Salvation of Souls; for if you do chearfully imbrace Humiliations and Contempt, upon all occasions, and if all those occasions are heartily welcome to you, 'tis a sign, that when you have come off well, either in a Sermon, or any other such like Function, and that you have thereby gain'd credit and esteem, you do not then rejoyce for your own Interest, but for that of Almighty God's, and for the benefit which
your

your Neighbour may get thereby; but if when any occasion is offer'd, to humble and depress you, you reject it, or receive it not as you ought; if you seek the praise of Men, and take pleasure therein, even then when it brings no good to your Neighbour; 'tis a sign that the joy that you find, springs from the consideration you have for your self, and not for God; and that you regard not his Glory, but your own.

'Tis true therefore to say, that the esteem and praise of the World have nothing of harm in themselves, when we know how to make good use of 'em, and therefore, that one may with a good Conscience seek and desire 'em, as Saint *Xaverius* did, when he went with a great Attendance and Splendour to wait upon the King of *Bungo*; nay, it may be even a piece of Sanctity to praise ones self, provided it be done in the Spirit it ought to be, and thus Saint *Paul* also did, who Writing to the *Corinthians*, praises himself, and glories in the favors God had done him; saying, He had labour'd more than all the other Apostles; and relates the Revelations he had had; and his being caught up to the third Heaven. But he did this; because then 'twas proper for the Glory of God, and the good of those to whom he Wrote. 'Twas to the end that they shou'd the more easily acknowledge him for a true Apostle of *JESUS CHRIST*, receive his Doctrine, and thereby profit the more. He sayd these kind of things, too with a Spirit, which did not only despise the Glory of the World, but imbrac'd Contempt and Reproach for the sake of *JESUS CHRIST*; for he knew when 'twas necessary for the Salvation of others, to give so advantageous an account of himself, as also when and how to humble and make himself of no Reputation; saying, † *That he was not worthy to be call'd an Apostle, because he had Persecuted the Church of God.* He call'd himself, * *One Born out of due time, † A Blasphemer, a violent Persecutor*; and when any occasion of being despis'd offer'd, he was delighted therewith; wherefore, for those who are thus dispos'd, there's no fear, when they accept any honor, or even spake to their own advantage; for they never do it, but when they judge it necessary for the Glory of God; and as 'tis not their own, but his Glory and the good of Souls, which they then seek; so the honors that they receive, and the praises they assume to themselves, leave not the least impression of Vanity upon their Heart.

† Non sum dignus vocari Apostolus, quoniam persecutus sum Ecclesiam Dei. 1 Cor. 15. 9.
* Tanquam abortivo.
Ibid. vers. 8.
† Qui prius blasphemus fui, & persecutor, & contumeliosus, &c.
1 Tim. 1. 13.

But because 'tis very hard that the honor which is done us, shou'd not puff us up, and raise in us a vain satisfaction, hence it is, that several Saints knowing the danger which usually accompanies great Reputation, Dignities, and high Employments, endeavour'd to avoid those Rocks, by retiring from the World, and employing themselves in mean and despicable Offices; and they found that, to be the most profitable way for their Spiritual Progress, which was most proper to keep 'em humble, and the surest for their Salvation. I am not a true Religious Man, says Saint *Francis*, if I receive not the scorn of Men with greater joy, than their praise; for if, when I Preach or do any other good Action which is for their advantage, I rejoyce at the praises which the Interest of their Salvation obliges 'em to give me, and which put my own in danger; how much more ought I to rejoyce at their scorn, in which I find a far greater advantage for my own Salvation? Certain it is, that we ought to be much more concern'd for our own Salvation than for that of another, because well plac'd Charity begins at home. If then you rejoyce at the advantage of your Neighbour, when you have had good success in a Sermon, or in a business of Charity, and are prais'd for it; why rejoyce you not at your own advantage, when having done on your part as you ought, you receive only scorn? Since this is the surest way for you to walk in. If you are glad to find you have a Talent for the great Employments which relate to the Salvation of Souls, why, if you are not fit for 'em, do you not rejoyce at the benefit which you may draw from the sense of your own unworthiness, by humbling your self before God? If you are pleas'd with a vigorous health, that you may be the better able to labor more profitably in the service of your Neighbour, why are not you as much pleas'd with being weak, infirm and useless, as if you were employ'd in the greatest Offices of Charity? Because you may turn it to your own profit, make use thereof to become humble, and so render your self more agreeable to God, who will have you be in that condition.

Every where it may easily be perceiv'd, how much they deceive themselves who have an Eye continually upon the esteem and Reputation of the World, upon pretence that it is a necessary means for the doing good to Souls. and under that pretence seek honorable Employments, and whatever has any Air of Dignity; and on the contrary avoid mean and

*Hist. S. Francis.
l. 1. c. 7.*

and humble Offices, as things which discredit 'em in the Opinion of Men. There's another mistake also in acting thus; for it often happens, that what a Man believes ought to get him the esteem of the World, makes him oftentimes lose it, and that which he believes may make him lose it, is, the very thing that makes him to gain it.

Some imagine, that if they were courly clad, and imploy'd in mean Offices, they shou'd not be any more in that esteem which is requisite, to labor successfully for the good of their Neighbour; but 'tis their Pride that deceives 'em; because for those very circumstances they'll be valu'd; and by the contrary, they wou'd lose the esteem they expected. Saint Ignatius was very much persuaded of this. He says, that an humble, simple and hearty way of acting, contributed more to the Conversion of Souls, than one that was grave and supercilious; in which appears still some tincture of a Worldly Spirit; so that he did not only practice this truth by his own example, but when he sent forth Labourers into the Lord's Vineyard, he always Counsel'd 'em to walk in the Path of Humility; because wherever they shou'd do, wou'd be firm and sure, when they build upon so solid a Foundation; and that God was wont to make use of such means, to work the greatest things. Wherefore in all occasions he acted according to this principle; for when he sent Saint Xaverius and Father Simon Redriguez into Portugal, he enjoyn'd 'em to beg Alms, as soon as ever they shou'd arrive thither; to the end that throu' Poverty and Humility they might make way for themselves to every thing else. He also directed Father Salmeron, and Father Pascasius, when they went afterwards, as Apostolical Nuncios into Ireland, to Catechise the Children and Common People. And when the same Salmeron and Father Laynez, were sent the first time by Paul the III. to the Council of Trent, as his Holiness's Divines, the Instruction which our holy Founder gave 'em, was, that every Day before they gave their Opinion in the Council, they shou'd go and serve the Sick in the Hôpital; and teach Children the Principles of the Catholick Faith; and that after that preparation, they might give it freely; and 'twou'd then be sure to be receiv'd with greater advantage; as by the Mercy of God, it indeed was. And shall we after all this, amuse our selves in examining by the false Rules of Human Prudence, whether or no it may not be prejudicial to us to practice the same things? No, no, let us not fear, that by teaching the Catechism, that by making

Exhortations

Exhortations in Publick Places, in Hospitals, or Prisons, we take away from the Dignity of the Ministry of the Gospel. Let us not fear to be less esteem'd, for having been seen to hear the Confessions of Poor people, or for wearing a Habit suitable to the Poverty of a Religious Man. We shall on the contrary be the more valu'd for this, and by these means do more good to Souls; for God is pleas'd to exalt the humble, and 'tis by them that he usually performs the greatest designs of his Providence.

But tho' we shou'd lay aside this reason (which nevertheless is the principal one) and shou'd look upon things only according to the true Rules of Human Prudence, yet we can do nothing more proper for gaining the esteem and favor of Men, and working successfully in the Salvation of Souls, than by being employ'd in mean and humble Offices; and the more capable we shall be of great things, 'twill be the more advantageous for our Reputation, and the Edification of our Neighbour, to stoop to little ones. The reason of this is, that the World makes so great an account of the marks of honor, esteem, and great employments, that it admires nothing more, than to see any one make no account thereof; and to behold a Man who is capable of the highest things, condescend to the lowest; wherefore it looks upon those of this temper, as Saints; and receives their Instructions as a Doctrine that comes from Heaven.

We Read in the Life of Saint Xaverius, that being ready to Ship himself for the Indies, he wou'd take no Provisions with him for so long a Voyage; and when the Earl of Castagnède, who was then Intendant of the Sea Affairs for those parts, press'd him to take at least some-body along with him, to serve him on Ship-board; and urg'd among other things, that he wou'd have less Credit, with those for whose Instruction he undertook the Voyage, if they shou'd see him with his own Linnen, and dress his own Meat. He answer'd, Sir, that which has reduc'd the Church of God, and it's Prelat's to the condition they are in at this Day; is the esteem and Authority they endeavour to acquire by their Squalidness: And the true means which I must use to make my self be look'd upon, is to wash my Old Rags, and to dress my Meat my self, without giving any one else that trouble; and besides all this, to be continually busi'd in Instructing and procuring the Salvation of my Neighbour. The Earl was so surpris'd, and Edifi'd at the same time, with this

this answer, that he knew not what to reply. 'Tis therefore by the Practice of Humility that we obtain the esteem of Men, and gain Souls to God; and indeed how many did this holy Man gain in the *Indies*, by teaching the Catechism to little Children; by ringing the Bell in the Night for the Souls in Purgatory; by serving and comforting the Sick and by exercising himself continually in the meanest and humblest Offices of Charity? By these means he acquir'd so great a Credit and Reputation, that he got the hearts of all, and was call'd nothing else, but the holy Man. 'Tis this sort of Reputation we want, for the advancement and good of Souls; a Reputation of Humility, Sanctity and Zeal in the Ministry of the Gospel; and we are only to endeavour, and seek after such a Reputation as this: For as to the esteem we may pretend to gain by Dignities and great Employments, where something of the Spirit of the World enters, 'tis more prejudicial than profitable, and do's more Scandalize, than Edifie our Neighbour.

* Ego autem
non quero
gloriam me-
am: est qui
querat, & ju-
dicet.
Joan. 8. 50.

A Pious and Learned Author makes an excellent reflection upon these words of our Saviour: * *And I seek not my own glory, there's one that seek's and judges.* If our Heavenly Father, says he, takes care himself to seek and procure our glory; 'tis to no purpose that we shoud take it. Let us take care to humble our selves, and to be what we ought to be, and leave to God the care of our Reputation so far as he sees it necessary for the good of Souls. The very things we do for our Humiliation, are those which he will make serviceable to acquire an esteem for us, beyond that which we cou'd have acquir'd our selves by Human ways.

Nor let us go about to fancy that the glory of our Order is at stake; for that is another kind of Illusion, which serves only to give a colour to Self-love and Vanity, which chiefly move us. I do not care at all for my self, you'll say, but only for my Order, which 'tis but just to have a respect for. Fear nothing; your Order will never be in better repute, than when you are Humble, Reserv'd and Patient; for what renders an Order truly considerable, is to have those who belong to it Humble, Modest, Mortifi'd, and wholly wean'd from all Worldly things.

Father *Massens*, in his History of the *Indies*, tell's us, how when one of the Fathers of the SOCIETY was a Preaching upon a certain Day the Christian Faith in a publick Piazza

Piazza of *Firando*, a City of *Japan*, one of the Idolaters of that Place, who was passing by, fell a laughing, both at him, and at what he sayd; and then Spat full in his Face. The Preacher without shewing the least alteration, or saying any thing, wip'd it off with his Handkercher, and went on with his Sermon, as if nothing had happen'd to him; which one of his Auditors observing, began to make reflection, that a Doctrine which taught us to be so Patient, so Humble, and so Compos'd, cou'd not but come from Heaven; and this passage did make so strong an Impression upon him, that as soon as ever the good Father had made an end of his Sermon, he went to him, and most earnestly begg'd of him, to Instruct and Baptize him.

CHAP. XXX.

The third Degree of Humility.

THE third Degree of Humility, is when a Man having receiv'd great gifts from God, and seeing himself honor'd and esteem'd, is not puffed up, attribut's nothing to himself, but every thing to the Fountain of all good, which is God. And this third Degree, says Saint *Bonaventure*, is only for those, who being already great Proficients in Virtue, do so much the more humble themselves in all things, by how much the more Perfect they are. For a Man, full of faults and imperfections, to acknowledge himself to be so, is always commendable, but no great wonder; no more than it is for the Son of a Peasant to say, he is not the Son of a King: For a Poor Man to believe he is Poor; a Sick Man to believe himself Sick; or for every one to pass for what he is, is not to be wonder'd at; but what is strange indeed, is, that he who is Rich shou'd ranck himself among the Poor; and that he who is above others, shou'd condescend to them. We must not wonder then, say's the same Saint *Bonaventure*, that an ill Man believes himself ill; but we ought, on the contrary, to wonder at him, shou'd he look upon himself to be

*S. Bonav. de
Process. Relig.
Process. 6. c. 22.*

be Just and Perfect; as much as we wonder at a Man who cover'd all over with Leprosie, yet believes himself very sound and healthful. But that a Man of eminent Virtue, replenish'd with Almighty God's Grace, and truly great in his sight, should reckon himself the least of all his Brethren, is a true subject of admiration, and an extraordinary effect of Humility.

† 'Tis a great and rare Virtue, says Saint Bernard, to do great things, and yet not to think thy self great, to have thy Sanctity known to every one, but thy self; to appear an admirable Man to all; and yet a vile one in thy own sight; this, continues the Saint, seem's more to be admir'd, than all other Virtues. This kind of Humility, the holy Virgin possess'd in a very Sovereign and high Degree of Perfection; for when the understood that she was chosen to be the Mother of God, she still acknowledg'd her own Original, and call'd her self,

* The hand-maid of our Lord; and when Saint Elizabeth call'd her Blessed among Women, she did not ascribe to her self the glory of these Prerogatives she enjoy'd, but gave all to God; and taken up wholly with thoughts of a most profound Humility, offer'd up her thanks to him, for the favors he had shower'd down upon her: † My Soul, says she, do's magnifie the Lord, and my Spirit rejoices in God my Saviour; for he has regarded the Humility of his hand-maid. This sort of Humility is Practis'd even in Heaven it self, and thus appears, says Saint Gregory, by the Vision which Saint John had, * Of the four and twenty Elders, who fell down before him, who sat on the Throne; and Worshipping him, cast their Crowns at the foot thereof; for to Cast thy Crown at the foot of the Throne of God, is not to attribute thy Victories to thy self, but to acknowledge that they proceed wholly from him, and to give him all glory thereof as they did, saying; † Thou art worthy O Lord to receive all glory, honor and power, for thou hast Created all things, and by thy Will they were and are Created. 'Tis but just for us to cast our Crowns at thy Feet, because all that we have comes from thee, and whatever good there is in us, is the Work of thy Will, and the effect of thy Divine Grace. Thus then we see in what the third Degree of Humility consists. In not being exalted with the gifts we have receiv'd from God, and in not ascribing the glory of 'em to our selves, but wholly to him, as the Author and Dispenser of all good.

But,

† Magna & rara virtus perfectio est, cum magna operaris, magnum te nescire: cum omnibus nota sit sanctitas tua, te solum lateat; cum omnibus mirabilis appareas, tibi soli vilescas. Hoc ego ipsis virtutibus mirabilis iudico.
Bern. serm. 13. sup. Cant.
* Ecce ancilla Domini
Luc. 1. 38.

† Magnificat anima mea Dominum: & exultavit spiritus meus in Deo salutari meo. Quia respexit humilitatem ancillae suae. Ibid. 45.
Greg. in Job. 1. 22. c. 5.
* Procidebant viginti-quatuor seniores ante sedentem in throno, & adoraverunt viventem in saecula saeculorum, & mittebant coronas suas ante thronum.
Apo. 4. 10.
† Dicentes: Dignus es, Domine Deus noster, accipere gloriam, & honorem, & virtutem: quia tu creasti omnia, & propter voluntatem tuam esant, & creata sunt.
Ibid. ver. 11.

But, if it be in this, that Humility consists, some may say, we are then all humble; for who is he who do's not own that all that is good in us comes from God, and that of our selves we are nothing but Sin and Misery? Who is there that will not say; that he shou'd be the worst Man in the World, if God did but leave him for one moment? * *Thy destruction, O Israel, comes from thy self*, says the Lord, *by his Prophet Osee, but in me is thy help*. 'Tis an Article of Faith, that we have nothing of our own stock but Sin, and that we hold all the rest from God's bounty; and thus we seem all to have that Humility of which we speak; because we all believe so clear a truth as this is, which the holy Scripture is full of. † *Every good and perfect gift*, says the Apostle Saint James, *comes from above and descends from the Father of lights*. The same thing Saint Paul expresses in several places of his Epistles; * *What hast thou, say's he, that thou didst not receive? Of our selves we are not sufficient to think any good as of our selves; but our sufficiency is of God: For 'tis God that works in you, both to Will and to Do, according to his good pleasure*. Without him we can neither Do, nor Speak; Begin or End; nor even Will or Think any thing for our Salvation; but all must come from God. And what clearer comparison can be giv'n, to make us sensible of this truth, than that, which our Saviour himself makes use of in Saint John? † *As the branch*, says he, *cannot bear fruit of it self, except it remain in the Vine, no more can ye, except ye abide in me*. * *I am the Vine, ye are the branches; he that abides in me and I in him, brings forth much fruit, for without me ye can do nothing*. What brings forth more fruit, than the Branch joyn'd to the Vine, and what is more useless when separated from it? What is it good for? † *What shall be done with the Vine-tree*, says the Lord to Ezekiel, *shall it's Wood be made use of, to do any Work, or can a Pin be made of it to hang any thing upon? 'Tis good for nothing but to be thrown into the Fire*. This shews what we are, when separated from the true Vine, which is Jesus CHRIST. * *If any one*, says he, *abides not in me, he shall be cast forth as a branch, and shall wither, and then shall be gather'd up and thrown into the Fire to be burn'd*. Of our selves therefore we are good for nothing, but to be

* Perditio tua Israel ex te: tantummodo in me auxilium tuum.
Osee 13. 9.

† Omne datum optimum, & omne donum perfectum desursum est, descendens à Patre luminum.

Jac. 1. 17.

* Quid habes quod non accepisti? Non quod sufficientiam habes: cogitare aliquid à nobis, quasi ex nobis, sed sufficientia nostra ex Deo est. Deus est qui operatur in nobis & velle & perficere pro bona voluntate.

1 Cor. 4. 7. &

2 Cor. 4. 5.

Philipp. 2. 13.

† Sicut pal-

mes non pos-

sunt ferre fru-

ctum à semet-

ipsis, nisi man-

serint in vite,

sic nec vos,

nisi in me

maneritis.

Joan. 15. 4.

* Ego sum vi-

tis, vos pal-

mites: qui

manet in me

& ego in eo,

hic feret fru-

ctum multum,

quia sine me

nihil potestis

facere. Ibid.

† Fili homi-

nis, quid facis

de ligno vitis?

Nunquid tol-

lectur de ea lig-

num, ut fiat

opus? Aut

fabricabitur de ea parvulus, ut dependat in eo quodcumque vis? Eodem modo dicit et in eodem. Ezech. 15. 1. 3. & 4. * Si quis in me non manserit, mittetur foras, sicut palmes, & arefcet, & colligent eum, & in ignem mittent, & ardet. Joan. 15. 6.

burn'd;

† Gratia Dei
sum id quod
sum.
1 Cor. 15. 10.

burn'd; or if we are any thing, † 'Tis by the Grace of God that we are what we are. But every body being (as we have already sayd) fully convinc'd of all this, every one must acknowledge, that all that's good in us comes from God, that we have nothing of our selves but Sin; that we cannot ascribe the glory of any thing to our selves; and that 'tis due to God alone. Now this truth being so evident, and so acknowledg'd, the disposition of mind which it requires, appears at the same time so easie to a Man that believes, that we shou'd not (one wou'd think) have made the chief Degree of Humility to consist therein.

* Dei enim
sumus adjuto-
res.
1 Cor. 3. 19.

True it is, that 'tis a thing which seems easie at first sight, yet when 'tis consider'd not superficially, but at the bottom, 'tis very hard and difficult. It seem's easie to beginners, says *Cassian*, not to impute any thing to themselves; nor to rely any way upon their own strength; to ascribe all to God; and to expect every thing from him; but to do so, there's found indeed more difficulty than is imagin'd: For being we contribute something to our own good Actions, * Which we perform, and in which we co-operate with God; it happen's, that we come unawares to rely too much upon our selves; and Presumption and Pride slipping afterwards secretly into our Hearts, and representing our good Deeds to us, as our own Work; we proceed so far, as to be exalted thereupon, and to assume all the glory thereof to our selves. Lastly, 'tis not so easie a business, as it seems, to contain one's self herein; and we ought to be sufficiently convinc'd hereof, since the holy Fathers have fix'd the chief Degree of Humility in thus keeping in our selves; and asserted that the Perfect only, can arrive to that pitch. For when we find favors heap'd upon us, and consider the great things we perform, great Perfection is in good truth requir'd, to give the glory to God, to whom it belongs, without assuming any of it, or giving way to vain thoughts of complacency in our selves. We must be in-dow'd with very extraordinary Virtue, and such as is very hard to be acquir'd, to see our selves esteem'd as Saints by every body, without receiving thereby some impression upon our Heart.

To be surrounded with honors, without being any way mov'd thereby, is, says Saint *Chrysostom*, as if a Man shou'd be among beautiful Women, without ever looking upon 'em otherwife than he shou'd do. 'Tis therefore a difficult thing, and such as requires a thorô try'd Virtue. To look down from a

very

very high place, and not have your Brains turn, requires a good head; nor is every body's strong enough for that; for even Lucifer's and that of his Companions turn'd, when they saw themselves in so high a Station as they were; so that from thence they fell down into the bottomless Pit. What destroy'd him and them was, that † *He abode not in the truth*, that is to say, he abode not in his Duty of acknowledging what he ow'd to God; but began to please himself with his own Perfections; not that he believ'd that they proceeded from himself; for he knew very well that they all came from, and depended upon God, who had Created him; but * *By reason of his own beauty, his Heart was puffed up, says Ezekiel, and he lost his Wisdom; because of his brightness.* Of the gifts of God he made to himself Trophies of Pride, as if he had not receiv'd 'em; and instead of ascribing all the honor and glory thereof to God, he himself glory'd in 'em, as if he had had 'em only of himself; so that tho' he knew by his Understanding, that the glory belong'd to God; by his Will nevertheless, he robb'd him of it, and attributed it to himself. This Degree then of Humility of which we speak, is not so easie to arrive to, as it seem's; since the Angels themselves have found it so difficult, that not knowing how to keep within the bounds of it, they fell from the high Station where God had plac'd 'em. Now if the Angels could not see themselves so high, without falling; how much more cause have we to fear, we who are but miserable Men; to whom with great reason these words of the Prophet may be apply'd, † *As soon as they shall find themselves honor'd, and exalted, they shall consume as the Smoke that vanishes;* and as Smoke, the more it ascends, the more it dissipates itself and vanishes; in like manner, the more that Men find themselves exalted, the more do they evaporate, by thoughts of Pride and Vanity.

The Saviour of the World giv's us warning himself to have a care of these Rocks: He had sent forth his Disciples to Preach, and the Gospel says, that they return'd full of joy; telling him, that *The Devils themselves became subject to them in his Name.* Whereupon he sayd to them, that * *He saw Satan fall from Heaven like Lightning;* as if he wou'd have express'd himself thus, take heed, for 'twas Pride which made Lucifer fall from Heaven. First, seeing himself so Perfect he fell into a vain conceit of himself, and instead of ascribing to God the glory of the gifts he had receiv'd of him, he made use

† In veritate non stetit.
Joan. 8. 24.

* Et elevatum est cor tuum in decore tuo: perdidisti sapientiam tuam in decore tuo.
Ezech. 28. 17.

† Mox ut honorificati fuerint & exaltati, deficientes quemadmodum fumus deficient.
Psal. 36. 20.

* Videbam Satanam sicut fulgur de celo cadentem.
Luc. 10. 18.

use of 'em as steps to his Pride and Rebellion; beware, lest as bad shou'd happen to you. Beware lest the Miracles which ye work in my Name shou'd possess ye with a vain joy, and make ye forget what ye are. These words are directed to all those, who are imploy'd in the Ministry of the Gospel. Grow not Proud; because it has pleas'd God to make use of you for the profit of your Neighbour, and gaining Souls for Heaven. Give not way to thoughts of Vain-glory, when ye see your selves esteem'd, honor'd and applauded. Take heed of being exalted at any thing, or of suffering, either the honor or praises giv'n you, to make the least impression upon your Heart; for 'twas Pride that destroy'd Lucifer, and of an Angel of Light chang'd him into a Spirit of Darkness. By this, says Saint Austin, may be seen how dangerous Pride is, since it changes Angels into Devils; and how estimable, on the contrary, Humility is; being it makes Men like unto Angels.

*Ang. lib. seu
exhort. de salute
Men. ad quen-
dam Comitem.
cap. 18.*

CHAP. XXXI.

In what the third Degree of Humility consist's.

WE have not yet sufficiently explain'd, in what the third Degree of Humility consist's, so that 'tis necessary to explicate it a little more fully, that the Practice thereof may be made easier, which is all we pretend to. The holy Fathers say, that it consist's in knowing how to distinguish what we are, by the Mercy of God; from what we are, by the Corruption of our own Nature; thereby to give to every one what's his own; to God, what proceed's from him; and to our selves, what is purely ours; so that this Degree consists, not in simply knowing that we can neither Do nor Merit any thing as of our selves; that whatever good there is in us, comes from God; and that 'tis † God that work's in us, both to Will and to Do according to his good pleasure; because this truth being taught us by Faith, the being a Christian suffices to convince us thereof;

† Deus est
auct. qui ope-
ratur in vobis
& velle, &
perficere pro
bona volunta-
te.
Ad Phil. 1. 13.

thereof; but it consists in having this knowledge to be impress'd in our Hearts, that we may never fail upon all occasions to reduce it to Practice. And Saint Ambrose say's, 'Tis that which cannot be done without Almighty God's particular Grace, and thereupon he quotes this passage of Saint Paul, * But we have receiv'd, not the Spirit of this World, but the Spirit which is of God; that we may know the things that are giv'n to us by God. 'Tis, according to the Apostle, a most particular Grace of Almighty God, to know how to discern the gifts, which we have receiv'd from him, and to attribute 'em purely to his bounty; and according to Salomon, 'Tis great Wisdom so to do. † I knew, says he, that I could not keep my self Continent, if God had not giv'n me the Grace to do it, and even that was great Wisdom, to know from whom it proceeded. Now 'tis in what Saint Paul looks upon, as A most particular gift of the Spirit of God, and in what Salomon call's, * The greatest Wisdom, that the third Degree of Humility consist's. † What hast thou that thou didst not receive, and if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not receiv'd it?

This is the Humility which the Saints have Practis'd; who when enrich'd with the gifts of Heaven, rais'd to the top of Perfection, esteem'd and honor'd by every body, look'd nevertheless upon themselves as despicable in the sight of God, and remain'd always stedfast in the knowledge of their own empty and mean condition. Applause and honors rais'd in 'em no vain thoughts; because they knew how to distinguish, what did, and what did not belong to them; so that looking upon the favors which were heap'd upon 'em, and the honor and respects which were pay'd 'em, as things receiv'd from God, they gave him all the glory; and considering at the same time, that of themselves, they neither had or cou'd do any thing, they humbl'd themselves before him, under the sense of their own meanness. From thence it was, that altho' they saw themselves honor'd and respected, it made no impression upon 'em; nor did they thereupon set a higher value and esteem upon themselves; nay, to the contrary, they look'd upon the honors which were giv'n 'em, not to be directed to them, but to God whom they belong'd to; and in his glory they plac'd all their Joy and Content.

'Tis then with great reason, that the Perfect only are say'd to be capable of this kind of Humility; because, in the first place, it presupposes great gifts and favors of God, which is

Tom. II.

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that

*Ambros. ep. 14.
ad S. Paul.
Rom.*

* Nos autem
non spiritum
hujus mundi
accepimus, sed
spiritum qui
ex Deo est, ut
sciamus quæ a
Deo donata
sunt nobis.
1 Cor. 2. 12.

† Et ut sciri
quoniam aliter
non possem
esse continens,
nisi Deus daret,
& hoc ipsum
erat sapientia,
scire, cujus es-
set donum.
*Alia versio
legit.*

* Et hoc ip-
sum erat sum-
ma sapientia,
scire, quid
habes
quod non ac-
cepisti? Si au-
tem accepisti,
quid gloriaris
quasi non ac-
ceperis?
1 Cor. 4. 7.

that which makes Men truly great in his sight: And secondly, because to be really great before God, and in the sight of Men; and to be nevertheless contemptible in our own Eyes; is a very rare and sublime Perfection. 'Tis that which Saint *Chrysostom*, and Saint *Bernard* admir'd particularly in the Apostles, and several other great Saints, who being replenish'd with the gifts of God; raising the Dead, and working Dayly an Infinity of other Miracles, which made 'em be esteem'd by every body, preserv'd nevertheless in the midst of all the honors done 'em, as great a sense of their own meanness, as if they had had none of those advantages at all, but as if another had been the Instrument of what they did; or as if the honors which were giv'n 'em, had been giv'n to others.

* Non magnū est humilem esse in abjectione: magna propterea & rara virtus humilitatis honorata.
Bern. tom. 4. sup.
Missus est, &c.

* To be humble, when we are low and despicable, is not, says Saint *Bernard*, a strange thing; for a low condition, and contempt, serve to make us know what we are; but to be honor'd and esteem'd by all, to be look'd upon as a Saint and as a Man come down from Heaven, and yet remain as sensible of our mean and low condition and nothingness, as if we possess'd no advantage above others, is a very eminent, and an extraordinary Virtue indeed. Thus they do, say's the same Saint, who perform as they ought what our Saviour commands in these words; † Let your light so shine before Men, that they may see your good Works; and glorifie your Father which is in Heaven; and these are they who truly imitate the Apostle, and are true Preachers of the Gospel, * And who Preach not themselves but CHRIST JESUS. These infine are the good and faithful Servants, † Who seek not their own Interest, who rob God of nothing, and attribute nothing to themselves, but render faithfully all things to him, and give him the glory of all. And therefore they shall one Day hear from the Mouth of our Lord these words; * Well done, thou good and faithful Servant; because thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee the Ruler over many.

† Lucēat lux vestra coram hominibus, ut videant opera vestra bona, & glorificent Patrem vestrum, qui in cœlis est.
Matth. 5. 16.
* Non enim nosmetipsos prædicamus, sed Jesum Christum.
2 ad Cor. 4. 5.
† Qui non quaerunt quæ sua sunt.
1 Cor. 13. 5.
* Euge, serve bone, & fidelis; quia super pauca fuisi fidelis, super multa te constituam.
Matth. 25. 21.

C H A P. XXXII.

A more ample Explication of the same Subject.

WE have shown that the third Degree of Humility, which a Man arrives to, is, when having receiv'd great gifts from God, and seeing himself honor'd and esteem'd, he is not puffed up, or attributes any thing to himself; but ascribe's all to the Fountain of all things, which is God; giving him the glory of every thing, and abiding under as great a sense of Humility and Lowliness, as if he did nothing, and were not indow'd with any Virtue at all. Our Intention nevertheless is not to assert, that we shou'd not act on our part; or that we have no share in the good Works we do; for that wou'd be a very Erroneous Proposition; since 'tis very certain, that our free Will concurr's and operates joynly with God in every good Work, by reason that the assent we give thereunto, whereby we put our selves upon acting, is a free Consent; since all that we Will, and all that we Do, we do it by a free Motion of our Will; and it is in our Power to do, or not to do it. On the contrary, even that, which makes this third Degree of Humility so hard to arrive to; is, that on the one side, we must use all care and diligence imaginable to acquire Virtue, to resist Temptations, and to be successful in all our Pious undertakings, as if our own strength were sufficient to perform it; and on the other side, that we may (after having done all that depended on us) be oblig'd to confide no more therein, than as if we had done nothing, we must look upon our selves as unprofitable Servants, and put our confidence in God alone, according to these words of our Saviour: † *When ye shall have done all that is commanded ye, say still, ye are unprofitable Servants, we have done nothing but what we ought to have done. He do's not say, When ye shall have done part of what is commanded ye, but when ye shall have done all that is commanded ye:* Now to look upon one's self as unprofitable after that, there is

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very

† Cum feceritis omnia quę præcepta sunt vobis, dicite: Servi inutilis sumus, quod debuimus facere, fecimus. Luc. 17. 10.

very great need of a most profound Humility; he who arrives to be sensible, that he is but an unprofitable Servant, and that all that he can do, is not sufficient to make him Master of any Virtue, but that Virtue is a gift of God's pure bounty, he, says *Cassian*, will not be puffed up, when he has acquir'd it; because he'll be very sensible, that 'tis not what he ow's, to his own care, but an effect of the Mercy of God to him, according to the words of the Apostle, *What have you, which you have not receiv'd?*

*Cassian. coll. 11.
c. 4. 15. 16.*

*De natura &
gratia. c. 16.*

This Saint *Austin* explains by an excellent comparison, he says, *That without the Grace of God, we are like a Body without a Soul.* As a Dead Body is incapable of Motion; so we, without the Grace of God, are incapable of any Meritorious Action in his sight, and as Life and Motion are not to be attributed to the Body, but to the Soul that animates it; so the Soul must not ascribe to it's self the good Actions which it do's, but to God alone, who quickens it by his Grace, and gives it the means to perform 'em. In another place he says further, *That as the Eyes of the Body, let 'em be never so well dispos'd, cannot see any thing, without the help of light; so, how Righteous soever a Man may be, he can do no good, without being assisted by the Divine Light of Grace.* * If the Lord keeps not the City, the Watchman wakes but in vain. † O What a happiness would it be for Men, the same Saint *Austin* cry's out, if they did but well know themselves, and if they who glory, did glory in the Lord? If God, by dissipating the Clouds of their Mind by a Ray of his Light made 'em fully sensible, that whatever is Created has it's Being from him, subsist's only by him, and has no good in it self, but that which it pleases the Divine Mercy to shower down upon, and preserve in it. Now this is properly the third Degree of Humility; tho', after all we can say, to make it rightly understood, we must own that our words still fall short in expressing it's Perfection; because the Theory or Speculation thereof, is as sublime; as it's Practice, is difficult.

* Nisi Dominus custodierit civitatem, frustra vigilat qui custodit eam. *Psalm. 125. 1.*
† O si cognoscerent se homines, & qui gloriatur in Domino gloriatur. *Aug. l. 9. Conf. c. 13.*

* Ad omnia indignum, & inutilem se confiteri, & credere. *In Regul. S. Bened. c. 7.*

We may add further, that it consist's * *In the reckoning our selves as nothing*, which is so much recommended by all Masters of Spirit: 'Tis this sense of one's own unworthiness in all things, which Saint *Benedict*, and other Saints look upon as the chief Degree of Christian Humility. 'Tis in the continual diffidence of our selves, and an inire confidence in God, of which the Scripture so often speaks; and infine, this third Degree

Degree of Humility consists in that real Contempt of one's self, which 'tis to be wish'd, we had as often in our Heart, as in our Mouth; it being that which so palpably convinces us, that of our selves, we share in nothing but Sin and Misery, and that whatever good we have, or do; we neither have it or do it as of our selves, but hold it all from God, and to him we ought to ascribe all the glory.

If now, after all this, you do not yet comprehend well what this third Degree of Humility is, be not surpris'd, for the Theory thereof (as we have already sayd) is so very sublime, that 'tis not strange, if we do not easily conceive what it is. Thus it happen's in all Arts and Sciences, that what is most common in every Art and Science, is easily understood by every body; but none but such as are Masters in it, are well vers'd in the secrets and niceties thereof: So every one conceives easily what is most common and ordinary in Virtue, but the Perfect only are well acquainted with the whole excellence thereof. Wherefore Saint *Laurence Justinian* sayd, *That no body knows well what Humility is, but he who has receiv'd it from God*; and from thence it comes, that the Saints who were indow'd with a profound Humility, sayd things of themselves, which we who are not arriv'd at so high a degree of Virtue, cannot well comprehend, and such, as seem to us meer exaggerations; as for example, that they were the greatest Sinners in the World, and several such like expressions; for so far are we from saying or thinking such things of our selves, that we cannot so much as arrive to comprehend how others cou'd say so; the reason is, because we are not indow'd with so profound a Humility as they were, and so know not the excellence and secrets thereof. Wherefore endeavour to become humble, and to profit every Day more and more in the Science of Humility, and you'll then comprehend how such kind of things may be sayd with truth of one's self.

C H A P. XXXIII.

A further Explication yet, of the third Degree of Humility; and whence it comes, that they who are truly humble still look upon themselves as the least and worst of all.

THAT we may conceive yet better, the excellence of this third Degree of Humility, and fortify our selves in it, we must look backward. We have already shewn, that we hold our Natural Being and Faculties from God; because of our selves we were nothing, and therefore incapable either of the Operations of our Sense; or of those of our Memory, Will or Understanding; it being God alone that has made us capable of 'em. by giving us our Being; and consequently 'tis to him to whom we ought to ascribe both the Being we have, and the Natural Faculties which accompany it. The same may be sayd of our supernatural Being, and of the Operations of Grace; and with so much the more reason, as Grace is infinitely above Nature; for we hold not from our selves our supernatural Being, but from God; which is a Being of Grace, that he has freely added to our Natural Being. † *By Nature we were the Children of Wrath, Born in Sin and Enemies of God.* * *God has call'd you out of darkness to his marvellous light.* Of Enemies, he has made us Friends; and of Slaves, Children; of Objects of hatred and anger, which we were, he has render'd us acceptable in his sight. Nor was he mov'd thereunto, either in consideration of our former Merits, or future Services; but by his own pure Mercy and the Merits of our only Mediator JESUS CHRIST; since according to the words of the Apostle, † *We are Justified freely by the Grace of God, and by the Redemption that is in CHRIST JESUS.* Now as we cannot make our selves out of nothing, nor give our selves the natural faculties we enjoy, all which are the pure gift of the liberality of God, to whom alone

† Erasmus naturalis filii iræ.
Eph. 2. 3.

* Qui de tenebris vos vocavit in admirabile lumen suum.
1 Pet. 2. 9.

† Justificati gratis per gratiam ipsius, per redemptionem, quæ est in Christo Jesu.
Rom. 3. 24.

alone we owe intirely the glory thereof; so cannot we of our selves, get out of the darkness of Sin, in which we were, and in which we have been conceiv'd, except God by his Infinite goodness, draws us out of it; and 'tis impossible to do any Meritorious Action for the gaining everlasting Life, if he gives us not the Grace to do it; for 'tis the Grace of God alone which stamps a Merit upon our Actions; as the Coin of a Prince, gives the value to Money. Thus ought we to ascribe all the glory to God alone, who is the Author of Grace, as well as of Nature; and to have always in our Mouths and Hearts these words of the Apostle, * *By the Grace of God I am what I am.*

* Gratia Dei
sum id quod
sum.
1 Cor. 15. 10.

Moreover, as we have shown, that in the order of Nature, 'tis God, who has not only giv'n us our Being; but continually preserves us in it, who sustaining us by his Almighty hand, hinders us from relapsing into the Abyſſe of Nothing, out of which he has drawn us; so also in the order of Grace, 'tis not only God who has drawn us out of the darkness of Sin, to the marvellous light of his Grace; but 'tis he, who holds us continually by the hand, to hinder us from falling back into that Abyſſe; so that thou'd he withdraw his hand but one moment, and permit the Devil to Tempt us at his pleasure, we shou'd at the same instant relapse into our former Sins, and into several other more hainous ones.

† *Because the Lord is at my right hand, says David, nothing can be able to move me.* 'Tis thy Grace O Lord, which draws us out of our Sins, and 'tis that which hinders us from relapsing into them; if I have risen again, 'tis because thou hast reach'd out thy hand to me; and if I now stand, 'tis because thou upholdest me.

† Quoniam a
dextris est mi-
hi, ne commovear.
Psal. 115. 8.

Now as I have shown, that this consideration is sufficient to convince us, in Natural things, that we are nothing; because in reallity we are and were nothing of our selves, and shou'd be still so, did not God preserve us every moment; so ought the same consideration to be sufficient in the things of Grace, to convince us that we are still Sinners; because we really are, and were nothing of our selves but Sinners; nor shou'd we be any thing else, if God did not always hold us by the hand.

Albertus Magnus therefore says, that he who will acquire Humility ought to plant the root of it in his heart; that is, he ought to make it his exercise, how to be sensible of his own weakness and misery, and to comprehend not only how

Tract. de virtutibus
perfectissimae
virtutis, c. 2.

* Nisi quia
Dominus ad-
juvit me, pau-
lo minus ha-
bitasset in in-
ferno anima
mea.
Psal. 93. 17.
† Si dicebam:
Mortuus est pes
meus, miseri-
cordia tua Do-
mine adjuvat
me. *Ibid.*, 18.

* Christus Je-
sus venit in
hunc mundum
peccatores sal-
vos facere,
quorum pri-
mum ego sum.
1 Tim. 1. 15.
† Non fallit
nos Aposto-
lus, nec adu-
latione uti ju-
ber, cum ad
Phil. 2. 3, dicit:
In humilitate
superiores sibi
invicem arbi-
trantes; & ad
Rom. 12. 10,
Honore invi-
cem preveni-
entes.
August. lib. 83.
quæst. 9. 71. &
l. de S. Virg.
c. 46.

how weak and miserable he is; but to what a degree of weakness he would be reduc'd, even in the very moment of his reflecting upon himself, did not God, thro' his infinite goodness, turn him from the occasions of Sin, and help and succour him in Temptations. Into what Sins should not I have fallen O my God; if by thy Mercy thou hadst deliver'd me? How many times hast thou remov'd from me the occasions of Sin, which might have overcome me (since David himself fell under 'em) if thou, who know'st my weakness, hadst not put 'em out of my way? How many times hast thou ty'd up the hands of the Devil, to hinder him from Tempting me, so far as he cou'd; or that he should not Tempt me at least beyond my Power to resist? How often might I have say'd with the Prophet, * *Unless the Lord had help'd me, my Soul had almost descended into Hell?* How often, when I was attack'd, and stagger'd, have I been upheld by thy Almighty hand? † *If I say'd my foot slips, thy Mercy O Lord succour'd me.* How often alas! Should I have been destroy'd, had not God by his goodness and infinite Mercy preserv'd me? These are the thoughts we ought to have of our own weakness and misery, being we are nothing of our selves but weakness and misery; and should fall into all manner of disorders, if God did abandon, or withdraw his hand from us, but for one moment.

Hence it is, that many holy Men have sought occasions to enter into such thoughts of so profound a Humility, that not content to be reckon'd barely wicked, they have look'd upon themselves, as the greatest Sinners upon the face of the Earth. God rais'd Saint Francis to so high a Degree of Perfection, and design'd so eminent a Seat in Glory for him, that he one Day shew'd that Saints Companion, the place he had reserv'd for him in Heaven among the Seraphins; yet the same Religious Man asking the Saint afterwards, *What Opinion he had of himself;* I think, answer'd he, *that there is not in the World a greater Sinner than my self.* Saint Paul believ'd the same thing of himself; * *JESUS CHRIST, came into this World, says he, to save Sinners, of which I am the chief.* Thus he teaches us, to abide in the same sentiments of Humility as he did, to value our selves less than any body, and to prefer every body before our selves: † *For the Apostle decri's us not in this, say's Saint Austin, nor teaches us flatteries; when he Writes to the Philippians, That every one of 'em should in Humility esteem others better than themselves; and to the Romans also, That they should in honor prevent one another.*

another. 'Twas not out of a feign'd Humility, that the Saints shyd themselves the greatest Sinners upon Earth; 'twas because they really thought so; and when they recommend to us the Practice of this Exercise, 'tis because they'll have us in good earnest, to think the same thing of our selves, and not be contented, only to make as if we did so.

Saint Bernard examining these words of our Saviour, *When thou shalt be invited to a Marriage, sit down in the lowest place*; observes, that he say's not, sit down in one of the middlemost places, or in one of the lowermost, but *Sit down in the last place*; to the end, says the Saint, that you may not pretend, not only, not to prefer your self before, but not so much as to equal your self to, any body; he orders you to take the last place, that is to say, to look upon your self as the most unworthy of all, and as the greatest Sinner. Nor do you expose your self to any danger in thus giving place to every body; but wou'd run a great hazard, by preferring your self, before any one; for as in passing throu' a low Door there's no danger in stooping too much; but you may easily break your head, shou'd you stoop never so little less then you ought; so there is no hazard in much humbling your self; but a great deal in not doing it enough, and in preferring your self before any one whosoever.

How know you, but that he whom you do not only think more wicked than your self, but whom you look upon as the worst of all Men, may become a better Man than you, or any one else; or whether he be not so already in the sight of God? How know you whether God may not change his hand, and prefer him before you; as Jacob did, when he Bless'd Ephraim the Younger Brother, before Manassah the Elder? How know you what God may have wrought in his heart since Yesterday; nay, since the very last Moment? * *For in an instant he can easily enrich the Poor*. He needs only to look with an Eye of Mercy upon him. Of a Publican, and Persecutor of his Church, he can easily make an Apostle and Preacher of his Name; † *Of Stones he can raise up Children to Abraham*; and in a moment make harden'd Sinners, become his own Children. How much was the Pharisee mistaken, who judg'd so ill of Saint Mary Magdalen? The Parable which our Saviour made use of, to reprove him for the censuring of her, made him sensible, that the whom he believ'd a publick Sinner, was become more Righteous than himself. Wherefore Saint Bennet, Saint Thomas, and several other

Tom. I I.

N n

Saints

Bern. serm. 17.
sup. Cant. in
allud: Cum
vocat fueris
ad nuptias, re-
cumbe in no-
vissimo loco.
Luc. 14. 10.

* Facile est e-
nim in oculis
Dei subito ho-
nestare paupe-
rem.
Eccl. 11. 23.

† Potens est
Deus de lapi-
dibus istis sus-
citare filios
Abraha.
Matth. 3. 9.

† Non reputes te aliquid profecisse, nisi omnibus inferiorum te essentias.
Sens. Christ. lib. 2. cap. 2.

Saints say, that one of the twelve Degrees of Humility, is to believe, and to own one's self the least of all; and 'tis not sufficient only to express it with our Lips, but it must also come from our very Heart. † *Believe not*, says the Author of the Imitation of CHRIST, *that you are a Proficient in Virtue, if you look not upon your self, as the least of all your Brethren.*

CHAP. XXXIV.

*How that just and holy Men, may with Truth
 look upon themselves, as worse and less than
 any body; and stile themselves the
 greatest Sinners in the World.*

B EING we have shown that we ought to try to arrive so far, as to reckon our selves the least of all; and to look upon our selves, as the greatest Sinners in the World; 'twill not be a vain curiosity, but a very profitable inquiry, to explain how the greatest Saints, cou'd truly have such thoughts of themselves as these. Some of 'em being content to have 'em in their heart, have not been willing to answer, to what has been ask'd 'em thereupon. And thus the holy Abbot *Zosimus* express'd himself before a certain Philosopher, saying, *He believ'd himself the greatest Sinner in the World*; and being ask'd by him, *How he cou'd have so bad an Opinion of himself, since he knew very well, that he observ'd God's Commands*: *All that I can tell you*, answer'd he, *is, that I know that I speak truth, and that I am very sensible of what I say; ask me therefore no more.* But Saint *Austin*, Saint *Thomas*, and several other Saints answer the Question, and solve it differently. Saint *Austin's* and Saint *Thomas's* solution thereof, is, that when a Man looks upon his own faults and considers at the same time the hidden favors, which God do's, or can do his Neighbour, every one may then with truth say of himself, that he is the greatest of Sinners; because he is acquainted with his own faults, but knows not

*Doroth. doct. 2.
 de humilit.*

the secret gifts, which his Brother has receiv'd of God. But you'll say, you see him every Day commit such and such Sins and Imperfections, which you commit not ! And how know you what God may have wrought in his heart, even since the last moment ? How know you, but in that instant, he may have conferr'd upon him some particular Grace, whereby he may become more Righteous than you. The Pharisee and the Publican enter'd at the same time into the Temple to Pray. The Pharisee look'd upon himself as Righteous, and the Publican on himself as a Sinner ; our Saviour, nevertheless says, † *That the last went down to his House Justif'd, and the Pharisee departed out of the Temple with his own Condemnation.* This Example ought to suffice for our Instruction, never to prefer, nor even to equal our selves to any one ; but to keep still in the last place, which is the only one, where we may with security put our selves.

To him that is truly humble, 'tis easie to look upon himself as the least of all : For in his Brethren he sees nothing but what is good, and nothing in himself but his own faults ; and he is so taken up in considering, and seeking how to mend 'em, that believing he has cause enough to Weep for 'em, he never looks up, to behold what is amiss in others ; and for that reason, he has a good Opinion of all his Brethren, and an ill one of himself alone ; nay, the more he increases in Sanctity, the more easie he find's it, to humble himself in this manner ; not only because, as he makes Proficiency in other Virtues, he do's so too in Humility, and the Knowledge of himself, and comes thereby to have a greater Contempt of himself ; but, also because the more sensible he is of the goodness and mercy of God, the more acquainted he is also, with his own misery ; and thus * *One Abyſſe carrying him into another* ; from the Abyſſe of the greatness of God, into that of his own nothingness ; he do's by the light of Grace, see into the very least of his own Imperfection. Now if we set any value upon our selves, the reason is ; because we have little knowledge of God, and are not illuminated with light from Heaven ; the Ray's of the Sun of Justice have not yet penetrated into our Soul, and so far are we from being able to discover the least Atom's of dust, which are our small faults, that we become so Blind as not to discern the greatest imperfections.

To this may be added, that Humility is so agreeable to God, that the better to preserve it in the heart of his Servants,

† Dico vobis,
descendit hic
iustificatus in
domum suam
ab illo.
Luc. 18 14.

* Abyſſus a-
byſſum invo-
cat.
Psal. 41. 8.

he often so conceal's the favors which he confers upon 'em, and so secretly imparts his gifts to them, that even he who receives 'em, perceives 'em not; nor believes he has receiv'd any thing. * *All the beauty of the Tabernacle*, says Saint Hierom, *was cover'd with the Skins of Beasts and Goat's-hair*; and thus it is, that God uses sometimes to hide under Temptations, the excellency of his gifts and benefits, and to suffer even some small faults in his Servants, that so Humility may be preserv'd in 'em, as Coals are kept alive under Ashes.

* Tota illa tabernaculi pulchritudo pellibus tegitur, & cilicibus. Hier. in Prologo galeato. Exod. 36.

Clim. 11. art. 20.

Saint John Climachus says, that the Devil, who seeks nothing but our Destruction, endeavours to set continually our Virtues and good Actions before our Eyes, that so he may make us Proud; and that God on the contrary, who desires only our Salvation, gives particular light to his Elect, to make 'em perceive even the least of their Imperfections; and hides the favors he bestows upon 'em in such a manner, that often they perceive not when they receive 'em. All holy Writers teach the same Doctrine; and Saint Bernard say's, † *That 'tis by a particular disposition of the Divine goodness, which is pleas'd to keep us humble, that the greater progress one ordinarily makes in Perfection, the less he thinks he has made; for when any one is arriv'd to the highest degree of Virtue, God permits that something of the Perfection of the lowest should yet remain to be acquir'd, to the end that he may not think he is advanc'd so far as he is.* Thus the comparison, which is made between Humility and the Sun, is a very just one; for as the Stars disappear, and hide themselves before the Sun, so when Humility Shines truly in Souls, all other Virtues hide themselves before it in such a manner, that they who are humble indeed, seem to themselves, to have no Virtue at all.

† Nimirum conservandæ humilitatis gratiâ, divina solet pietas ordinare, ut quando quis plus profecit, eo minus se reputet profecisse: Nam & usque ad supremum humilitatis gradum si quis eo usque pervenerit, aliquid ei de primi gradus imperfectione relinquatur, ut vix sibi primum videatur adeptus.

Bern. serm. de quatuor mod. grand.

Greg. lib. 4.

Mor. ca. 21.

Pastor. p. 4. in fine, & 3.

Dial. ca. 14.

* Boni soli, bona sua non vident, qui in se videnda omnibus ad exemplum præbent.

Greg. lib. 11. ca. 21.

Mor. ca. 5.

† Ignorabat quod cornuta esset facies sua ex confortio sermonis Domini.

Exod. 34. 29.

* *They are the only Persons*, says Saint Gregory, *who see not in themselves the exemplary Virtues which all the World admires.* When Moses came down from Mount Sinai, where he had forty Days Convers'd with God Face to Face, † *His Countenance shin'd so bright, that all the Children of Israel*, says the Scripture, *beheld it, and he alone knew not that his Face shin'd; because of the Conversation he had had with the Lord.* So it is with the humble Man; he alone sees not his own Virtues; and whatever he do's see in himself, appears full of Imperfections; nay, he also thinks, that he sees but the least part of his faults; and that those which he sees not, are much more numerous; and thus can he easily look upon himself

self as the least of all his Brethren, and believe that he alone is the greatest Sinner in the World.

True it is, that thô God lead's many Saints, in this way which we have shown, by hiding from 'em the favors which he confer's on 'em; yet the means he makes use of, for the conduct of his Elect are different; for he sometimes discover's also his gifts to those upon whom he bestows 'em; that hereby they may esteem and acknowledge 'em as much as they ought to do. Saint Paul therefore sayd, * *But we have not receiv'd the Spirit of this World, but the Spirit which is of God, that we might know the things which are giv'n to us by God:* And do's not the holy Virgin, in her Spiritual Song, say, † *That she magnifies the Lord; because the Almighty had done great things to her.* This knowledge is so far from being contrary to Humility and Perfection; that 'tis even accompany'd with so Perfect a Humility, that for that reason, 'tis call'd the Humility of the Perfect.

* Nos autem non spiritum huius mundi accepimus, sed spiritum qui ex Deo est, ut sciamus quæ à Deo nobis donata sunt.
1 Cor. 2. 12.
† Quia fecit mihi magna qui potens est.
Luc. 1. 49.

In this notwithstanding there is so great a danger and mistake, that holy Writers give us warning to beware thereof; which is, that sometimes one thinks he is more enrich'd with the favors of God, than he really is. Witness that unfortunate Man to whom the Lord directs these words in the *Apocalypse*: * *Thou say'st I am Rich, and abound with all things, and have need of nothing, and know'st thou not, that thou art miserable, poor, blind and naked?* In the same Error was the Pharisee in the Gospel, † *Who gave God thanks, that he was not as other Men;* he thought that he had great advantages above 'em, which he had not; and prefer'd himself before 'em, for that very reason. Now this sort of Pride, do's sometimes creep so secretly into our heart, that we are often full of our selves, without perceiving it; wherefore 'tis good to have our Eyes always open upon the Virtues of others, and shut upon our own; and the living thus in this holy fear, will with more security, preserve the gifts of God in us.

* Dicit: Dives sum, & locupletatus, & nullius ego: & nescis quia tu es miser, & miserabilis, & pauper, & cæcus, & nudus.
Apoc. 3. 17.
† Deus, gratias ago tibi, quia non sum sicut cæteri hominum.
Luc. 18. 11.

As God nevertheless has not oblig'd himself, to conduct every body by this way, but leads his Elect by several Paths; so it now and then happens, that he do's the favor to some, which he did to Saint Paul, to make 'em know the greatness of those gifts, which they have receiv'd from him. Now this being so, how can it be (as some may say) that they who see the Divine favors heap'd upon 'em, can truly believe themselves the least of all Men; and assert, that they are the greatest Sinners in the

the World? That he indeed from whom God hides the gifts which he confers on him, and who finds no Virtue in himself, but a great many imperfections and defects, shou'd have these kind of thoughts of himself, is not difficult to conceive; but that they, who know to what a pitch God has rais'd 'em, shou'd have the like thoughts, is very hard to comprehend. Yet all this may very well be. Wherefore be but as humble as Saint *Francis*, and you'll quickly conceive it. When he was one Day press'd by his Companion, to tell him, how he cou'd have so low an Opinion, and speak at that rate of himself as he did; I am, sayd the Saint, fully convinc'd, that had the greatest of Sinners receiv'd the same favors that I have done, he wou'd have made greater improvement of 'em than I have done; and on the contrary, I firmly believe, that did God withdraw his hand from me but one moment, I shou'd fall into the most extravagant enormities in the World, and be the worst of Men; therefore do I look upon my self as the greatest and most ungrateful of all Sinners. This answer is very just, and proceeds from a great stock of Humility, and at the same time contain's admirable Doctrine; for this kind of reflection, is in reality that which has mov'd the Saints to humble themselves, and stoop to the very Center of the Earth; and is that which has made 'em fall down at every bodies feet, and truly reckon themselves the greatest Sinners. The knowledge of our own weakness, which is the root of Humility, was so fix'd in their hearts, that they easily distinguish'd, what they were in themselves, from what they were by Grace; wherefore considering, that if God had left 'em but one moment, they might have grown the greatest Sinners; they always look'd upon themselves as such; and upon the gifts of God, as borrow'd favors, which instead of making 'em less humble, did on the contrary, inspire 'em with a more profound sense thereof; because they always thought, that they made not that use as they ought, of the benefits they had receiv'd; so that on whatever side we turn our Eyes, whether we cast 'em down, upon what we have of our selves; or lift 'em up to behold what we have receiv'd from God; we shall always find occasion, to humble and esteem our selves less than all others.

Greg. in Job.
lib. 14. ca. 17.

Saint *Gregory* upon this occasion lay's great weight upon the words of *David*, when it being in his power to Kill *Saul* in the Cave into which he was enter'd, and letting him go out of it again without intending him any harm, he call'd

to

to him from afar off; * *Whom pursuest thou O King of Israel? Thou pursuest a dead Dog and a Flea.* David, says this great Saint, was already Anointed King, and had been inform'd by *Samuel*, who had Anointed him, that God intended to take the Kingdom from *Saul*, to confer it upon him; he nevertheless humbles himself, and bows to him, tho' he knew, that even by the choice of God, he was preferred before him; and was more acceptable then he, in the sight of the most high. This shows us very well, that we ought, with much more reason, to place our selves beneath our Brethren; because we know not in what degree of esteem they are in God's sight.

* Quem persequeris, Rex Israel, quem persequeris? Canem mortuum persequeris, & pulicem unum.
1 Reg. 24. 15.

CHAP. XXXV.

That the third Degree of Humility, is a means to overcome all kind of Temptations, and to acquire the Perfection of all kinds of Virtues.

CASSIAN says, that 'twas a constant Tradition, and a sort of first principle among the Fathers of the Desert, that one cou'd not acquire Purity of Heart, or the Perfection of other Virtues; if he were not first convinc'd, that all the care he cou'd take of himself in order thereunto, was to no purpose, without God's particular assistance, who is the Author and giver of all good; and the knowledge of this, adds he, must not be only a knowledge of speculation, founded either on what we have had by hear-say, on what we have read, or on the Revelations of Faith; it must be a knowledge of Practice and Experience; that makes this truth so palpable, that we may touch it as 'twere with our very finger; so that this is indeed the third Degree of Humility, of which we speak. And of this sort of Humility, are those many passages of Scripture to be understood, which promise the humble so great rewards; wherefore with great reason it is, that holy Writers fix the chief Degree of Humility, in this knowledge we speak of, and

Cass. l. 12. de
Bis. superb. c.
13.

*Cass. coll. 12.
Ab. Chorem. c.
4. & 16.*

*Aug. l. 2. de
sanct. Virg. c.
39.*

*Pallad. in ejus
vita.*

and hold, that 'tis the Foundation of all Virtues, and a necessary disposition to receive all other gifts of God. *Cassian*, afterwards, treats more particularly on this subject, and coming to speak of Chastity, says, that all the endeavours we can make to acquire it, signifie nothing, till by experience we are sensible, that we cannot acquire it by our own strength, but that it must be by a gift of the liberality and mercy of God. With this, the Doctrine of Saint *Austin* agrees very well. He say's, that the chief way to obtain and preserve Chastity, is not to believe that of our selves we can acquire it, or by our own care; because we deserve to lose it, when we lay any stress on our own strength; but by believing, that it must be a gift of God, that it must come from above, and that from thence all must be expected.

This it is which made an Antient Hermit say, that one cou'd never be deliver'd from Temptations of Impurity, till he were first thoroly convinc'd, that Chastity is a gift of God, and not an effect of our own care. This is confirm'd by the Example, which *Palladius* relates of an Abbot call'd *Moses*, who being of a strong and vigorous Constitution, and giv'n to Incontinence; suffer'd in the beginning of his Conversion great Temptations of Impurity: Which he endeavour'd to overcome by all those means, which several holy Fathers of the Desert, had Councell'd him to make use of. He was continually at his Prayers, and gave himself so much thereunto for six Years together, that he usually pass'd the greatest part of the Night standing at 'em; he Labor'd very much with his hands, Eat nothing but a little Bread; carry'd Water up and down to the Cells of the Antient Fathers, and exercis'd himself continually in the Practice of several other Austerities. With all this notwithstanding, he cou'd not overcome the Temptations which tormented him; the attacks whereof were so violent, that he was in danger to sink under 'em, and to quit the Solitary Life he led. Being thus troubl'd in Mind, the holy Abbot *Isidore*, coming to him, as sent from God, told him, *I assure you in the Name of Jesus CHRIST, that your Temptations shall forthwith cease*; as indeed they then did for good and all. But *Moses*, if thou wou'd'st know, continues the Saint, why God has not giv'n thee a perfect Victory over 'em till now, 'tis because he wou'd not have thee attribute it to thy self, or become Proud thereupon, as if thou had'st by thy own strength obtain'd it; so that it is for thy good, that he has permitted thee to be

so long Tempted. *Moyſes* was not yet come to have an inſure diffidence in himſelf; and Almighty God, that he might bring him to it, and hinder him from falling into Proud and Preſumptuous thoughts, permitted him to be ſo long a time expoſ'd, to ſuch ſtrong and violent assaults; and did not permit that the Practice of ſo many holy Exerciſes, ſhou'd get him an inſure Victory over a Paſſion, which others had conquer'd with a great deal leſs pains.

The ſame *Palladius* ſays, that the like happen'd to Abbot *Pacomius*, who was ſubject to Temptations of Impurity, even to the Age of threeſcore and ten, who once upon Oath aſſur'd him, that after he was fifty Years Old, he had for twelve Years together ſuffer'd ſuch frequent and brisk assaults, that not a Day or Night paſſ'd; wherein he was not to defend himſelf againſt ſome one or other of that nature; for all that he cou'd do, to preſerve or free himſelf, ſignifi'd nothing; ſo that complaining one Day, that he thought God had forſaken him, he heard a Voice within him ſay, *Know, that thou haſt been ſo long expoſ'd to ſuch ſevere assaults, that thou might'eſt be the better acquainted with thy own weakneſs; and how little thou art able to perform of thy ſelf; and that being thus ſtripp'd of all the confidence thou had'eſt in thy ſelf, thou mighteſt fall down before me, and in all things, have recourſe only to me.* After this, he found himſelf ſo comforted and ſtrengthen'd, that he never after had the like Temptations. So that God will have us put all our truſt in him alone, and none at all in our ſelves.

Now this Doctrine is not only Saint *Auſtins*, *Caffian's*, and that of the Antient Fathers of the Deſart; but 'tis alſo the Holy Ghoſt's; who ſpeaks thereof in the Book of Wiſdom, in terms, wherein the Practice is joyn'd to the Speculation.

† *When I found,* ſays *Salomon*, *that I cou'd not be indow'd with Continency, otherwiſe than by the gift of God, (and even that it was a point of great Wiſdom to know from whom the gift came) I proſtrated my ſelf before the Lord, and Pray'd to him with my whole Heart.* The word *Continency* is here a general word, which ſignifies not only a reſiſtance of motions contrary to Chaſtity, but alſo the moderation of whatever is againſt reaſon; and in the ſame ſenſe this other paſſage of *Eccleſiaſtes*, is to be underſtood; that * *A Contented Soul is worth all the Riches in the World;* that is; ſuch a one who keeps all his Paſſions within the bounds of Reaſon and Virtue; *Salomon* hereby ſignifies, that knowing,

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† Et ut ſcivi quoniam aliter continens eſſe non poſſem, niſi Deus daret & hoc ipſum erat ſapientiæ, ſcire cujus eſſet donum: adii Dominum, & deprecatus ſum illum ex totis precordiis meis.

Sap. 8. 21.

* Omnis autem ponderatio non eſt digna contentis animæ. Eccleſ. 26. 20.

that he cou'd not contain his Passions within the bounds of Virtue, without God's particular Grace (and it was, as he sayd, great Wisdom to know, that without God's help one can do nothing) he had recourse to God, and Pray'd to him with all his Heart to be assisted by his Grace. So that this kind of knowledge is a proper means to keep us Continent, to repress and regulate our Passions; to get the Victory over all Temptations, and to acquire the Perfection of all manner of Virtues. 'Tis that which the Royal Prophet confesses, when he says, † *Except the Lord Builds the House, they that Build it labour in vain; and except the Lord keeps the City; the Watchman watches but in vain.* 'Tis God must bestow gifts upon us; and 'tis he that must preserve 'em in us, after having bestow'd 'em; otherwise whatever we shall do, will be to no purpose.

† Nisi Dominus edificaverit domum in vanum laboraverunt qui edificaverunt eam. Nisi Dominus custodierit civitatem, frustra vigilat qui custodit eam. Psal. 126. 1.

C H A P. XXXVI.

That Humility is not contrary to a greatness of Courage, but is the Source and Foundation thereof.

S. Th. 2. 2. q. 41. art. 1. ad 3. ad Humil. q. 129. de magnan. 1.

SAINTE Thomas treating of Magnanimity, proposes this difficulty; both holy Writers, and the Gospel, says he; teach us on the one side, that Humility is very necessary for Christians; and on the other side, that Magnanimity is very necessary for 'em also; but more especially for those, who are exalted to high Employments; these two Virtues notwithstanding, appear directly opposite; for Magnanimity is a greatness of Courage, which moves us to undertake great and glorious things; yet nothing seems more contrary to Humility than this. For in the first place, the undertaking of great things seems wholly repugnant to Humility; for one of the Degrees of this Virtue, is to acknowledge and believe, that we are unworthy of every thing, and good for nothing; and it is presumptuous to attempt, what we are not capable to perform. In the Second place; to attempt things which

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initle us to honor, seems still a further acting against Humility; because he who is truly humble, ought to be far, from so much as thinking how to get honor. These Objections, *Saint Thomas* answers very well; and say's, that tho' these two Virtues seem contrary to one another, if we look only on the outside, yet they are not so; not only because no Virtue can be contrary to another; but because Humility and Magnanimity are very like, and depend upon each other. First, as to the attempting great things, which is the property of Magnanimity, 'tis so far from being contrary to Humility, that 'tis what belongs properly to none, but to him who is truly humble: To attempt great things upon our own strength, would indeed be presumption and pride; for what can we do of our selves, since according to the Apostle, * *We are not able even to think any thing as of our selves?* But furthermore, 'tis only upon the diffidence of our selves, and our confidence in God, that Christian Magnanimity lays the Foundation of great enterprises; and 'tis that which Humility do's likewise; for the reason why holy Writers call it the Foundation of all Virtues, is, (as we have already sayd) because 'tis that which break's the ground for the Spiritual Building, which digg's the Foundations, and throws out the light and sandy Earth, till coming to the solid Stone, which is CHRIST JESUS, it begins to build thereupon.

Upon this passage of the Canticles, † *Who is she that comes up from the Wilderness, breathing nothing but Perfumes, and leaning on her beloved?* *Saint Bernard* shews, how all our Virtue and good Works ought to lean upon JESUS CHRIST; and upon this occasion he quotes these words of the Apostle to the *Corinthians*: * *By the Grace of God, I am what I am, and his Grace in me was not in vain, but I labour'd more abundantly than all.* Have a care great *Saint* what you say, *Saint Bernard* crys out, and that you may not lose the fruit of all your labours, lean upon your beloved; see therefore how he lean's; † *Yet 'tis not I,* says the Apostle, *but the Grace of God which was with me.* After the same manner he expresses himself in his Epistle to the *Philippians*, for after having sayd, *I can do all things,* he immediately leans upon his beloved, and adds, *In him who strengthens me.* There's nothing but we can do with the help of God; his Grace can make us capable of every thing; upon that we ought to rely, and upon that the greatness of a Christian's courage ought to be founded: * *For they who hope in God shall change their*

* Non quod sufficientes sumus cogitare aliquid a nobis. 2 Cor. 3. 5.

† Qui est ista quæ ascendit de deserto delictis affluens, innixa super dilectum suum? Bern. serm. 60. expositio Cant. 3. 5.

* Gratia Dei sum id quod sum, & gratia ejus in me vacua non fuit, sed abundanti- us illis omni- bus laboravi. 1 Cor. 15. 10. † Non ego autem, sed gratia Dei mecum. Vbi sup.

* Qui sperant in Domino mutabunt fortitudinem. Isa. 40. 31.

their strength, says the Prophet *Isay*. They shall change Earthly strength, for that of Heaven; their own weak Arm, for the Arm of the Almighty; and so there will be nothing which they are not capable to undertake and perform; because they can do all things with Gods help. † *Nothing is difficult to the humble*, say's Saint *Leo*, for he who is truly humble is Magnanimous, Courageous and Bold to attempt great things, nothing seems impossible to him; because 'tis not in himself, but in God that he places his confidence; and when he turns his Eyes upon God, he sees nothing that can be any obstacle to him. * *Thro' God we shall do valiantly, and he it is who shall destroy those that afflict us*. These are the thoughts which we, who are Ministers of the Gospel, ought most particularly to have thoughts of Courage, Resolution and Confidence in God; and not thoughts of Fear and Pusillanimity, which may take away from us the desire of labouring in our Functions: So that, we must be humble in our selves, acknowledging that of our selves we neither are, nor can do any thing; but we must also at the same time, place our courage and confidence in God, and believe that with his Grace and Assistance, we are capable of doing all things.

This is perfectly well explain'd by Saint *Basil* upon these words of *Isay*, † *Here am I, send me*. God design'd to send some body to his People; and because he will have a concurrence of our consent, in things which he designs to work in us and by us, he spoke so, that *Isay* might understand him, * *Whom shall I send, and who will go from us?* The Prophet answer's, *Here am I, send me*. He say's not, continues this Father, I will be the Man that shall go, I will perform all that is to be done; for he was humble, he was sensible of his own weakness, and he saw that it wou'd have been presumptuous in him, to promise to do a thing that was above human strength; but he says only, *Here am I, O Lord send me*, as if he had sayd, I know that of my self I am not capable of so high an Employment, but thou canst make me capable thereof, thou canst put into my Mouth, words powerful enough to soften the hardest Hearts, and if thou send'st me, there's nothing but I shall be able to do in thy Name. *Go then*, says our Lord to him. And Saint *Basil* observes hereupon, that the reason why *Isay* became the Ambassador of God, and Minister of his Word; was, because he knew how to keep himself within the bounds of Humility, and had not attributed to himself the power of going, but acknowledging his

† Nihil arduum humilibus.
Leo Papa Ser.
1. de Epiph.

* In Deo faciemus virtutem, & ipse ad nihilum deducet tribulantes nos
Psal. 59. 14.

† Ecce ego, mitte me.
Isa. 6. 8.

* Quem mittam, & quis ibit nobis?

his own incapacity and weakness, and convinc'd that he cou'd do every thing with the help of God, he had plac'd his whole confidence in him alone. This therefore, is the Magnanimity we have need of in great enterprises, and that which will hinder our insufficiency and weakness, from making us lose courage. * *Say not, I am a Child, for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak; be not afraid of their Face; for I am with thee.* So that as to what concerns the greatness of an undertaking, Humility is not only not contrary therein to Magnanimity, but is the very source and foundation of it.

Now as to our loving to do things which may deserve glory; neither is that at all contrary to Humility: For as Saint Thomas says very well, thò 'tis that which the Magnanimous Man desires, yet he desires it not for the glory that accrues from it; he desires only to deserve the glory, without caring to possess it. And on the contrary, he has rais'd himself to high above the Opinion of the World, that he finds nothing estimable but Virtue; and looking with the same Eye upon the praise and scorn of Men, he do's nothing for the love of the one, or fear of the other. And indeed Virtue is a thing so excellent, that Men cannot either honor or recompence it sufficiently; God only can do it. The Magnanimous Man therefore makes no account of the honors of the World, he looks upon 'em, as what deserves not to be made the Object of his desire; his flight is higher, 'tis for the Love of God and of Virtue that he is mov'd to the performance of great Actions; all other motives have no influence upon him. Now there is need of very great Humility, to care as little for the honor or scorn of Men, as the Magnanimous Person ought to do; and to be able to say with the Apostle, † *I know how to be humbl'd, and how to abound with honor, every where, and in all things: I am instructed, both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and suffer want; and to teach us how to shew our selves true Ministers of the Gospel, he adds, By honor or dishonor, by bad and good report, as deceivers and yet true, as unknown and yet well known, as dying and behold we live.* There's need I say of a great stock of Humility, and of Heavenly Wisdom to hinder Winds, so violent and contrary to one another, as those of Esteem, and Contempt; of Praise, and Detraction; of Favor, and Persecution are; from being able any way to toss us, and to keep our selves steady in the same frame of Spirit, and the same temper of Mind, in the midst of the greatest Storms. 'Tis hard

* *Noli dicere, Puer sum: Quoniam ad omnia, ad quæ mittam te, ibis: Et universa, quæ mandavero tibi, loqueris. Ne timeas à facie eorum, quia tecum ego sum.*
Jerem. 1. 7.

† Scio humiliari, scio & abundare, (ubi-que & in omnibus instructus sum) & fami-ali, & esuri-re, & abundare, & esuriem pati Per gloriam, & ignobilitatem; per infamiam, & bonam famam, ut seductores, & veraces, sicut qui ignoti, & cogniti, quasi mortui, & ecce vivimus.
Philip. 4. 12. & 1 Cor. 6. 3.

hard to preserve Humility, as Saint *Paul* did in the midst of Plenty: You may preserve it, perhaps in Poverty, Banishment, Reproaches and Affronts; but to preserve it in the midst of Honor and Applause; in great Offices and in the splended exercise of the most eminent Employments, is what I doubt you will not be able to perform. The Angels themselves knew not how to preserve it even in Heaven, and 'twas that which caus'd the misfortune of their Fall. * *A Wise Man*, says, *Boetius* ought to fear both good and bad Fortune, but the good is to be feared more than the bad; and indeed 'tis far more difficult to be humble in promotion, than in disgrace; because the last leads naturally to Humility, and the first to Pride and Vanity: † *Knowledge pusses up*. And all other things which do any way exalt us, cause the same effect; and upon that account it is, that holy Writers say; that none but the Perfect, know how to keep themselves humble, in the midst of those signal favors which God bestow's upon 'em, and the honors and respects which the World shew's 'em.

There's a Story of Saint *Francis*, very different from that which we have already told of him, when to shun the honors which were design'd him at his Reception, he fell a treading Mud as if it had been Morter. The Saint coming one Day to a small Village, the People, who were possess'd with the opinion of his Sanctity, fell a shewing him all honor imaginable; to kiss the hem of his Garment, and his Hands and Feet; whilst the Saint in the mean time shew'd no dislike thereof. His Companion judg'd hereupon, that he was very well pleas'd with the honors he receiv'd, and being able to dissemble his thoughts no longer, he imparted 'em to the Saint; who answer'd thus, these People, dear Brother, do nothing yet in comparison of what they ought to do; so that the good Brother was yet more scandaliz'd at his Answer than he was before, the meaning of which he did not comprehend; at last the Saint told him, I am not puffed up or exalted in my thoughts with the honor they shew me, nor do I attribute it to my self; but swallowing up all, in the depth of my own nothing and baseness, I ascribe all to God, to whom alone it belongs: So that they who behave themselves thus, are gainers by it; because 'tis God whom they acknowledge and honor in his Creatures. At which answer, the good Brother remain'd satisfi'd, and was at the same time surpris'd at the Perfection of the Saint: And without doubt he was justly so; for to be esteem'd for a Saint, which is the greatest honor that can be done to a Man, and to

* Cum omnis fortuna timenda sit, magis tamen timenda est prospera quam adversa.

Boetius de Consol.

† Scientia inflat.

1 ad Cor. 8. 1.

attribute nothing thereof to on's self, or give way to any secret complacency therein, but to ascribe the glory of all to God alone; to contract on's self within on's own narrow bounds, as if nothing had happen'd, and as if the honor had been giv'n to another; is certainly a very high Perfection, and a most profound Humility.

Now 'tis this kind of Humility, that every body shou'd endeavour to arrive to, and they chiefly, who are call'd, not to ly hidden under a Bushel, but to be expos'd to the sight of every body, as a City upon a high Mountain, and to give Light, like a Candle in a Candle-stick: But to do so, good and deep Foundations must be lay'd; there must be an ardent desire of being despis'd by every body; and that desire, must proceed from a deep sense of our own nothingness, such a one as Saint *Francis* had when he fell a treading the Mud, that he might pass for a Fool; for that deep sense of himself, which made him desire to be contemn'd, was the cause also, that when the hem of his Garment and Feet were kiss'd, he valu'd himself, never the more, and was puffed up with no Vanity thereupon, but being as stedfast in the Contempt of himself, as if no honor had been done him, he ascrib'd all to God alone. Thus tho' these two Actions of Saint *Francis* seem contrary to one another, they proceeded nevertheless from one and the same Principle and Spirit of Humility.

CHAP.

C H A P. XXXVII.

*Of several other great advantages, which are found
in the third Degree of Humility.*

Tua sunt
omnia : quæ
de manu tua
accepimus, de-
dimus tibi.
1 Paral. 29. 14.

† Quisquis ti-
bi enumerat
merita sua,
quid tibi enu-
merat, nisi
merita tua ?
Aug. Lib. 9.
Confes. c. 13.
Genes. 42.

* Gratiam &
gloriam dabit
Dominus.
Psalm. 83. 11.

ALL belongs to thee O Lord, what we have receiv'd from thy hand, we have giv'n back unto thee, sayd David to God, when he offer'd to him the Gold, Silver, and other materials which he had got together, for the building of the Temple. Thus also ought we to express our selves, when we do any good Work ; for as Saint *Austin* says very well, † *Whoever reckons up his Merits to thee, what else do's he do, but reckon up O Lord thy own Merits ?* 'Tis by an effect of thy infinite goodness and liberality, that thou impute'st any thing to our Merit, so that when thou rewardest our services, thou dost but crown thy own gifts, and heap upon us one favor after another. God deal's with us as *Joseph* did with his Brethren ; he is not satisfi'd with giving us the Corn we have need of for our sustenance, he gives us also the Mony that it costs. * *He gives us Grace and Glory.* Every thing comes from him, and we ought also to return every thing to him, by ascribing still to him the honor of all things.

One of the greatest advantages of the third degree of Humility, is, that the Actions which it produces, express best our return of thanks to God for the gifts receiv'd. We know well enough, how much thanksgiving to him, is recommended in Scripture ; being we see that when he had done any signal favor to his People, he commanded forthwith to have a Feast of thanksgiving instituted, that hereby he might give us to understand, that to deserve new favors, 'tis necessary to shew a great sense of the old on's ; now this is done in an eminent manner by the third degree of Humility, which consists as we have sayd, in attributing to on's self nothing of those gifts it has pleas'd God to bestow upon us, and in ascribing and giving the glory of all to him alone, for that

is

is to be truly thankful, and not only to say with our Lips, we give thee thanks O Lord for all thy benefits; thō we ought also this way to give him thanks, but if we do it only with our Lips, 'tis no true thanksgiving, they are only verbal thanks. Wherefore we must not only utter a few bare words, but heartily express our thanks, and that the Heart may share therein as well as the Lips, we must acknowledge, that whatever good we have in our selves comes from God; we must by ascribing all the glory thereof to him, make intire Restitution, without reserving the least part; and thus by stripping our selves of an honor which we know belong's not to us, we restore it wholly to God, to whom alone it appertains. Our Saviour was pleas'd to instruct us to do thus, when having heal'd the ten Lepers, of which one alone, who was a Samaritan, returning to give him thanks for his Cure, † There is not found, says he, one that return'd to give glory to God, except this Stranger. The same Instruction is giv'n also to the People of Israel in Deuteronomy, where God speaking by the Mouth of Moses, * Beware, says he, that thou forgettest not the Lord thy God, beware, when thou hast plenty of all things, lest thy heart be exalted and puffed up, and thou remembrest not the Lord thy God, who has brought thee out of the Land of Ægypt. † Say not, that it is my Power, and the Might of my own Hand, that hath procur'd me all this; but remember the Lord thy God; for 'tis he that gives thee Power, that he may accomplish his promise, which he Swore unto thy fore-fathers. To attribute to one's self the gifts we have receiv'd from God, is to forget God, and to shew him the greatest ingratitude in the World. On the other side, to acknowledge the benefits which we hold from his Divine bounty, is to return the true thanks requir'd of us. This is the * Sacrifice of praise whereby, he says, he will be glorifi'd; and this is the acknowledgment which the Apostle teaches us to express, when he says, † To the King Eternal, Immortal, Invisible, the only God be honor and glory.

Hence follows yet another advantage, which is, that whatever gifts, he who is truly humble may have receiv'd, and whatever esteem he may have gain'd thereby, he values not himself the more for it, but rests as steady under the sense of his own baseness and nothing, as if he had receiv'd none at all; because he knows how to distinguish, between what is foreign or extern, and belongs not to him; and what is

Tom. II.

P p

properly

† Non est inventus qui rediret, & daret gloriam Deo, nisi hic alienigena.

Luc. 17. 18.

* Observa, & cave nequando obliviscaris Domini Dei tui... Ne postquam habueris cunctarum rerum copiam, elevecur cor tuum, & non reminiscaris Domini Dei tui, qui eduxit te de terra Ægypti.

Deut. 8. 11. 14.

† Ne dices Fortitudo mea, & robur

manus meæ, hæc mihi omnia præstiterunt Sed recorderis Domini Dei tui, quod ipse vires tibi præbuerit, ut imparet pactum suum super quo iuravit Patribus tuis.

Ibid. 16. 17.

* 18.

* Sacrificium laudis honorificabit me.

Psalm. 49. 23.

† Neque sanctorum immortalium, & invisibilium, soli Deo honor & gloria.

1 Tim. 1. 17.

*Dover. ferm.
feu DoBt. 2.
de hum.*

*Gregor. lib. 22.
Moral. c. 5. &
Hom. 9. in Ev.*

† Omne autem
cui multum
datum est mul-
tum quæretur
ab eo: & cui
commendave-
runt multum,
plus petent ab
eo. Luc. 12. 48.

properly his own; and understands how to attribute to every one what is his due. Thus looking upon the favors which he has receiv'd from God, as farraign and borrow'd Goods, he never turns his Eyes off his own meanness, and the condition he shou'd be in, if God abandon'd him but for one moment, and did not hold him continually by the Hand; but the more he is crown'd with Divine favors, the more do's he humble himself before God: When Trees, are much loaded with Fruit, says Saint *Dorathens*, the quantity of it makes the Branches bend, sometimes even to the breaking of 'em, whereas, those which are not so loaden remain straight: And when the Ears of Corn are full, they hang down, so that the Stalk seems ready to break, but when they stand straight up, 'tis a sign that there is little in 'em. Just so it is, as to Spiritual things, they who bear no Fruit shoot still upwards, but they who are loaden with the Fruits of Grace and good Works, are always hanging down their Head's, in an humble posture; the favors which they have receiv'd from God, they make a Subject of further Humiliation and Fear. Saint *Gregory* says, that as a Man when he has borrow'd a great sum, finds the joy he has of having the Mony, allay'd by the obligation he lyes under to restore it, and by the disquiet he is in, not knowing whether he shall be able to pay it at the time appointed: So he who is humble, the more gift's he receives from Almighty God; the more he acknowledges himself a Debter, and that he has a stricter obligation to serve him; and fancying still that his gratitude and services answer not, as they ought, the greatness of the favors and benefit's he has receiv'd, he believes at the same time, that any body but he, wou'd have made better use of 'em. And this it is, which makes the Servants of God more humble than all others, for they know that God will call 'em to account, not only for the Sins they shall commit, but also for the Benefit's they shall receive. † *That much shall be requir'd of him, to whom much is giv'n, and of him to whom much has been intrusted, more shall be requir'd and demand'd of him.* Saint *Macharius* was us'd to say, that the humble Man look'd upon the gifts of God in himself, as a Man do's upon things that are deposited in his hands; or as a faithful Treasurer looks upon the Mony, which he has in his keeping. So far is he from being proud, that he is in continual fear of it; because he knows that 'tis Mony which he must give an account of, and that

that if he comes to lose it by his fault, the loss will fall upon his own head.

There's yet another advantage in being humble, which is, that he who is truly so, do's never despise his Neighbor, whatever Sins he sees him fall into, nor do's he thereupon esteem himself the more. But on the contrary he takes occasion the more to humble himself; because he considers that he is frash'd of the same Mass that he is, who is fallen; and because in his Brothers fall he beholds his own: For as Saint *Austin* says very well, our Brother commits no Sin, which we shou'd not also commit our selves, if God by his Mercy did not continually hold us up by the hand. And therefore an Ancient Father, of the Desert when he heard of any bodies, fall, us'd to weep bitterly and say, *Such a one is fallen to Day, as much may happen to me too Morrow*, since I am a Man like him; subject to all human weaknesses, and if I am not yet fallen, 'tis a particular Grace of God which has supported me. For as when we look upon a Blind, Deaf or Lame Man, or any one afflicted with any other Distemper, we ought to reflect upon all those Calamities in others, as so many obligations which we have to God, for having exempted us from 'em, so ought we in like manner to consider the Sins of all Men, as so many gracious favors of God to us; since we might have fallen into the same, if by his infinite Mercy he had not preserv'd us. Thus it is, that the Servants of God keep themselves humble, without ever despising, or being angry at their Neighbor, by reason of his Sins: † *For true Justice is full of Compassion*, says Saint *Gregory*, but pretended Justice is full of Disdain. They therefore who are only angry at the faults of their Neighbor, ought as Saint *Paul* says, * *To consider themselves, for fear of being Tempted*, with the same things themselves, which they with so much severity condemn in others; and lest God shou'd by a punishment, which falls usually on this sort of Pride, permit 'em to find to their cost, how great Human weakness is. An Ancient Father of the Desert was us'd to say, that he had without pity judg'd his Brethren upon three things, and that he happen'd to fall into all three of them himself. God therefore will † *Have us learn that we are Men*, and therefore ought not to take upon us to judge or despise any one.

Aug. Sol. c. 17.

Ille hodie, &
ego cras.
Psal. Diac. c.
6. Num. 4.

† vera iustitia
compassio-
nem habet,
falsa iustitia
designatio-
nem.

Greg. Hom. 34.

Sup. Evang.

* Considerans

teipsum, ne &

tu tentaris.
Gal. 6. 1.

† Ut sciatis
gentes quanti
sunt homines
sunt.

Psal. 9. 27.

C H A P. XXXVIII.

Of the great Favors which God confer's upon the Humble, and why he raises 'em so high.

† Venerunt
mihi omnia
bona pariter
cum illa.

Sap. 7. 11.
* Ubi est hu-
militas, ibi est
& patientia.

Prov. 11. 2.
† Sapientiam
prestant par-
vulus.

Psal. 18. 8.
* Ad quem au-
tem respiciam,
nisi ad pauper-
culum, & con-
tritum spiritu,
& trementem
sermone meo?

Isa. 66. 2.
† Deus super-
bis resistit, hu-
milibus autem
dat gratiam.

1 Pet. 5. 3.
* Deposuit
potentes de
sele, & exal-
tavit humiles.

Esurientes im-
plevit bonis,
& divites di-
misit inanes.

Luc. 1. 52. 53.
† Quoniam tu
populum hu-
miliem salvum
facies, & oculos
superbum
humilia-
bis. Ps. 17. 28.

* Qui se exal-
tat humiliabi-
tur, & qui se
humiliat exal-
tabitur.

Luc. 14. 11.
† Qui emittit
fontes in con-
vallibus.

Psal. 103. 10.
* Et valles a-
bundabunt
frumento.

Psal. 64. 14.
† Altus est
Deus: humi-
litas te, & de-
scendit ad te;

erigit te, &
auget a te.

Aug. serm. 2.
de Ascensu.

† **A**LL good things came to me with it, says Salomon, speaking of Wisdom, which words we may apply to Humility, and say also, that all good things come along with it, being the same Salomon add's, * *That where Humility is, there is Wisdom*; and David, tells us, † *That God gives Wisdom to little ones*, that is, to those who become little by Humility. But this Truth is further taught us in down-right term's, in several places of the Old and New Testament, wherein God promises great favors and benefit's to the humble, to little ones, and to the poor in Spirit; calling those who have true Humility of Heart, indifferently by all these names: * *On whom shall I look*, says the Lord in *Isay*, *but on the Man that is poor, and of a contrite Spirit, and who trembles at my Word*? God cast's his Eyes upon such, to crown 'em with benefits and favors. And Saint Peter and Saint James teach us, that † *God resists the proud, and gives Grace to the humble*. The same thing the Holy Virgin assures us of, * *The Lord, says she, has cast down the mighty from their seat, and has exalted the humble; he has fill'd the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent empty away*. The Royal Prophet says likewise, † *That the Lord will save the humble, and will humble the haughty look's of the proud*. And our Saviour infine assures us, that * *Whosoever exalts himself shall be humbled, and he who humbles himself shall be exalted*. As † *God sends Rain upon the Vallies*, * *Whereby they abound with Corn*; so the shower's of God's Grace fall more plentifully upon the humble, and cause 'em to bring forth a greater abundance of fruit than others. Saint *Austin* says, that Humility draws down God unto it, † *God is high*, says he: *If you humble your self; he comes down to you: If you exalt your self, he withdraw's himself from you*: And why so?

so? * Because God is high, and lock's down upon things that are lowly, that is humble persons; and throw's down blessings upon 'em; but He sees a far off, things that are high, that is, the proud: And as we know not, what is seen a great way off; so God know's not the proud, so as to confer any favors upon 'em but assur's 'em. † *Verily I say unto you I know you not.* Saint Bonaventure says, that the humble Soul is dispos'd to receive from God all kind of favors, as soft Wax is, to receive all manner of Impressions. In the Entertainment which Joseph made to his Brethren, the least had the best share.

But why is God so pleas'd to exalt the humble, and to confer upon 'em so many favors? 'Tis, because all the good he do's 'em, return's to himself; for they who are humble appropriate nothing of what they receive to themselves, they restore it all to God, and acknowledging, * *That there is nothing great but the Power of God alone, they ascribe to him the glory and honor of all.* Now God seeing the disposition of their Heart, know's very well he may securely trust 'em with the Treasures of his Grace, without fear of their breaking in his Debt, or keeping any thing for themselves; and so the good he do's unto them, he do's to himself; because the glory thereof remains his own. Moreover, do we not see that even the Grandees of the World, often please themselves by signalizing their Power upon inconsiderable People, and by raising 'em out of the Dust, to heap their favors upon 'em, by making 'em, as we usually say, their Creatures. And thus it is, that God deals with us; † *For we have,* says the Apostle, *the treasure of Grace, in Earthen Vessels; that our advancement may be ascrib'd to the Power of God, and not to our selves.* This then is the reason why God is pleas'd to exalt the humble, and to confer so many favors upon 'em; and why on the contrary; he abandons the proud, who attribute all to themselves; who have a vanity in all their good actions and successes; as if they ow'd all to their own care; and thus rob God of his glory, who is alone the true owner of it. For alas in every little fervor we feel, for example the dropping a Tear or two at our Prayers, we fail not presently to look upon our selves as Persons of great Devotion, and far advanc'd in Spirituality: Yea we stick not even to prefer our selves before others, and to look upon 'em, as being a great way behind us. And from thence it comes, that God sometimes do's not only not confer

* Quoniam
excellus Do-
minus, & hu-
milia respicit,
& alta à lon-
gè cognoscit.
Ps. 137. 7.

† Amen dico
vobis, nescio
vos.
Math. 25. 12.
Bonav. in spe-
culo disc. ad
Nov. cap. 3.
Gen. 45. 34.

* Quoniam
magna poten-
tia Dei solius,
& ab homini-
bus honora-
tur. Eccl. 3. 21.

† Habemus
autem thesau-
rum istum in
vasis fictilibus
ut sublimitas
sit virtutis
Dei, & non
ex nobis.
2 Cor. 4. 7.

confer new favors upon us, but cut's off from us, part of the former; lest we shou'd turn good into evil, and Antidotes into Poison; and lest his gifts and benefit's by the ill use of 'em, shou'd become a greater cause of our Condemnation. Thus we do when a Man has a weak Stomack, let the Meat be never so good of it self, we give him but very little of it; because he has not strength enough to digest a greater quantity; for if more were giv'n him, 'twou'd all turn into Corruption, Phlegm and Choler. The Holy Scripture tell's us that the Oyl ceas'd not to run from the Widows Pot, † *Whilst there were any other Vessels to receive it, but as soon as the Vessels were full, the Oyl stop'd.* So is it with Divine Mercy; on God's side, it has no Limits; * *For the hand of the Lord is not shortened,* God neither do's, nor can change; he remains always in the same state, and desires more to impart his favors to us, than we do to receive 'em. The fault is, in us, who are so full of our selves, and of the confidence we have in our own strength, that there remains no empty Vessels for us to receive the Oyl of his Mercies. Nothing but Humility and the Knowledge of on's self, can free a Man from so unhappy a fullness, can give him a just diffidence of his own strength, and make God shew'r down his favors more plentifully upon him, according to these words of the Wise Man. † *Humble your self before God, and expect all things from his hand's.*

† Cumque plena fuissent vasa, retit oleum.
4 Reg. 4. 6.

* Non est abbreviata manus Domini.
Isa. 59. 1.

† Humiliare Deo, expecta manus ejus.
Eccl. 13. 9.

C H A P. XXXIX.

*How important it is to have recourse to Humility,
thereby to make up what we otherwise stand
in need of, and to hinder God from
Humbling and Chastising us.*

* **H**E's a fool, says Saint Bernard, who puts his Confidence in any thing else but in Humility: For since we have all, Dear Brethren, offended God in many things; we cannot but plead guilty before him. † If any body will contend with him, he cannot answer one word, to a thousand things which God will accuse him of; * What therefore remains for us to do, but to have recourse with all our heart to the helps of Humility, and so make up whatever may be otherwise wanting? This way being of great importance, the same Saint repeats the same Doctrine to us in several places; † If you find not your Conscience clear enough, make up what is deficient, by a holy shame and confusion, and what is wanting of fervor, endeavour to recompence by an humble and sincere Confession.

mas, de ea supplere. Id. Bern. Serm. de Nativ. S. Joan. Bapt. humilitas suppleat purę confessionis. Idem. de inferiori Domo. 6. 37.

† Quidquid verò minus est fervoris,

* Stultus est qui confidit nisi in sola humilitate, quia audit Deum, fratres, jus habere non possumus: quoniam in multis offendimus omnes. Bern. Serm. de Diversis 26. † Si voluerit contendere cum eo, non poterit ei respondere unum pro mille.

Job. 9. 3. * Quid ergo restat, nisi ad humilitatis remedia tota mente confugere, & quidquid in aliis minus habemus,

Saint Dorotheus tells us, of an Abbot call'd John, who did very often recommend the same thing; * Let us humble our selves, sayd he, to save our Souls, and if our weak Constitution hinders us from labouring much, let us study at least how to humble our selves; for hereby we shall make as great proficiency, as they who have undergone great labours. If after having liv'd a long time in Sin, we find not sufficient health and strength to walk in the path of Austerities, let us take that of Humility, and we shall find no securer way, to lead us whither we desire to go, If we cannot apply our selves to Prayer, let us endeavour to be cloath'd

* Humiliemus nos, paulisper, ut salutem animę consequamur: Si propter imbecillitatem laborare non possumus, humiliare saltem nos ipsos studemus. Dorotheus. refert. de Abb. Joan. Serm. seu doct. de humil.

cloath'd with confusion, because we cannot Pray; and if we have no Talent for great things, let us at least get Humility, and thus shall we make up whatever is wanting in us.

Moreover, let us here consider how little God requires of us, and with how little he is contented. He requires, that we shou'd acknowledge our selves to be what we are, and conceive thoughts of our selves, proportionable to our weakness. If he requir'd we shou'd use great Austerities, and soar aloft with sublime Contemplations, some might excuse themselves, upon account of their weak Constitution; and others upon that of their incapacity; but is there any thing that can hinder us to humble our selves? For the effecting of which there's no need either of a vigorous health or great wit; there wants only a good Will; for as Saint Bernard says, † *There's nothing more easie to him that Will's it, than to humble himself*: And 'tis easie enough for every body to humble himself, because every body has reason enough to do so, since according to the Prophet, * *The subject for our Humiliation is within us*. Let us therefore have recourse to Humility; thereby to make up what is wanting toward our Perfection, and thus we shall move the Bowels of Divine Mercy to Compassion. Thou art destitute of Spiritual Riches, thou art Poor and Indigent: Be humble, and God will be satisfi'd with thee; but he cannot suffer Arrogancy and Poverty joy'd together; and of three things, which the Wife Man says, that God abhorrs, the first is † *To be Poor and Proud*. 'Tis one of the things also, that most of all thocks and disedifies Secular Persons.

Now if all this be not sufficient to make us humble, let us at least humble our selves, for fear that God shou'd humble us; for so has he been us'd to do, according to these words of the Gospel, * *He who exalts himself shall be humb'd*. If then you will not have him humble you, humble your self; and this point is doubtless of great importance, and highly deserves to be examin'd with care. † *Thô God*, says Saint Gregory, *takes pleasure in purifying the heart of the just; he often nevertheless permits some imperfections to remain there, to the end, that whatever eminent Virtues shine in 'em, the sight of their Imperfections may make 'em look down with Humility; and hinder 'em from being too much exalted with great things, since they find themselves so weak in resisting little ones; and knowing infine, that they are unable to overcome themselves in lesser occasions, they may not grow*

† Nihil facilius est volenti, quam humiliare semetipsum.

Bern. serm. 2. in cap. Jejunii.

* Humiliatio tua in medio tui. Mich. 6. 14.

† Pauperem superbum. Eccl. 25. 4.

* Qui se exaltat humiliabitur. Luc. 14. 14.

† Plerumque omnipotens Dominus justorum mentes, quamvis maiori ex parte perficit, imperfectas tamen in aliquibus esse permittit, ut, licet miris virtutibus tulent, imperfectionis suæ tædio tælescant, & de magnis se non extollant, dum

grow vain by the Victory they gain in greater, but walk still in Fear and Humility, imploring continually the Grace of God without which they can do nothing. Saint Bernard says as much, and so do all holy Writers. Saint Austin upon these words of Saint John, * Without him nothing was made; and Saint Hierom upon those of the Prophet Joel, † I will restore to you the Tears, that the Locust the Canker-worm, the Cater-piller and the Palmer-worm have eaten, say, that it is to humble Man, that God has Created such variety of Insects which torment us. It wou'd have been as easie for him to have sent Bears, Lyons and Serpents, for the punishing the obstinacy of Pharao and the Egyptians; but the more to humble 'em, he was pleas'd to bring down their Pride by Flies, Grashoppers and Frogs; he deals with us, almost after the same manner. To humble us the more, he permit's us to fall into small faults, and let's little Flies and Atom's attack and disquiet us; for if we will but Examine what uses most of all to disquiet us, we shall find that they are things, which, if well consider'd are almost nothing, 'Tis perhaps a word giv'n us in a slighting kind of Tone; 'Tis because we think we have been dispis'd. Of a Fly, insine, we make an Elephant, and picking up still whatever comes in our way, we create a thousand things to vex and trouble our selves withal. What shou'd we do, if God had let loose Tigers and Lyons upon us, when a Fly puts us to so much pain? And what shou'd we do if some great Temptation came upon us? Thus ought we to turn all these things, to our profit, and make 'em serve for our greater Humiliation and Confusion. And when we make so good use of 'em as this, * 'Tis an effect, says Saint Bernard, of God's Mercy not to deliver us wholly from 'em.

But if these kind of things suffice not to humble you; know, that God will proceed yet further to your cost, for so he uses to do: Pride and Presumption he so much hates, that holy Writers say, that he often, by a secret but just Judgment, permits the Proud for their Humiliation, to fall into some Mortal Sin; and not only into some of the least, but into those which are the most shameful of all, I mean the Sins of the Flesh: The secret Sins of Pride he punishes, say they, by the publick on's of Impurity; and they quote upon this occasion, what Saint Paul says of the Pagan Philosophers, whose Pride God punish'd. † By giving 'em up to the unclean desires of their own hearts, to dishonor their own Bodies between themselves. After such a Judgment as

Tom. II.

Qq

this

adhuc, contra
minima inni-
tentes laban-
tur. Denique
cum extrema
vincere non
valeant, de-
precipuis acti-
bus superbie,
non audeant.
Greg. 4. p.
Past. in su. l.
3. Dial. 4.
Moral. l. 4.
6. 21. Bern.
de 4. modis
orandi.
* Et sine ipso
factum est ni-
hil. Joan. 1. 3.
† Et reddam
vobis annos,
quos comedit
locusta, bru-
chus, & rubi-
go, & eruca.
Joel. 2. 25.

* Pia dispen-
satione nobis-
cum agitur,
ut non penitus
auferantur.
Serm. in Cons.
Dom. S. Bern.

† Propter
quod tradidit
illos Deus in
desideria cordis
eorum, in im-
munditiam:
Ut contume-
liis afficiant
corpora sua in
semetipsis...
in passionem
ignominie.
Rom. 1. 24. 26.

* Quis non
timebit te, &
reus gentium?
Jerem. 10. 7.

† Quis novit
potestatem iræ
tuæ, & præ-
timore tuo
ram tuam di-
numerare?
Psalm. 89. 11.

* Miserere
mei, Deus, se-
cundum mag-
nam miseri-
cordiam tuam.
Psalm. 50. 1.

† Ecce gladius
pervenit usque
ad animum.
Jerem. 4. 10.
* Iræ magnâ
iraſcor super
gentes opu-
lentes.
Zachar. 1. 15.

† Plagâ ini-
mici percussus
te castigatiõe
crudeli.
Jerem. 30. 14.
* Fovea pro-
funda os alie-
næ, cui iratus
est Deus, inci-
det in eam.
Prov. 22. 14.
† Audio dice-
re, superbus
est: utile cade-
re in aliquod
apertum, ma-
nifestumque
peccatum, un-
de sibi displic-
eant, qui jam
sibi placendo
cecidérant.
Aug. l. 4. de
Civ. Dei c. 13.
& Sermon. 53. de
verbis Domini.
* Contritio-
nem præcedit
superbia: &
ante ruinam
exaltatur spi-
ritus.
Prov. 16. 18.
Eccl. 10. 13.
Mat. 23. 16.
Psalm. in Reg.
bruv. 31.

this; * *Who will not fear thee O King of Nations? Who will not tremble at the recital of a punishment so great, that there is not a greater except in Hell; if Sin be not yet a punishment more cruel than Hell it self?* † *Who knows the Power of thine Anger, and who is he that Feares thee not?*

Holy Writers observe, that God shew's two kinds of Mercy towards us; the one, greater, the other lesser. The lesser is, when he assists in the Miseries which are but Temporal, and have respect only to the Body; and the greater is, when he assists us in the Miseries, which are purely Spiritual; and reach even to the Soul: Wherefore when *David*, after the Adultery and Murder he had committed, saw himself fallen into the great Misery of being abandon'd by God, he implores God's great Mercy, saying. * *Have Pity O God upon me, according to thy great Mercy.* There are also, say they, two kinds of God's Anger, the one greater, the other lesser: The lesser is, when he Chastises any one in Temporal Affairs, by the loss of Estate, Honor, Health, and the like, which concern the Body only; and the greater when he extend's his Chastisement even to the very Soul, according to these words of *Jeremiah*, † *The Sword reaches unto the Soul*, and as God himself says in *Zachary*, * *I am much displeas'd with the Nations that are Rich*, that is, with the Proud and Haughty. When God forsakes any one, and to punish him for his Sins, let's him fall into some Mortal Sin, 'tis an effect of his great Anger; and then he Chastises him in his Fury, not as a tender and indulgent Father, but as a severe and rigorous Judge. And of this kind of Chastisement, may be understood these words of *Jeremy*, † *I have wounded thee with the wound of an Enemy, and with a cruel Chastisement*, as also those of the Wise Man, * *The Mouth of the Strange Woman is a deep Pit, he whom the Lord is angry with, shall fall therein.*

Pride infine is so ill a thing in it self, and such an abomination to God, that holy Writers hold it to be an advantage sometimes to a Proud Man, to be thus Chastis'd, that he may thereby be cur'd of his Pride. † *I dare assure*, says *Saint Austin*, that 'tis profitable for the Proud to fall openly into some Sin, that so the shame of a publick fall, may cure 'em of the secret complacency they take in themselves; into which they were already fallen without knowing it; * *For Pride go's before Destruction, and the Spirit becomes haughty before a fall.* The same Doctrine *Saint Basil* and *Saint Gregory* hold, the last of which speaking of *David's* Sin, ask's why God permit's sometimes that they

they whom he has in all times Elected, and Favor'd with his Grace shou'd fall into the shameful Sin of Impurity: 'Tis, answers the Saint, because they who have receiv'd great gifts from God, let themselves be carry'd away by thoughts of Pride, which lye lurking so secretly in their Breast, that they perceive 'em not, but full of the confidence and complacency they take in themselves, they believe they have no other object but God. Thus Saint *Peter* took for Courage and Excess of Love to his Master, the Presumption which made him say, † *Thō all Men shall be Scandaliz'd at thee, yet will I never be Scandaliz'd.* Now when any one is fallen into this kind of secret and cover'd Pride, 'tis to raise him from this fall, that God permits him sometimes to fall into Sins of Impurity; which being Sins of the Body, are easier perceiv'd than those of the Mind. For he who fall's, being thereby put in mind of his weakness, comes to discover the secret Pride that lurk'd in him, which he did not think of remedying, for want of perceiving it; and might have perish'd thereby: And thus from his fall he draw's this advantage, that it induces him to humble himself before God, and to seek by Penance the remedy for this his Crime of Pride: The evident fall of Saint *Peter* made him know the Presumption which lay hidden in his Breast, and thereby was of advantage to him; because it gave him occasion to bewail, and do Penance at the same time for both the Sins he was guilty of. The same advantage *David* also got by his fall, and 'twas that which made him say:

* *'Tis good for me, that thou hast humbl'd me, that I might learn thy Statutes,* and have greater diffidence in my self. As when a Physician sees that Medicines are not strong enough to Cure the Malignity of an inward Disease; he, to Cure it the more easily, endeavours to draw it outward; so when God is pleas'd to Cure any of us of our Pride, he lets us fall into some great exterior faults, that so the sence of so manifest a Sin, may cloath us with Confusion; and that, that Confusion may serve to Purge and Cure in us the internal Disease of Presumption. God tells us he us'd his People thus, † *Behold,* says he, *I will do a thing in Israël, which whosoever shall hear, both his Ears shall Tingle.* And who wou'd not tremble at the hearing only of so terrible a punishment?

But God nevertheless being Merciful; 'Tis only in case of extremity, that he makes use of so severe a Chastisement, and so violent and deplorable a remedy, after having try'd milder and easier ones: For first of all, he endeavours to Cure, and

† Etiam si omnes scandalizati fuerint in te, ego nunquam scandalizabor.
Matth. 26. 33.

* Bonum mihi quia humiliasti me, ut discam justificationes tuas.
Psalm. 118. 71.

† Ecce ego facio verbum in Israël: quod quicumque audierit, tinnient auribus ejus.
1 Reg. 3. 17.

bring us back to himself, sometimes by Diseases and Crosses, and sometimes by afflicting us in our Estate or Honor, and when these kind's of Temporal punishments, suffice not to humble us, he has recourse to Spiritual ones. He first of all begins with slight tryals; afterwards he permits us to be assaulted by violent Temptations, which may bring us to the very point of yielding to them, and make us doubt whether we have not consented thereunto, and this he do's, to shew us by experience, that of our selves we are not capable to overcome 'em, and that being sensible of our weakness and the need we have of God's help, we may become diffident of our own strength, and humble our selves before him. Now if this be not yet sufficient, he then uses the dreadful remedy of letting a Man fall into Mortal Sin, and suffering him to sinck under the Temptation, that one may at least learn to know himself, after so fatal a proof, and that he who wou'd not be humbled by Grace, shou'd be humbled by Sin.

By this may be seen, of how great importance it is to us, to be humble, and not to presume too much on our own strength. Let every one therefore call himself to account, and Examine how he improves the occasions of humbling himself, which God sends him as a Father, and Charitable Physician, that he may not be oblig'd to make use of more violent and dangerous remedies. Chastise me, O my God, with the tenderness of a Father: To cure me of Pride, make use of Sufferings, Sicknes, Affronts, Injuries, and all the Humiliations which thou think'st fit; but never suffer me to fall into Mortal Sin: Give the Devil power to attack my Reputation, and my Health; and to reduce me even to the Miseries of *Job*, but hinder him from making any attempt upon my Soul: Provided, O Lord, that thou dost not go far from me, and permittest me not to go far from thee; no affliction will be able to hurt me, but on the contrary, I shall draw an advantage out of whatever trouble happens to me; because I may make use of it; to acquire Humility, with which thou art so well pleas'd.

C H A P. XL.

*A Confirmation of the foregoing Doctrine by
some Examples.*

SULPICIOUS Severus and Surinus tell us of a holy Man, who had receiv'd of God the gift of healing the Sick, driving out Devils, and doing several other Miracles; who seeing, that a croud of an infinity of People, flock'd from all parts to see him, and to touch his Cloaths, and receive his Blessing; from hence some thoughts of Vanity began to rise in his Heart, and not being able to be rid of 'em, nor to hinder the concourse of People, from coming to him, he begg'd of God, that to free him from the Temptation that tormented him, and to keep him humble, he wou'd for some time deliver him up; to be Possess'd with the Devil. God heard his Prayer, permitted the Devil to enter into him; and it was a strange sight to see him, to whom the Possess'd were usually brought to be cur'd, dragg'd along like a Mad-man, to be Exorcis'd, according to the practise of the Church. He was five Months in this condition, at the end of which time, God deliver'd him not only from the Evil Spirit that had taken possession of his Body, but from all the thoughts of Pride and Presumption, which had stoln into his Mind.

Sever. Sulp.
Dial. 1. 6. 14.
Sur. in Vit.
S. Severin.
die 8. Jan.

The same Surinus gives us another Example almost like this, which is, that Saint Severinus having in his Monastery three Religious Men, who were very much puffed up with Pride and Vanity, and seeing that after all his Admonitions, they mended not at all; such was his Zeal for their Reformation, that it mov'd him one Day to beseech God with Tears, that he wou'd be pleas'd to inflict some punishment upon 'em, which might serve to humble and make 'em better, he had not made an end of his Prayer, when God, by a Chastisement proportionable to their fault, gave up their Bodies to three Devils, which cruelly tormented 'em for forty Days: After which time, it pleas'd the Divine goodness to deliver 'em at the Prayer of the Saint; and the Cure of their Bodies was follow'd by that of their Souls, the punishment having wholly allay'd in 'em the vapours of Pride and Vanity.

Surinus ubi
suprà.

Cesarinus

Lib. 4. Dial.
cap. 5.

Cesarinus relates, that one Possess'd also with a Devil, being brought to a Monastery of the *Cistercian* Monks to be Cured, the Prior, who was to Exorcise him, took with him a Young Religious Man, who was in great Reputation for his Virtue, and who had always kept himself Pure and Chast; and having ask'd the Evil Spirit whether, if that Religious Person commanded him to be gone, he durst still stay. Yes, answer'd he, for by reason of his Pride, I fear him nor.

Clim. grad. 15.
art. 26.

We Read in Saint *John Climacus*, that a great Servant of God purposing to walk in the Path of Humility; the Devil, jealous of the progress he made therein, wou'd have put him out of his way, by sowing Seeds of Vain-glory in his Heart; but by a Divine Inspiration, he found out an easie remedy against their Malice. He Writ upon the Wall of his Cell, the Names of some of the chief Vertues, according to the most excellent Idea that cou'd be fram'd of them; as *Perfect Charity*, *Most profound Humility*, *Angelical Chastity*, *Continual Fervor of Prayer*. And so of the rest. And when he found himself attack'd by vain thoughts: Let us come to the tryal, sayd he, to the Devils, and falling to Read the Inscriptions, and Titles, he had Writ, as, *Most profound Humility*: I am not, sayd he, come yet so far. I shou'd think my self happy to come near it, but so far am I from being arriv'd at the last degree of Humility, that I am not, it may be, even got to the first *Perfect Charity*: 'Tis true, I find that I have Charity; but 'tis far from being a Perfect Charity; for I speak sometimes very roughly to my Brethren. *Angelical Chastity*: 'Tis not a thing I can flatter my self with, since I am subject to so many thoughts and motions contrary to Purity. *Continual Fervor in Prayer*: I am far from having it, for therein I am very often either distracted, or drowsie. Speaking afterwards to himself, he added, When thou shalt have acquir'd all these Vertues; thou oughtest yet to say, that thou art but an unprofitable Servant, and must look upon thy self as such, according to those words of our Saviour, † When ye shall have done all that is Commanded you, say, we are unprofitable Servants. And if it is so, what thoughts at present ought'st not thou to have, of thy self, since thou art still so far off from Perfection?

† Cum feceritis omnia que precepta sunt vobis, dicite: Servi inuiles sumus.
Luc. 17. 10.

THE

THE FOURTH TREATISE

OF TEMPTATIONS.

CHAP. I.

*That we are all in this Life expos'd to
Temptation.*

SON applying your self to the Service
of God persevere in Justice with fear,
and prepare your Soul for Temptation.
Saint Hieron upon the words of Ec-
clesiastes. † There is a time of War and
a time of Peace, says, that as long
as we are in this Life 'tis a time of
War and when we shall come to the

other World, 'twill be a time of Peace, according to these
words, * He has establish'd his abode in Peace; and 'tis for
this reason, that the Name of Jerusalem, that is to say, The
Vision of Peace is giv'n to this Heavenly Country, to which

* Fili, acceden-
dens ad servi-
tutem Dei,
sta in iustitia
& timore, &
prepara ani-
mam tuam ad
tentationem.
Ecl. 2. 1.
† Tempus
belli & tem-
pus pacis.
Ecl. 3. 8.
Hieron. in
illud:

* Et factus est
in pace locus
eius.
Psal. 75. 2.

wo

† Nemo ergo
sepulcrum esse
secutum tem-
pore belli, ubi
continuo cer-
tandum est,
ut victores
quondam re-
quiescamus in
pace.

Aug. serm. 45.
de Temp. in
illud :

* Non quod
volo bonum
hoc ago, sed
quod odi ma-
lum, hoc fa-
cio. Et vi-
deo aliam legem
in mem-
bris meis re-
pugnantem legi
mentis
meæ, & capti-
vantem me in
lege peccati,
quæ est in
membris meis.
Rom. 7. 25.

& 25.

† Absorpta est
mors in vi-
ctoria : Ubi
est, mors, vi-
ctoria tua ?
Ubi simul
tuus ?

1 Cor. 15. 54.

& 55.

* Militia est
vita hominis
super terram,
& sicut dies
mercenarii,
dies ejus.
Job. 7. 1.

† Unde bella
& lites in vo-
bis ? nonne
ex concupis-
centiis vestris,
quæ militant
in vobis ?
Jacob. 4. 1.

we aspire. † *Let no body therefore, add's he, think himself at present secure, in this time of War, in which we are continually to fight, that at length we may rest in Peace,* such a Peace as nothing shall be able to molest. Saint *Austin* upon those words of the Apostle : * *I do not the good that I would do,* says, that the Life of a Just Man, is not a Triumph but a Combat; and therefore at present we hear the cry's of War such as are express'd by the words the Apostle makes use off, when he complains of the repugnance of our Nature to what is good, and of it's inclination to evil. *I do not* says he, *the good I would do; but I do the evil I would not.* — *I see in my Members another Law which is contrary to the Law of my Mind, and which subjects it to the Law of Concupiscence, which is in my Members.* But the Song's of this Triumph will be heard, when our Mortal Body shall be cloth'd with Immortality, and then 'twill be, that we shall cry out with the Apostle, † *Death is absorb'd in Victory, O Death where is your Victory? O Death where is your Sting?* The same thoughts are very well express'd by these words of Job. * *The Life of Man is a continual Warfare, and his Days are like those of a Hireling.* For as a Day Work-man labors from Morning till Night without ceasing, and then receives his Day Wages; so our Life is as a Day's Work full of Pain and Temptations, after which, each one will receive a reward according to what he shall have done.

But let us at present examin the cause of this continual War, the Apostle Saint *James* tell's us in his Canonical Epistle, † *From whence,* says he, *proceed these combats and dissensions we feel in our selves? Do they not proceed from Concupiscence which makes War against you?* The source of all this, is within our selves; and the source is the repugnance we have to what is good, which has remain'd in our Flesh since the entrance of Sin. Because the Earth of our Flesh was no less Curs'd than the other; and therefore it produces so many Thorns and Thistles which prick and torment us. The Saints compare us to that Ship in the Gospel which was no sooner lanch'd into the Sea, but a Tempest rise that cover'd it with Waves, for our Soul is in our Body as in a Ship, that Leak's on all sides, and which the Winds of a thousand different Passions, expose every Moment to suffer Ship-wrack.

The cause then of those continual Temptations that torment us is our corrupt Nature? * *For the Corruption of*

* Corpus,
quod corruptum

ONT

our Body which clog's the Soul, is that Incentive to Sin we carry about us, and that Inclination to ill, with which we are Born. Our greatest Enemy is within us, and wages continual War against us: Nor are we consequently to wonder at our being tempted; for since we are the Children of Adam, and † *Have been conceiv'd in Iniquity, and brought forth in Sin*, how can we be exempted from Temptations, or how can we hinder our Evil Inclinations from making War continually against us? In the Prayer therefore which our Saviour taught us, Saint Hierom observes, that he do's not bid us beg of God, * *To have no Temptations, for that's impossible*, but only, that † *He wou'd not suffer us to fall or sink under them*; after the same manner he taught his Disciples, when he sayd to them, * *Watch and Pray, lest ye enter into Temptation*; † *For to enter into Temptation*, says the same Saint Hierom, *is not to be tempted, but to be overcome by Temptation*. Joseph was tempted to commit Adultery, but he resisted the Temptation; Susanna likewise was tempted after the same manner, but God gave her also the Grace of resisting: Now this it is that we beg of God in the Lords Prayer, that he wou'd give us the Grace and strength to support our selves in Temptation, and not to remove Temptations wholly from us. * *Thou art mistaken Brother, say's the same Saint, writing to Heliodorus, thou art mistaken. if thou believest that a Christian is quite exempted from Temptation's never art thou more strongly set upon, than when thou believest, that thou art not at all assaulted*. Never do's the Devil make fiercer War upon thee, than when thou think'st he is at Peace with thee. † *Our Adversary is as a roaring Lyon, who go's about seeking whom he may devour, and can'st thou then think thou art secure?* * *He lyes in Ambush for the Rich, and in hidden places to destroy the Innocent*. His Eyes are always upon the Poor, as a Lyon in his Den, he lay's Snarres for him in secret. 'Tis a mistake to think we can live in Peace here below: We are in a time of War, and to be startled at Temptations, is as if a Souldier shou'd start at the noise of a Musket, and thereupon quit the Army; or as if a Man shou'd quite leave off going to Sea; because the motion thereof raises some qualm's in his Stomack.

Saint Gregory says, that 'tis an error in a great many, to imagine, that as soon as they are attack'd by any violent Temptations, all is lost, and that God has already forsaken 'em. They are very much mistaken; for all Men are subject to

Tom. II.

R r

Temptations,

pitur, aggravat animam.
Sep. 9. 15.

† In iniquitatibus conceptus sum, & in peccatis concepit me mater mea.
Psal. 50. 7.

* Impossibile est cuius humanam animam non tentari.

Hier. in illud: † Et ne nos inducas in tentationem.

Math. 6. 13.
* Vigile, & orate, ut non intretis in tentationem.

Math. 26. 41.
† In tentationem intrare, non est tentari, sed vinci.
Hier. Idem not.
August. de ser. Domini. in monte. lib. 2. cap. 14.

* Erras, frater, erras, si putas unquam Christianum persecutionem non pati.
Tunc maxime oppugnaris, si te impugnari nescis.
Hierom.

† Adversarius noster, tanquam leo rugiens, aliquem devorare quaerens, circumit, & tu pacem putas?

Hier. ubi sup.

Ex. 1. 3. 8.
* Sedet in insidiis cum divitibus, in occultis, ut interficiat innocentem. Oculi ejus in pauperem respiciunt, insidiatur in abscondite, quasi leo in spelunca sua.
Psal. 9. 30. 31.

Temptations, all is lost; and that God has already forsaken 'em. They are very much mistaken; for all Men are subject to Temptations, and they who aim at Perfection, are more subject than others; as the Wise Man tell's us in the words we have already cited. The Apostle teaches us also the same thing. † *All, says he, who will live piously in Jesus CHRIST, shall suffer Perfection.* All who will advance in Virtue, shall be expos'd to Temptations, as for others, they often know not, even what it is to be tempted; they are not sensible of the Rebellion and Combat of the Flesh against the Spirit.

Upon this passage of the Apostle, * *The Flesh Lusteth against the Spirit*, Saint Austin says, *that 'tis in good People that it so Lusteth, because in the bad, it has not any thing to Lust against, and that it is only where the Spirit is, that is to say, where there is a real desire of Virtue, that it Lusteth against the Spirit*, the wicked therefore, having not the Spirit which fights against the Flesh, are not sensible of the Rebellion of the Flesh against the Spirit, nor need the Devil lose time to tempt 'em; since of themselves, and without resistance, they yield to him: We go not a hunting after tame Creatures, but after the Stag, and other wild Beasts noted for their swiftness; 'tis after those, whose Feet God has made as swift as Hart's Feet, and those who keep upon the Mountains, that the Devil hunts; for as for such who live like tame Creatures, he has no need to run after 'em; they are already his own, † *And he mind's not*, says Saint Gregory, *the disturbing those, of whom he enjoys a quiet possession*: Wherefore we ought not only not to wonder at our having Temptations, but thou'd look upon 'em as a good sign, according to the words of Saint John Climacus, who says, * *That there is not a more infallible mark, of having overcome the Devil, than having been smartly assaulted by him*; for he do's not at that rate attack you, for any other reason, than for your having struggl'd with him, and shaken off his Yoke; from thence comes his hatred and persecution of you, nor would he otherwise so much torment you.

† Omnes qui pie vivere volunt in Christo Jesu, persecutionem patientur.
2 Tim. 3. 12.

* Caro in bonis concupiscit adversus spiritum: nam in malis non habet contra quem concupiscere: ibi enim concupiscit adversus spiritum, ubi est spiritus.
Aug. de verb. Dom. in Ev. secund. Joan. serm. 43.

† Eos enim pulsat negligi, quos quicquid iure possidere se sentit.
Greg. lib. 24. Moral. ca. 7.
Idem l. 53. c. 7.

* Nullum certius argumentum quod Demones victi sunt a nobis, quam si nos acerrime oppugnent.
Clim. grad. 26. de Dissert. art. 60.

C H A P. II.

That Some are Tempted at the beginning of their Conversion, and others afterwards.

S AINT Gregory observes, that there are some Persons, who are never so sharply assaulted by Temptations, as in the beginning of their Conversion, and he say's, that our Saviour has been pleas'd by a wonderful Providence to give us an Example thereof in himself, by not having permitted the Devil to tempt him till he retir'd, after his Baptism into the Wildernis, to Fast and Pray; he intended thereby, add's the same Saint, to teach his Children, that when they retire from the World to apply themselves wholly to Virtue; they must be prepar'd to withstand strong attack's; because 'tis then usually, that the Devil makes his greatest attempts upon 'em: As soon as ever the Children of Israel were gone out of Egypt, Pharaoh got his Army together to follow them: When Laban saw that Jacob had quite left him, then it was that he pursued him, with all the People he had about him: And when the Devil went out of the Man, whom the Gospel speak's of, he did, like one who arm's against a Rebel to seduce him to his Duty, † *He took seven other Spirits more wicked than himself*, to return to the place from whence he was driven. Thus it is, when the Devil sees a Man Rebelling against him, and shaking of his Yoke, he becomes more intrag'd, and attack's him with the greater fury. When our Saviour cast out the foul Spirit, which was Deaf and Dumb, * *It came say's the Gospel, out of him, crying and huring him with great violence.* And Saint Gregory well observes upon this occasion, † *That when the Devil Possess'd this Man, he did not thus tear him, but when by the Divine Power, he was forc'd to quit him, then it was, that he more cruelly torment'd him; to make us comprehend,* says the same Father, that when we forsake the Devil, 'tis then we ought to expect our being assaulted by the most violent

Greg. Moral. l. 24. c. 7.

Exod. 14.

Genes. 32.

† Et assumit septem alios spiritus secum nequiores se. Luc. 11. 26.

* Et exclamans, & multum discerpens eum, exiit ab eo.

Mat. 9. 25. † Ecce eum non discerpserat cum tecebat, exiens discerpit.

Greg. ubi sup.

Idem. lib. 24.
Mor. c. 7. &
lib. 27. ca. 9.

† Securitas
negligentiæ
Mater est.

Clim. grad. 26.
art. 38.

Greg. lib. 24.
Mor. cap. 7.

Temptations. He says also, that one of the reasons for which God permit's us to be tempted at the beginning of our Conversion, is, to hinder us from running on easily into thoughts of Presumption; and that we may not look upon our selves as Saints; because we are gotten out of the Road of Perdition, into the right Way. And it is, as he further add's, because † *Security is the Mother of Negligence*: So that to hinder this Security from making us fall into negligence and slackness, God permit's that Temptations should come upon us, to let us see the continual danger, we are expos'd to in this Life, and to oblige us to watch over our selves with greater care and application. Saint John Climacus says, that the beginning of a Holy and Regular Life seem's ordinarily troublesome to him who has been accustomed to a Licentious one: And that as a Bird perceives not that 'tis taken in the Net, till it wou'd get out; so 'tis not till we renounce to Vice, that we are most sensible of the unhappy ties we were engag'd in, and feel the greatest strife within our selves. We must not therefore be astonish'd or lose courage, whatever difficulties we may meet with at the beginning, and whatever Temptations may assault us; for they who apply themselves to God's Service, are usually expos'd to these trials.

Saint Gregory add's, how it sometimes happens, that a Man who has renounc'd the World, to give himself wholly to the Service of God, feel's then much more violent Temptations, than all those that he had undergone before his Conversion. Nor says he, that he had not then in him the Root of all these Temptations; but the truth is, it did not then appear, but shew'd it self afterwards. Thus it is, that a Person distracted with many cares and thoughts, is not acquainted with himself at the bottom, and scarce know's what passes as to his inward Man; but when he comes to recollect and enter again into himself, he then perceives how much his Heart is out of order. Temptations, as the same Saint Gregory moreover shew's, are like Thistles which grow on the high-way, but scarce appear; because every body that passes, treads 'em down; the Roots notwithstanding remain still in the Ground, tho' the Prickles shew not themselves; but as soon as they are no more tramp'd upon, they begin to shoot up. The Roots of Temptations, continues he, lie hidden thus in Worldly People; variety of thoughts, cares, and business, let 'em not shew themselves, but cause in 'em
the

the same effect, that Passengers do to the Thistles, which grow in the high-way: But when we reject all other affairs, to imploy our thoughts intirely in the Service of God, then, as when no body go's to and again upon the Thistles, they spring freely up, we begin also to perceive and feel the Thorns of Temptations, the Roots of which lay before cover'd in our Hearts. Hence also is the reason, why some use to feel smarter Temptations in the time of Retreat and Prayer, than when they are busi'd in exterior Employments. So that tho' sometimes we perceive 'em more violent in a Religious Life, than before our Conversion, yet we are not therefore in a worse State, than when we liv'd in the World; only we were not so well acquainted with our selves then, and because we now begin to discover the Evil that before lurk'd in us. Wherefore we ought to be careful not barely to cover the Root of our bad Inclinations, but wholly to pluck it up.

As for those who feel a great deal of comfort and delight in the beginning of their Conversion, and whom God try's not with Temptations till afterwards: 'Tis, say's Saint Gregory, an effect of the Divine Providence, which wou'd not have the Path of Vertue seem at first so rough and troublesome, as to make 'em faint-hearted and turn back. And thus he dealt with his own People, when he brought 'em out of the Bondage of Egypt: He led 'em not throu' the way of the Land of the *Philistin's*, which was the nearest to the Country which they left, * *For fear*, says the Scripture, *lest the People repent when they see War, and return back to Egypt*; but when they had pass'd the Red Sea, and gotten into the Wilderness, from whence there was no apprehension of their return, God try'd 'em with many Sufferings and Temptations, before he put 'em in Possession of the Land of Promise. He deals sometimes after the same manner with those who forsake the World, he hinder's Temptations from making War against 'em, lest being yet but weak in Virtue they shou'd be frighted, and return to the World: And at the beginning he lead's 'em throu' pleasant and comfortable Ways, that after having tasted what God is, and known how much he deserves to be Lov'd and Serv'd, they may with so much the more easiness and courage, support the Temptations which War against the inward Man. Nor did he suffer Saint Peter, to be tempted by a Woman, who ask'd him whether he was not one of the Disciples of JESUS CHRIST, till after he had shewn him the Majesty of his Glory in his

* Ne forte
pœniteret cum
si vidisset ad-
versum se bella
conflurgere, &
reverteretur in
Egyptum.
Exod. 13. 22.

his Transfiguration; to the end that when he had been humbl'd by Temptation, he might amidst his sighs of sorrow and tenderness, make use of what he had seen upon Mount *Thabor*; and that as the fear of Man had made him fall, so the consideration of the Bounty of God, which he had already experienc'd, might help to raise him up again.

This may shew, says Saint *Gregory*, how much they are mistaken, who beginning to serve God, and seeing that they find a great deal of pleasure therein, that God is pleas'd to give them fervor in Prayer, and that all the Exercises of Virtue, and Mortification become easie to them, presently imagine that they have already attain'd to Perfection, whereas they ought to think, that these kind of favors are only demonstrations of Almighty God's kindness, which he shew's to them, as to Children who begin to change Diet, and such as he design's to wean wholly from the things of this World.

'Tis sometimes, continues the same holy Father, to the less Perfect, and to those who have made the smallest progress in Virtue, that God communicates himself more abundantly; not because they Merit more; but because they have the greatest need thereof. In this he do's like a Father, that having many Children, and loving 'em all most tenderly, seem's not much to mind those who are well, but if any one of 'em fall's sick. He do's not only take all care to restore him to his health, but seek's to treat and caress him with a hundred things: He do's also like a Gardiner who is extreemly careful to Water continually the Young Plant's, but as soon as these Plant's are strong and have taken Root, he do's not Water 'em at the same rate, nor make such a do about 'em.

Holy Writers farther observe, that God sometimes sends more comforts to Converted Sinners, and bestow's in appearance more particular favors upon 'em, than upon those who have always liv'd as they ought: And this he do's, that the first may not fall into Despair, nor the others run into Vanity. This conduct is perfectly well explain'd to us in the Parable of the Prodigal Son: His Father receives him with all expressions of Joy, gives him a new Garment, and sends for Musicians: Notwithstanding this very Father, having never receiv'd any thing but what was satisfactory from his Eldest Son, † *Had never given him a*

† Et nunquam
dedisti mihi
heredum, ut
cum amicis
meis epularer.
Luc. 15. 29.

*Kid to Eat with his Friends, makes ready a great Feast, and orders a fatted Calf to be kill'd for the return of a Son, who had been disobedient to him all his Life time: The reason is, * Because they who are Well, says our Saviour, want not a Physician, but the Sick have need of one.*

* Non est opus medico valentibus, sed male habentibus.
Matth. 9. 12.

C H A P. III.

Why God is pleas'd to have us Tempted, and of the Advantage thereof.

* **T**HE Lord your God tempts you, that it may be known, whether or no you Love him with all your Heart, and with all your Soul. Upon these words of Deuteronomy, Saint *Anst*in ask's, how that which is sayd here by the Holy Ghost, can be reconcil'd with what he expresses elsewhere, by the Mouth of Saint *James*, that † God tempt's no Man. And answering his own objection, he says, that there are two ways of tempting; the one tend's to deceive Souls and make 'em fall into Sin: Now God makes not use of this, but the Devil only, whose business 'tis to tempt after this manner, according to those words of the Apostle, * *Left he who tempt's, shou'd have tempted you*, that is to say, as 'tis interpreted, left the Devil shou'd have tempted you. The other way of tempting go's no farther, than to try our Hearts; and in this sense 'tis, that the Scripture says here, that God tempt's us; and in another place, that † God tempted Abraham. God is pleas'd to try us, to make us sensible of our own strength, and shew how we love and fear him; and therefore as soon as Abraham, had lifted up his hand to Sacrifice his Son, * *I know now*, sayd our Lord to him, *that thou fearest God*, that is, as Saint *Anst*in expresses it, † *I have made thee know*, that thou lovest him; so that there are two sorts of Temptations, the one, which God himself sends us, and the other which happen to us by his permission; and which proceed from our Enemies, the World, the Flesh, and the Devil.

* Tentat vos Dominus Deus vester, ut patam fiat utrum diligatis eum, an non in toto corde, & in tota anima vestra.
Deut. 10. 3.

† Deus neminem tentat.
Jacob. 1. 13.

* Ne forte tentaverit vos is qui tentat.
1 ad Thess. 3. 5.

† Tentavit Deus Abraham, id est, probavit.
Genes. 22. 1.
* Nunc cognovi quod times Deum.
Ibid. 12. id est.
† Fecit te cognoscere.
Aug. hom. 18. sup. Gen.

But

*Cassian coll. 4.
cap. 6.*

† Non me de-
relinquas ul-
quequaque.
Psal. 118. 8.

* Ne declines
in irā servo
tuo.
Psal. 26. 9.

† Proba me
Domine, &
tenta me.
Psal. 43. 2.
* Ad punctum
in modico de-
reliqui te, &
in miserationibus
magnis congregabo
te. In mo-
mento indignationis
abieci faciem
meam parum-
per a te, & in
misericordia
sempiterna
misertus sum
tui.
Isai. 54. 7. 8.
Cass. vii. sup.
† Ut erudiret
in eis Israël,
ut posset di-
cerent certare
filii eorum
cum hostibus,
& habere con-
suetudinem
preliandi.
Judic. 3. 1. 2.

*Greg. lib. 21.
Moral. c. 15.*

But what is the reason, that God permit's us to be tempt-
ed, by this last sort of Temptation? Saint *Gregory, Cassian*,
and several other great Men, treating of this Question, say
first, that 'tis for our advantage to be tempted, and that God
sometimes to try us withdraws his hand from us for a little while:
And if 'twere not so, neither he nor the Prophet wou'd have
sayd, † *O do not utterly forsake me*; but knowing well
that God uses sometimes to forsake his Servants, and to with-
draw his hand from 'em for a little space, and for their
greater good; thence it is, that he asks not of God, that he
wou'd never forsake him, but only that he wou'd not forsake
him for ever. After the same manner he addressees himself to
God in the twenty seventh Psalm. * *Withdraw not thy self
from thy Servant in thy Anger*. He asks not, that God
wou'd never withdraw himself from him, but that he wou'd
not do it in his Anger; that is, so, that he might thereby
fall into Sin; for as for that withdrawing, which go's no fur-
ther than to try us; and as to those Temptations which God
himself sends us; these are what the Prophet ask's for, when
he says, † *Prove me O Lord and try me*. And God him-
self says in *Isay*, * *For a small moment have I forsaken thee,
but with great Mercies will I gather thee. In the moment
of my Wrath I hid my Face a little from thee, but with ever-
lasting kindness have I had pity on thee*.

But let us take a more particular view of the advantages
we reap from Temptations. *Cassian* says, that God deals with
us as he dealt with the Children of *Israël*, when he brought
'em into the Land of Promise; he wou'd not destroy their
Enemies wholly, but left there the *Canaanites*, the *Amorites*,
and several others, † *To the end*, says the Scripture, *that
Israël might gain experience by them, and that it's Children
might learn to fight with the Enemy, and be accusom'd to
War*. Thus it is, says he, that God is pleas'd we shou'd
have Enemies, and that we shou'd be expos'd to the assaults
of Temptations; to the end, that being continually engag'd,
we might not by softness and prosperity ruin our selves: For
it has often happen'd, that they whom the Enemy has not
been able to overcome by an open War, have been afterwards
easily vanquish'd, whilst they have been seduc'd by the deceit-
ful appearance of Peace.

Saint *Gregory* says, that God by a secret and adorable Pro-
vidence, is pleas'd that the Elect shou'd be tempt'd and af-
flicted here; because this World is only a place of Pilgrimage.

or

or rather of Banishment; where we must be continually a going on, till we arrive at our Heavenly Country. And tho' when Travellers meet with some agreeable Meadow or Grove, they go sometimes out of their way; yet God, who wou'd not have any thing put us out of our's, nor wou'd not have us fix our Minds upon Earth, or take the place of our Exile for that of our Country, permit's this Life to be full of pain and torment; to the end, that the consideration of what we here suffer in it, may make us more ardently breath after the Life to come. Saint *Austin* speaks hereof, after the same manner, saying, that Temptations and Afflictions serve to shew to us the misery of this Life, and † *To make us desire with greater ardour, and seek more carefully the other*; where we are to enjoy true happiness for all Eternity. In another place he says, that *Afflictions hinder the Traveller, who is a going to his own Country, from looking upon his Inn as the place of his abode, and from staying there too long.* When we intend to Wean a Child, and use it to a more solid Diet, we rub the Nurses Nipples with some bitter thing, which may make it have an aversion to them: God deals with us almost after the same manner: He dashes all the' things of this World with Worm-wood, that we may have an aversion to them, and that seeing nothing here worth our longing after; we shou'd desire nothing but God: And this it is, which made Saint *Gregory* say, That the * *Afflictions which oppress us here below, force us to have recourse to God, and make us to have an Inclination for nothing but him.*

† Ut illa, ubi
erit beatitudo
vera, desideretur
ardentius,
& instantius
inquiratur.
Ne victor ten-
dens ad patri-
am, stabulum
amet pro pa-
triam suā.
*Aug. l. 13. de
Triu. c. 16.*

* Mala quæ
nos hic pre-
munt, ad De-
um nos ire
compellunt.
Greg. ubi sup.

C H A P. IV.

Of some other advantages which Temptations
bring with 'em.

† Beatus vir,
qui suffert
tentationem:
quoniam cum
probatus fue-
rit, accipiet
coronam vitæ.
Jacob. 1. 12.

* Necessè est,
ut veniant
tentationes:
quis enim co-
ronabitur, nisi
qui legitime
certaverit?
Aut quomodo
certabitur, si
desit qui im-
pugnet?
Bern. serm. 64.
sup. Cant. ex
2 Tim. 2. 5.

† Quoniam
per multas
tribulationes
oportet nos
intrare in reg-
num Dei.
Mat. 14. 21.

* Hi sunt qui
venerunt de
tribulatione
magna, & la-
verunt stolas
suas, & deal-
baverunt eas
in sanguine
Agni.
Apoc. 7. 14.
Bern. serm. 1.
de Resurrex.

† Dilectus
meus candi-
dus, & rubi-
cundus, elect-
us ex millibus.
Cant. 5. 10.

† **B**LESSED is the Man that suffers Temptation, for when he shall be try'd, he shall receive the Crown of Life. Saint Bernard explaining these words of Saint James, says, * 'Tis necessary that Temptations shou'd happen, for who shall be Crown'd but he that shall lawfully have fought, and how shall a Man fight, if there be none to attack him? The Scripture and holy Writers shew us, that a world of advantages are annex'd to Sufferings and Adversities; and the same advantages are also annex'd to Temptations; among which one of the most considerable, is, that which is propos'd to us by these words of Saint James. God sends us Temptations that our Merits may be the greater, and our Reward the more eminent, † For throu' many Tribulations we must enter into the Kingdom of God. So when the Glory of the Blessed Souls was reveal'd to Saint John, one of the Elders that stood before the Throne, sayd to him: * These are they who came out of great Tribulation, and have wash'd their Robes, and made 'em white in the Blood of the Lamb. Hereupon Saint Bernard ask's, how is it that they are made white, in the Blood of the Lamb? For Blood uses not to make that it touches, white; but on the contrary, it makes it red. They are made white, says he, because with the Blood that issu'd forth of the Sacred Side of JESUS CHRIST, there came forth Water also, which made 'em white; or let us rather say, that they are made white; because the Blood of this spotless Lamb is white and ruddy, according to these words of the Spouse in the Canticles. † My Beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefest of ten thousand. So that 'tis throu' Pains and Sufferings, that we must enter into the Kingdom of God. Here we must hew and polish the Stones that are to build the Temple of the Heavenly Jerusalem,

for

for not one stroke of the Hammer shall be giv'n in that Holy City. * *When the House of the Lord was a Building, there was neither Hammer nor Ax nor any Tool of Iron heard.* Now the more considerable a place is where the Stones are to be put, the more strok's of the Hammer and Chisel are requisite to polish 'em. Those for Example, that are to make up the Frontispiece of the Gate of a Building, must be more smooth'd than the others; that so they may make the Entrance of the Building more Beautiful. Nor is it only for that, that JESUS CHRIST having made himself for us the Gate of Heaven, was pleas'd to be afflicted with so many sufferings and reproaches; but 'tis to the end also, that we being to pass throu' a Door where sufferings and reproaches, if we may say so, had giv'n so many strokes of the Hammer and Chisel to him, ought to be atham'd for not having receiv'd also some our selves; that we might be made more fit for this Heavenly Building. The Stones that are to be thrown into Foundations, are not cut with any care; nor is it necessary, that they who are to be thrown headlong into Hell, shou'd be try'd by Afflictions and Temptations: Let Reprobates therefore think of nothing else but diverting themselves; let 'em deny their Sensuality nothing; let 'em in all things follow their Inclinations: But for such as are design'd to fill the Places of the Disobedient Angels, they must be exercis'd with Temptations and Sufferings: † *For if we are the Children of God, we are consequently his Heires, Heires of God and Coheirs of JESUS CHRIST, that provided we suffer with him, we may with him also be glorifi'd.*

The necessity of being prov'd by Temptations, is also manifested very well unto us, by these words of the Angel to Toby. * *Because you were acceptable to God, 'twas necessary for you to have been prov'd by Temptation.* And the Wife Man says, † *That it was Temptation that made the Faith of Abraham to appear.* And because he was found stedy in Temptation, God forthwith lay's before him the Reward of his Virtue; and Swears to him, * *That he would Multiply his Posterity as the Stars of Heaven, and as the Sand upon the Sea-shore.* So that one of the reasons why God sends Temptations, is to make us Merit a greater Reward, and a richer Crown. Holy Writers therefore tell us, that God shews us greater favours by sending us Temptations, and giving us strength to overcome 'em, than if he shou'd deliver us wholly

* Malleus & fecuris, & omne ferramentum non fuit audita in domo eum edificaretur.
3 Reg. 6. 7

† Hæredes quidem Dei, coheredes autem Christi: si tamen compatimur, ut & glorificemur.
Rom. 8. 17.

* Quia acceptus eras Deo, necesse fuit, ut tentatio probaret te.

Tob. 12. 13.
† In temptatione inventus est fidelis.
Eccl. 44. 21.

* Multiplicabo semen tuum sicut stellas cæli, & velut arenam quæ est in litore maris, & benedicentur in nomine tuo omnes gentes terræ.
Ibid. 22. 17, 18.

from 'em; for so we shou'd be depriv'd of the Recom-
pence of that Glory, which they give us an occasion to
Merit.

*Bonav. de Proc.
Relig. c. 1.*

Saint *Bonaventure* add's another reason, which is, that
the Love which God has for us, is the cause, that he is not
only pleas'd, that we shou'd come to Glory, and to a high
degree thereof; but, that we shou'd also quickly possess it,
without being oblig'd to stay any long time in that place,
which he has appointed for the purifying us from our Sins;
for this end, he sends us here below Temptations and Suffer-
ings, which cleanse our Souls from the spots and rust of
Sin, and put 'em into a condition of injoying sooner the
Presence of God, † *Take away the Dross from the Silver,*
and a most pure Vessel will come forth. Thus it is, that our
Soul must be purif'd from it's uncleanness, before it can be
capable of Glory; nor is it, indeed, any ordinary favor
which God shew's us, by thus putting us in a condition, the
sooner to enter into Glory; nay, 'tis a very great one that
he is pleas'd, that the torments which we ought to suffer
in Purgatory, shou'd be chang'd into some slight Pains where-
with he Chastises us in this Life.

† *Aufer' rubi-
ginem de ar-
gento, & e-
greddietur vas
purissimum.*
Prov. 25. 4.

* Succeedenti-
bus prosperis,
præpositus
pincernarum
oblatus est in-
terpretis sui.
Gen. 40. 23.

† Cum robo-
ratus esset, e-
levatum est
cor ejus in in-
teritum, &
neglexit Do-
mum Deum
suum.

2 Paral. 26. 16.
* Incrassatus
est dilectus, &
recalcitavit,
impinguatus,
dilatatus dere-
liquit Deum
factorem su-
um, & recessit
à Deo saluari
suo.

Deut. 32. 15.
† Imple facies
eorum igno-
minia: &
querent no-
men tuum
Domine.

Psal. 81. 17.
* Et clamave-
runt ad Domi-
num cum tri-
bularentur.

Psal. 106. 13.
† Et cum oc-
cideret eos,
quererant e-
um, & revert-
ebantur; &
ad eum venie-
bant ad eum.
Psal. 77. 34.

The Holy Scripture is full of Examples, which shew us,
that Prosperity do's usually remove us far from God; and
that Adversity, on the contrary brings us back again to him.
Was it not Prosperity that made *Pharao's* Butler forget *Jo-
seph* so soon? * *All things prospering with the chief Butler,*
says the Scripture, he remembred no more his Interpreter.
Was it not Prosperity which made King *Osias*, after so good
a beginning; make so ill an end? † *When he found him-
self strong, his Heart was lifted up to his Destruction, and*
he neglected the Lord his God. Was not Prosperity insine
the source of *Nabuchodonosors* misfortunes? Was it not that
which made *Salomon* transgress: Which made *David* num-
ber the People: And made the Children of *Israel* forget the
Benefits they had receiv'd from the Hand of God? * *My*
Beloved waxed fat, and kick'd, he is grown thick, and blown up
with fatness, and he has forsaken the Lord that made him,
and gone far from the God who sav'd him. Afflictions, on
the contrary, brought 'em back again to God, and 'tis that
which made the Prophet say. † *With shame O Lord cover*
their Faces, and they will seek thy Name: * *They cry'd unto*
*the Lord, when they were in trouble; * They sought him, they*
return'd to him, and came to him betimes.

When

When *Nebuchodonosor* was turn'd into a Beast, however real or imaginary that change might be, 'twas then that he acknowledg'd God: And was not *David* more faithful when *Saul* Persecuted him, when *Absalon* Rebell'd against him, and when *Semei* Revild him, than when all things went prosperously with him? The experience also which he had of the advantages which Afflictions bring with 'em, made him thus address himself to God, * *We rejoice'd*, says he, *at the Days wherein thou didst humble us, and the Tears when we were afflicted*: † *'Twas good for me that thou hast humbl'd me*. How many have been sav'd by Adversity, who wou'd have been lost by Prosperity? *I turn'd to thee O Lord in my Affliction*, says the Psalmist, *when I felt most the Thorns thereof*. When these kind of Thorns prick us, then it is that we enter into our selves, and have recourse to God, 'tis a common Maxim among the People of the World, *That Chastisement makes Fools Wise*. The same thing the Holy Ghost teaches us, when he says by the Mouth of the Prophet *Isay*, * *That Chastisement alone will give Understanding*, and explaining himself more clearly by the Wise Man, he says, that † *A great Sickness makes the Mind sober, and that the Rod and Correction gives Wisdom*. Prosperity makes a Man Vain and Insolent, it makes him like a Bullock, which has not yet suffer'd the Yoke; and God, to tame him, put's the Yoke of Afflictions and Temptations upon him. † *Thou hast Chastis'd me; and I was tam'd as a Bullock unaccustom'd to the Yoke*. It was with Gall that the Angel cur'd *Toby*; and with Clay that our Saviour restor'd the Blind Man to his Sight: And 'tis with the same design to heal us, that God sends us Temptations, which are the greatest Sufferings, that they who truly serve him can be expos'd to; for the loss of Goods, Sickness, and other things of that nature, are not very sensible Afflictions, to the true Servants of God; because they affect only the Body, and do but touch the outside; they are not therefore in great pain thereupon, but when they are attack'd with what pierces to the very Soul, as with Temptation, which tends to separate 'em from God, and seems to put 'em in danger of losing his Grace; then it is, that finding themselves touch'd to the quick, and agitated by the Rebellion of the Flesh, which wou'd draw the Spirit after it, they in the excess of their trouble cry out with the Apostle,

* *O wretched Man that I am, who will deliver me from*

* Lætati sumus pro diebus nos humiliasti: anis quibus vidimus mala: *Psalm. 89. 15.*

† Et bonum mihi quia humiliasti me. Converti sum in ærumna mea, dum configitur spina. *Psalm. 31. 4.*

* Sola vexatio dabit intellectum auditui. *Isa. 28. 19.*

† Infirmitas gravis sobrietatem facit animam. *Eccl. 31. 2.*

* Et virga atque correctio tribuit sapientiam. *Prover. 29. 15.*

† Castigasti me, & eruditus sum, quasi invenculus indomitus. *Jerem. 31. 18.*

* Infelix ego homo quis me liberabit de

the

corpore mortis hujus.
Rom. 7. 24. &
7. 19.

the Body of this Death? The Corruption of the Flesh draws me to Evil; I am full of good design's, which I put not in Execution, who will free me from the Bonds of so deadly and dangerous a Slavery?

CHAP. V.

That Temptations serve to make us the more sensible of our Weakness, and to have Recourse to God.

TEMPTATION brings yet another advantage with it, which is, that it makes us know our selves. Many times we know not our selves, but Temptation shews us what we are, as *Thomas à Kempis* says very well; * *Temptations are very profitable tho' unease and troublesome to Man; because in them, he is humbl'd, purif'd and taught*; and this knowledge of our selves is the Foundation-stone of the whole Spiritual Building; without which, nothing can be built that will last long; and by the means of it, the Soul lays it's whole stress upon God, throu' whom it can do all things; and becomes capable of raising it's self to the height of Christian Perfection. The effect then of Temptation is, that it shews us out Weakness and Ignorance; for before that, Man is not sufficiently acquainted with Misery; and having not yet try'd it, he has too good an opinion of himself; but when by experience he sees, that the least puff blows him down, that little or nothing puts him quite out of Heart; that a slight Temptation confounds, and dangerously wounds him; that his Resolution and Judgment fail him in time of need; and that darkness incompasses him; then he begins to moderate his Presumption and Vanity, to be humbl'd, and to have no other thoughts of himself, but such as suit with his own meanness. Were it not for Temptation, says *Saint Gregory*, we shoud have too good an opinion of our own Courage and Strength: But when a Temptation comes, when

* Tentationes sunt homini valde utiles, licet molestæ & graves quia in illis homo humiliatur, purgatur & eruditur.
Sinit. Chr. li. 1. ca. 13.

Greg. lib. 23.
Mor. ca. 17.

we see our selves just a falling, and to be as it were within an inch of Ship-wrack; then do we sincerely acknowledge our weakness, and enter into true thoughts of Humility and Lowliness. Wherefore the Apostle speaking of himself, says, *† Left the multitude of Revelations shou'd exalt me, there was given to me a Thorn in my Flesh, the Messenger of Satan to torment me.*

† Ne multitudine revelationum extollas me datus est mihi stimulus carnis meæ, Angelus Satanæ, qui me colaphizet. 2 Cor. 12. 7.

From hence follows another advantage, which is, the knowledge of our weakness, makes us know the need we have of God's Assistance, of having Recourse to him in Prayer, and of cleaving fast to him only; according to these words of the Psalmist, ** My Soul cleaves unto thee; 'tis good for me to cleave unto God.* As a Mother who wou'd have her Child go to no body but her self, makes it afraid of every one else, that so it may be forc'd to fly into her Armes; so, the Lord permits the Devil to frighten us with Temptations, that so we may be oblig'd to run more readily to our Heavenly Father. *† He withdraws himself a while from us, says Gerson, as the Eagle do's from her little ones; to provoke 'em to fly after her: And as a Mother that leaves her Child for a moment, that it may Cry the more after her, look about for her with greater care, hug her the more heartily, after having found her; and that she may caress it also with more than usual tenderness.* Saint Bernard says, that when God seems, sometimes to withdraw himself from us; 'tis, that we shou'd, as 'twere, call him back again with the more earnestness, and endeavour the more carefully to keep him when we have him. Thus it was, that being with his two Disciples, who were going to *Emaus*, he made as if he wou'd leave 'em, and that he was oblig'd to go on still further, to the end that they shou'd the more press him to stay with 'em, and say as they did; ** Abide with us, O Lord, for it grows late; and the Day is much spent.*

* Adhæsit anima mea post te. Mihi autem adhærere Deo bonum est. Psal. 62. 9. & 72. 28.

† Ut provocet sicut aquila pullos ad volantium, ut mater filium ad horam relinquit, quo instantius ille clamet, accuratius quærat, ardens stringat, & illa viciissim blanditur suavius. Gerson. de Inst. Theolog. præf. confid. vel Inst. art. 6. Bern. Ser. 74. sup. Cantica.

* Mane nobiscum Domine, quoniam advesperascit, & inclinata est jam dies. Luc. 24. 29.

By this means it happens also, that seeing the need we have of God's assistance, we esteem it also the more. 'Tis also this which makes Saint Gregory say, that 'tis for our advantage that God do's sometimes withdraw his hand from us; because if he shou'd never leave us, we might perhaps esteem his Protection the less, and think it not so necessary as it is: Whereas when he leaves us but for a time, and do's afterwards reach out his hand to us, and that at the very moment, when we are ready to fall, we conceive much better the value

Gregor. lib. 23. Mor. ca. 19.

value

† Nisi quia
Dominus ad-
juvit me, pau-
lò minùs habi-
taffet in infer-
no anima mea.
Psal. 93. 17.
* In quacum-
que die invo-
cavero te, ecce
cognovi quo-
nim Deus
meus es tu.
Psal. 55. 10.

value of his favors. When we reflect with the Psalmist, that with-
out him we had been lost: † *Had the Lord but deferr'd never
so little to help me, my Soul had descended into Hell;* we
have then a more lively sense of his favors, and we enter into
more deep reflections of his Mercy and Bounty. * *Whensoever
I call upon thee, I forthwith know that thou art my God,*
by the help that thou givest me. As soon as ever we have
recourse to God in Temptation, we receive succour from him;
we find how faithful he is to assist us in time of necessity;
and that proof makes us, by looking then more particularly
upon him as our Father and Defender, to be the more inflam'd
with his Love; and to fall a Singing his Praises, as the Chil-
dren of Israel did, when they saw their Enemies, that pursu'd
'em, perish in the Red Sea.

Another advantage that Temptation causes, is, that it
teaches us not to attribute any thing that is good to our
selves, but to give the Glory of all to God, and this ad-
vantage is so much the greater; because 'tis also a very ef-
fectual remedy against Temptations, and a very proper means
to obtain of God new favors.

C H A P. VI.

*That the just are the more try'd, and purif'd by
Temptations; and that Virtue thereby takes
the deeper Root.*

HOLY Writers say, that God is pleas'd, we shou'd
be the more temptred, thereby to prove every one's
Virtue; for as 'tis in great Winds and Storms,
that we find whether a Young Tree has taken
Root; and in War and Battel's, not in Peace
and Repose, that we see the Courage and Valour of a Soul-
dier; so 'tis in Temptations and Sufferings, not in a time of
a calm and still Devotion, that we perceive the zeal and sted-
fastness of a true Servant of God. Upon these words of the
Royal Prophet, *I am prepar'd to keep thy Commandments,
without being disorder'd at any thing;* Saint Ambrose says, that

S. Ambr. in
illud: Paratus
sum, & non
sum turbatus,
ut custodiam
mandata tua.
Psal. 118. 60.

The Husband-man prunes the Vine, that it may bear more: And thus it is, say the holy Writers; that God compares himself to the Husband-man in the Gospel, who prunes his Vines; that is, tempts and proves his Elect, that they may more abundantly bring forth fruits of Grace, † *He will prune; says the Scripture, every branch which bears fruit, that it may bring forth more.* † The Lord, says the holy Abbot Nilus, *make the Tree; take deeper Root, and Temptation makes the Soul more and more steadfast in Virtue:* And 'tis in this sense, that the holy Interpreters understand these words of the Apostle, † *Virtue is made perfect in weakness;* as if he had sayd, *that 'tis never established, grow's more firm; and makes it's solidity the better known.* When any one disputes against the truth which you defend, the more reasons that are urg'd to oppose it; the more also you endeavour to bring for the defence thereof. And so it happens, that by your Answer's to the Objections made against you, you become more and more confirm'd therein; 'tis so in Temptations, the more endeavours that the Devil uses to turn a Servant of God, from the practise of some Virtue, the more the Servant of God seek's by new motives, by firm resolutions, and by new acts; to fortify himself therein; and thus that Virtue becomes more firm, and takes deeper Root in his Heart. Wherefore 'tis very well sayd, that Temptations are to the Soul, what the stroke of the Hammer are to the Anvil; they serve to make us stronger against all trials.

Saint Bonaventure says more yet, that those, who finding themselves strongly tempted by some Vice, remain faithful to the Temptation, are ordinarily rewarded by God in an eminent manner, with the possession of the Virtue, most opposite to the Vice which they resisted; thus Saint Benet, as Saint Gregory tell's us, having with great resolution overcome a violent Temptation of the Flesh, by rowling himself all Naked upon Thistles and Thornes, receiv'd as a Reward from God the gift of Chastity; without ever feeling after that, any motion against it. We Read the same thing in Saint Thomas of Aquina, a Woman having a mind to intice him to Sin, he drove her away with a Fire-brand; and God crown'd this his resistance, by sending two Angels, who strongly begirt his Loyns, as a mark that he indow'd him with the gift of a perpetual Chastity. God deal's after the same manner with those, who resist stoutly Temptations against Faith:

T t 2

He

† Omnem put-
nitentem qui fecit
fructum pur-
gabit eum, ut
fructum plus
afferat.

Joan. 15. 2.
* Plantas enu-
trunt venti,
& tentatio
confirmat ani-
mæ fortitudi-
nem.

Nil. Abb.
Tom. 3. Bibl.
3. 5. Pater. &
Clim. grad.
† Virtus in
infirmitate
perficitur.

2 Cor. 12. 9.
id est, stabili-
tur, fundatur,
stabilis decla-
ratur.

Ben. Procell. 4.
Relig. ca. 13.

He gives 'em afterwards pure and clear lights, which so illuminate their Minds, and inflame their Hearts, that nothing any more troubles 'em. Saint Bonaventure applies to this purpose the words of *Isay*, * *They shall lead 'em into Captivity, whose Captives they were, and they shall bring into Subjection their Oppressors*. Wherefore dear Brother comfort thy self, when thou art tempted, and take courage; 'tis by this trial, that God is pleas'd to strengthen in thee, that Virtue which Temptation set's upon; 'tis by these Rebellions of the Flesh, that he will have thee obtain the gift of Angelical Chastity. *Sampson* meets a Lion in his way; attack's him, and tears him in pieces; and a while after returning by the same place, he finds a Hony-comb, in the body of the Dead Lion. Fall courageously upon the Temptation, and overcome it, and you'll then see, what pleasure you'll reap thereby.

By this we may also learn, that to yield to a Temptation, is to give new force to it, for the time to come; for hereby Vice increaseth, and grow's more hard to overcome; as Saint *Austin* well observes upon this passage of *Jeremy*, † *Jerusalem has Sinned, and is therefore become weak*. The same truth the Wise Man teaches us in these words, * *The Sinner shall add Sin to Sin*. And this remark, is of great importance, to those who are troubl'd with Temptations; for the Devil deceiv's some, by making 'em believe, that they shall cause the Temptation to cease, by yielding to it; 'tis an Error, for on the contrary, 'tis the way to strengthen it, and to give Concupiscence the greater power over you, thereby the more easily to overcome you upon all occasions; 'tis with that, as 'tis with one that has the Dropsie, who by Drinking increaseth his thirst, instead of quenching it: Or as 'tis with a Covetous Man, who intending still to satisfy his Avarice, makes it always the more insatiable. Take it therefore for a certain truth, that when you let your self be carry'd away by Temptation; you add new strength to it, against your self; and you lose some of your own force, and so grow more easie to be overcome another time; whereas when with resolution you resist; Virtue do's so much the more increase and grow strong in you; the way therefore to be rid of Temptations, and to act so as not to be more disturb'd by them, is not to yield to them, and never to suffer 'em to get ground upon us; for thus they do so lose their strength, that they are brought in-

* Et erunt capientes eos qui se ceperant, & subicient exatores suos.
Isai. 14. 2.

Judic. 14.

† Peccatum peccavit Jerusalem: propterea instabilis facta est.
Thren. 1. 8.
* Peccator adjiciet ad peccandum.
Eccl'es. 3. 29.

as a Pilot must be of great ability, to steer a Ship well, during a Storm, and whilst one Wave carry's him, as 'twere up to the Skies, and then falling again, seem's ready to swallow him up in the Deep; so we shew our selves skilful; when we govern our selves well in time of Temptation, so that without being carry'd away by Pride in Prosperity, or Pusillanimity in Adversity, we can always say, I am prepar'd, without being disorder'd at any thing. Now 'tis upon this account that God send's us Temptations, to prove us, as he did his People, whom he left amongst many Enemies, *† To the end*, says the Scripture, *that by them he might prove Israël, and know whether they wou'd hearken to the Commandments of the Lord, which he commanded their Fathers by Moses*; do's not the Apostle also tell us, ** That Hereafter must be, that so those, who have been prov'd, may be made manifest*? And do's not the Wise Man, speaking of the Just, say, *† That God had tempted 'em, and found 'em worthy of him*? Temptations are like strok's of the Hammer, which discover the goodness of the Metal. They are the touch-stones, wherewith God try's his Friends; for God as well as Men, will have Friends, prov'd, and therefore it is, that he puts 'em to the trial; according to these words, *The Furnace proves the Potters Vessels, and Affliction the Just*. *† And as Silver is try'd by the Fire, and Gold by the Furnace, so the Lord try's our Hearts by Temptation*. As when a mass of Metal, says Saint Hierom, is throu'ly red hot, it cannot be distinguish'd, whether 'tis Gold, Silver or Copper; because whatsoever is so pierc'd by the Fire, seems like Fire it self; so in the ardor of Devotion, and the fervor which Spiritual Consolations raise; we know not what any one is, all is then Fire: But take the Metal out, and let it but cool a while, you'll quickly see what it is; let the Spiritual Consolations and Fervor pass, and let Sufferings and Temptations come, and then will appear what every one is in himself. When in a State of tranquillity and peace, a Man gives himself to Virtue, 'tis hard to know whether he do's it, either purely out of Love to Virtue, or by reason of the goodness of his temper; whether for the pleasure he find's therein; or insine, because he is not then touch'd with any thing else: But he who Persevers in spite of all the assaults, which Temptation makes upon him, shew's indeed, that 'tis for Virtues sake, and the Love of God alone that he act's.

T Tom. II.

T t

Temptation

† Ut in illis
experiretur Is-
raëlem, utrum
audiret man-
data Domini
quæ præcep-
erat patribus
eorum per ma-
num Moysi,
an non.

Judic. 3. 4.
* Oportet &
hæretes effe-
re, ut & qui pro-
bati sunt, ma-
nifesti fiant
in vobis.

1 Cor. 11. 19.
† Quoniam
Deus tentavit
illos, & in-
venit eos dig-
nos se.

Sap. 3. 5.
* Vala signifi-
cat fornax,
& homines ju-
stos tentatio
tribulationis.

Ecc. 27. 6.
† Et sicut igne
probatur ar-
gentum, & au-
rum camino,
ita corda pro-
bat Dominus.

Prov. 17. 3.

* Igne examinasti nos sicut examinatur argentum.

Psal. 65. 10.

† Utam eos sicut uritur argentum, & probabo eos sicut probatur aurum.

Zach. 13. 9.

* Et excoquam ad purum scoriā tuam, & auferam omne stannum tuum.

Isai. 1. 25.

† Tentatio ignis est in quo aurum rutilat, & palea consumitur: justus persequitur, peccator miseretur perit.

Tempestas est; ex qua hic emergit, ille suffocatur.

Aug. in Psal. 42. Faber, ad Mart.

* Multiplicatae sunt aquae, & elevaverunt arcam in sublime.

Gen. 7. 17. Gers. de insul. Theol. 6.

Temptation serves further, to make us more pure, * *Then O Lord hast prov'd us*, says the Psalmist, *as Silver is try'd in the Fire*. God purifies his Elect by Temptation, as the Gold-smith do's Gold and Silver by the Fire, † *And I will make 'em pass throu' the Fire*, says he by *Zachary*, and will refine 'em as Silver is refin'd, and I shall try them as Gold is try'd; and in *Isay*, * *I will purely purge away thy Dross, and take away all thy Tin*. Thus Temptation work's in the Just, it consumes whatever Rust and Impurity, Vice had left in 'em; it takes 'em off from Self-love, and the Love of Worldly things; and renders 'em, most pure and agreeable in the sight of God. 'Tis true, says Saint *Anstsin*, that every body do's not draw this benefit and comfort from Temptations. Some things grow soft and melt before the Fire, as Wax; and other things on the contrary grow hard, as Clay. So 'tis with the Just and the Wicked; the Just are soften'd by the Fire of Temptations and Sufferings, by humbling themselves under the sense of their meanness; but the Wicked, on the contrary become harden'd. Thus it was with the two Thieves upon the Cross: One made his Punishment the means of his Conversion, and the other made it, a motive to Blaspheme. Which caus'd the same holy Doctor Saint *Anstsin* to say, that † *Temptation is a Fire, in which Gold shines, and Straw consumes; the Just is made Perfect, and the Sinner miserably Perishes*: That 'tis a *Storm* from whence one gets a *Shore*, and in which the other is *Drown'd*. The Almighty open'd a way a-cross the Sea to the Children of *Israël*, but the same Waves which separated to save them, united again to swallow up the *Egyptians*.

Saint *Cyprian*, desiring to encourage the Faithful to suffer Persecutions courageously, says, that as the People of *Israël* did Daily multiply more and more, whilst the *Egyptians* oppress'd 'em, so the Church of God, increases amidst the Persecutions of the unfaithful: And as the Ark, * *Was rais'd according to the swelling of the Waters*, so the true Servants of God, raise themselves up to Heaven, according to the increase of Temptations and Sufferings. And as the agitation of the Sea, says *Gerson*, makes it in one instant throw up all the Filth, it had receiv'd by little and little in Calm weather, so Temptations and Sufferings, serve to purifie the Soul, from all the Imperfections it had contracted, during the great peace it enjoy'd.

indeed, to destroy Virtue in our Heart, and to rob us of the Merit and Reward of our good Works; but God's design there-
in, is quite opposite: The Stones which the Devil throws to
overwhelm us, are turn'd by God into precious ones, to make
up a Crown of Glory for us: The Jews Stone Saint Stephen,
and seek nothing but his Death; and then it is, that he sees
the Heavens open, and the Son of God calling him to him.

Upon this Subject, *Gerson* observes, what ought to be of great
consolation to us. He says, that 'tis the opinion of the holy
Fathers, that tho' in time of Temptation we commit some
little faults, and believe that we have been in some measure the
cause thereof, throu' our own negligence; yet the Patience and
Resignation nevertheless, with which we may have suffer'd this
trial; the resistance we may have made against the assaults
of the Temptation; and our endeavours to overcome it; do not
only blot out, all these kind of faults and negligences, but
make us increase in Grace and Merit in the Eyes of God,
according to the words of the Apostle, * *God will make you
draw advantage out of the Temptation.* When a Mother or
Nurse has a mind to teach a Child to go; she retires a
little from it, and then calls it to her; yet 'tis still afraid,
and dares not come forward; she nevertheless lets it alone,
and sometimes exposes it to the hazard of falling, knowing
that 'tis better it shou'd have a little fall, than not learn to
go. After the same manner God deals with us. † *I am*, says
he, *as the Nursing Father of Ephraim*; those light faults, which
you believe you have committed, he makes no reckoning of,
in comparison of the profit which you reap, from Temptations
by resisting 'em.

Blessins, tells us, that one Day Saint *Gertrude* bemoaning bit-
terly a fault she was subject to, and begging of God most ear-
nestly to free her from it; our Lord, with great bounty
answer'd her thus. Why wou'd'st, thou my dear Daughter, de-
prive me of a great Glory, and thy self of a great Reward?
Every time that thou art sensible of that thy fault, and dost
purpose to amend it for the future, 'tis a new Merit thou
acquirest, and as often as one endeavours to overcome any
fault for the Love of me, he do's me the same honor, as a
brave Souldier do's his King, in fighting courageously against
his Enemies, and endeavouring to Conquer 'em.

*Gers. tract.
contra Publ-
ianim.*

* Faciet etiam
cum tentati-
one proven-
tum.
1 Cro. 10. 13.

† Et ego quasi
nutricius
Ephraim.
Osea 11. 3.

C. 4. Monis.
Spiris.

C H A P. VIII.

*That the Saints and Servants of God, not only,
did not afflict themselves at Temptations,
but on the contrary rejoyc'd; because
of the Profit they drew from
thence.*

THE prospect of the great advantages annexed to Temptations, was the cause that the Saints instead of afflicting themselves for having been rejoyc'd thereat. And 'tis to this purpose that the Apostle Saint James exhorts by these words

* Omne gaudium exultationis, fratres mei, cum in variis tentationibus incid-
eritis.

Jacob. 1. 2.
† Non solum autem, sed & gloriamur in tribulationibus, scientes quod tribulatio patientiam operatur: patientia autem probationem, probatio vero spem.

Rom. 5. 3.
Greg. ibid.

c. 7. in illud:
* Si dormiero, dicam quando con-
surgam? &
rursum ex-
pectabo vel-
peram.

Job. 7. 4.
Refers Dorot.
Doctr. 13. ex
Prat. Div.

* *My dear Brethren count it all joy, when ye fall into divers Temptations.* In the same Spirit, Saint Paul speaks thereof; † *'Tis not only, says he, in the hope of the Children of God, that we glory also in tribulations; knowing that tribulation worketh Patience: And Patience, Experience, and Expectation of Hope;* Saint Gregory, explaining this passage of Job, * *If I lie down, I say when shall I arise; and when I arise, I will be still in expectation of the Evening;* says, that the expectation of the Evening in this place, is the expectation of being tempted, as a good and advantagious thing: For we are in expectation of good things, as the same Father adds, and in apprehension of bad ones; and Job by saying that he is in expectation of Temptation, shews sufficiently the effect he has thereof.

Saint Dorotheus upon this occasion gives us an Example of a Disciple of the Ancient Fathers of the Desert, who being continually attack'd by the Spirit of Impurity, did by the Mercy of God, by the means of Prayer, Fasting, Labour and several other Austerities, courageously resist. His Director seeing him in that condition, told him one Day, that if he pleas'd, he wou'd Pray to God to deliver him from that Temptation. I see very well, Father, sayd he, that the State I am in, is very troublesome; but I find also that it furthens my

to give us no more trouble: And this is that which mightily to incourage us to make Resistance.

CH A P. VII.

That Temptations serve, to make us more careful and fervent.

ANOTHER advantage which Temptation brings with it, is, that it makes us more attentive to our Duties of Obligation, hinders us from being remiss in 'em, and causes us more to stand upon our guard; like Men, who are every where upon the point of ingaging. As a long Peace makes us negligent, takes away their strength, and softens their courage; so the exercise of War makes 'em valiant, robust and bold: *Cato* therefore asserted in the Senate, † *That Carthage was not to be demolish'd, for fear the Romans shou'd lose themselves in the Idleness of Peace: For woe be to Rome, sayd he, if once Carthage is no more!* The same thoughts the *Lacedemonians* had as to their Enemies: For one of their Kings having propos'd, utterly to destroy a City, which they were continually at War withal, the *Ephori* oppos'd it, saying, they wou'd not suffer the breaking of a Whet-stone, which serv'd to sharpen the Virtue and Courage of their Citizens; for so they call'd their Enemies City, which kept 'em still in breath, and alarum'd 'em every hour: And thus they believ'd, that nothing was more prejudicial to them, than the want of occasions to fight, and signalize themselves. Just so, 'tis in things of our Salvation; the want of Temptations makes us careless and remiss, whilst we having 'em renders us more careful and vigilant, and stirs up our Fervor and Courage.

A Religious Person for example, lets himself fall into a state of carelessness, which makes him negligent in all his Duties and Exercises: He will wear no more Hair-cloths, take no more Disciplines, he Sleeps at Prayer; Obey's but slightly, seek's only Pastime and Conversation. Thereupon a violent

† Carthagi-
nem non de-
lendam, ne
Romani otio
& torpore lan-
guerent. Vaz,
inquit Romæ,
si Carthago
non steterit!
Paul. Manut.
in Apoph. p. 2
11. & pl. 24.

violent Temptation steals upon him, wherein he has need of remedies, and to have recourse to God; and then he stirs out of his slumber, resumes new vigor and fervor for Mortification and Prayer; 'tis even a Proverb amongst Worldly People, that to learn to Pray to God, a body must as it were turn Sea-man: And what do's that signifie, but that necessity and danger are great means, to oblige us to have recourse to God. Upon this account it is, and in order to our Spiritual advancement, says Saint Chrysostom, that God permits Temptations: * *For when he sees us fall into Carelessness and Luke-warmness; when he finds that we leave off the Communication we have with him in Prayer, and make no more so great an account of Spiritual things; he withdraws himself a little from us, to oblige us thereby to return to him with more fervor. When the Devil, says the same Saint, possesses our Soul with fear and terror, then we become more faithful, we are more sensible of our own weakness, and we throw our selves wholly into the Arms of God.*

So that Temptations are so far, from being a rub to us in the way of Virtue, that they on the contrary, forward us therein. Saint Paul therefore, speaking of Temptation, and intending to describe it by a Figurative Expression, borrows not any term from the Sword or Lance, but uses that of the Goad. † *The Goad or Thorn of the Flesh, says he, was given to me; to shew, that as the Goad is not made to hurt or kill, but to quicken the pace, so Temptation is not giv'n us to destroy, but to advance us, and to stir up our fervor; and so 'tis profitable even to those, who have already made the greatest progress in Virtue; for let a Horse be never so good and Mettlesome, yet he go's always better when he feels the Spur; so, let the Servants of God be never so Perfect, they run more swiftly in the Path of the Lord, when they find themselves prick'd on by the Goad of Temptation.*

The Intention of the Devil in Temptation is bad, says Saint Gregory, but God's design is good. Thus the Leeches which are apply'd to a Sick Person, wou'd suck out all the Blood to the last drop, if they cou'd; but the Physician uses 'em only to draw away that which is Corrupted. In like manner, when Fire is apply'd to a Wound, the activity of the Fire, tends to burn the sound Flesh, as well as the other; but the intention of the Surgeon being to heal, hinders it from acting any where, but where it shou'd. The design of the Devil in Temptation is indeed,

* Cum enim nos ad torporem declinantes viderit, & ab ipsius familiaritate resistentes, & spiritualium nullam rationem facientes, paululum nos derelinquit, ut ita castigati, ad ipsum studiosius redeamus. Quando malignus ille perterret nos, atque perturbat, tunc frugi efficiuntur: tunc nosmetipsos noscimus; tunc ad Deum omni studio recurrimus. Chrys. hom. 4. ad Pop. Antioch. 1. 5. & 1. 1. de Prov. † Datus est mihi stimulus carnis. 2 Cor. 12. 7.

Greg. 1. Moral. 2. ca. 6.

my Progress in Virtue; for it makes me give my self the more to Prayer, Mortification and Penance; so that all I desire you to beg of God for me, is, that he would give me Patience and Strength, that I may become Victorious in the Conflict. The good Old Man overjoy'd at the answer of his Disciple, say'd to him; now my Child I see very well, that thou dost truly advance in the Path of Virtue; for when a Man is smartly attack'd by a Temptation, which he strives to resist; he becomes more Humble, more Careful and more Mortifi'd; and so the Soul coming to rid it self, of whatever is Impure in it, arrives insensibly to a high pitch of Purity and Perfection. The same Saint *Deserius* tell's us of another Hermit, who finding himself deliver'd from a Temptation he was subject to, he was very much afflicted thereat, and complain'd earnestly thereof to Almighty God, saying, do's this happen O Lord because thou hast not thought me worthy to suffer something for the Love of thee?

Saint John *Climacus* says, that Saint *Ephrem* finding himself in that perfect state of tranquillity and peace; which he call's Impassibility, begg'd earnestly of God to re-engage him in the Combat, that he might have more matter of Merit, and wherewithal to make up his Crown. *Palladius* also tell's us, that another Hermit going to find the Abbot *Pasor*, and telling him that he was at last deliver'd from all the Temptations that had tormented him, and that now by the Divine Mercy, he enjoy'd a profound Peace; go, say'd the holy Man to him, throw your self again at the Feet of God, and beg of him to send you your Temptations again, lest the state you are in, thou'd make you more luke-warm and negligent in his Service. The Hermit, made his address anew to God, lay'd open his Heart and Soul before him, to know what was most convenient for him; and so God sent him back again his former Temptations. For confirmation of all this; we see, that when the Apostle Pray'd to be deliver'd from the Temptation which troubl'd him, he was not heard, but God told him, † *My Grace is sufficient for thee, for Virtue is made perfect in weakness.*

*Clim. grad. 27.
art. 8.*

† Sufficit tibi
gratia mea:
nam virtus in
infirmis
perficitur.
1 Cor. 12. 9.

C H A P. IX.

*That Temptation serves both to instruct our
Selves and others.*

ANOTHER advantage, which even Spiritual Directors may draw from Temptations, is, that those Temptations making 'em feel in themselves, what they are to see afterwards in others; they learn thereby what course they are to take; for he we say, is the best Surgeon, who has been oftentimes hurt: So he who is best exercis'd in this Spiritual War-fare, knows by his own experience, which is the best Mistress, all the Artifices of the Devil, whereby he becomes much more able to instruct his Neighbour. * *They who have been at Sea,* says the Preacher, *know the dangers thereof.* And do we not every Day see, that they who have been inur'd to the business of the World, wind themselves much better than others, out of the several emergencies thereof.

* Qui navigant mare, experiant pericula ejus.
Eccles. 43. 26.

† Qui non est tentatus, quid scit? Vir in multis expertus, cogitabit multa: qui non est expertus, pauca recognoscit.
Eccles. 34. 10.

Now Temptations are as advantageous to us, in reference to what regards our Salvation; and this is that, which the Wise Man teaches us by these words; † *What do's he know, who is not tempted? A Man who has been try'd in many things, makes many Reflections: He that has not been try'd, knows very little.* A Man, infine, who has pass'd a long Apprentiship in this sort of War-fare, will doubtless be very proper for the Direction of Souls; and 'tis to make us expert in this Science, that God is pleas'd we shou'd have Temptations: He will have it so also, that they may teach us to be sensible of those, which our Neighbour is expos'd to; just as the Diseases and Infirmities of the Body, with which we have been afflicted, teach us to compassionate those who are attack'd with the like distempers.

Cassian. coll.
2. cap. 13.

Cassian tell's us of a Young Hermit, who being tormented with continual Temptations of the Flesh, address'd himself to an Ancient Anchorit; and lay'd open to him the
State

State of his Soul, hoping by the Counsel and Prayers of the Old Man, to find a comfort and remedy, for what thus perplex'd him; but he found himself quite mistaken; for this Person, who had neither that Prudence nor Discretion, which Age usually brings along with it, shew'd a very great surprize, at the recital he made him of his Temptations; took him up sharply, and gave him very bad words, calling him a wicked Wretch, and telling him that he was unworthy of the name of an Hermit; since the things of that nature, he spoke of, did befall him; lastly, he sent him away so disconsolate, by the roughness of this his reproach, that in the trouble and despair he was in, he thought no more of resisting his Temptations, but rather to put in execution what they suggested to him; and did already begin to take measures for that purpose. The Abbot, call'd *Apollo*, who was then in great Reputation in the Desert, for his Sanctity and Prudence, met him on the high-way to the adjacent Town, and judging of his inward trouble, by the outward disorder he saw in his look's, ask'd him with great mildness what he ail'd, and what was the cause of the discomposure and sadness which appear'd in his Countenance? But the Young Man was so overwhelm'd with his own thoughts, that he answer'd him nothing: The holy Abbot thereby further knowing, the confusion his Mind was in, fell a pressing him yet more earnestly, so that infine he oblig'd him to declare the trouble of Spirit he was in, and how that the reproaches of the Old Man, had so far dishearten'd him, that despairing of his being able to overcome his Temptations, and of Living like a good Hermit, he had resolv'd to quit the Desert, and to return into the World to Marry. The holy Abbot began then to comfort and encourage him, by telling him, that he himself, was assaulted every Day with the same Temptations; and that he was not therefore to lose courage and be dishearten'd, since for the overcoming of 'em, we were not to rely so much upon our own strength, as upon the Grace and Mercy of Almighty God. He infine conjures him to defer, but for one Day, his Resolution, and to return in the mean time to his Cell, to implore there God's Assistance; and since the time was but short, he made him consent thereunto. After this the Abbot went to the Old Mans Cell; and as soon as he was near it, he fell prostrate on the Earth, where lifting his Hands to Heaven, and gushing out in Teares, he made

this Prayer to God. Thou, O Lord, who know'st our strength and our weakness, and who art the Sovereign Physician of our Souls, grant that the Temptation that afflict's this Young Man, may pass into the Heart of this Old Man, that he may, at least in his Age, learn to have compassion; and pity the pains and weakness of his Brethren: Scarce had he made an end of his Prayer, when he saw the Devil, in shape of a hideous Negro, shoot a fiery Dart into the Old Mans Cell, who had no sooner felt the sensible stroke thereof, but he fall's into so great a trouble of Mind, as gives him no rest at all; he rises, he go's out, he comes back again: And after having been for some time a doing continually the self same thing over and over again, being at last unable to bear any longer the heat of Lust, which had seas'd upon him; he makes the same Resolution that the Young Hermit had made, and betakes himself to the same high-way that he had done.

The holy Abbot who observ'd him, and who by the Vision he had had, knew the Temptation that tormented him, comes up to him; ask's him, whither he was a going, and what was the reason that forgetting what he ow'd to the gravity of his Age and Profession, he walk'd in such great haste and disquiet. The Old Man who believ'd himself discover'd; and whose bad Conscience had Cloath'd him with shame and confusion, answer'd nothing. Then the holy Man taking advantage of the trouble he saw him in; bad him return to his Cell, believe, say's he, that if the Devil has let thee alone hitherto, 'tis either because he did not know thee; or made no account of thee. See now thy own weakness; since after having grown Old in the Desert, thou hast not been able to resist one Temptation; nay, not so much as the first attacks of it; but hast permitted thy self to be immediately overcome, and without intending to defer one Day only, hast thought of nothing else, but the putting thy ill designs in Execution. God has thus permitted it, that at least in thy Old Age, thou may'st learn to sympathise with thy Brethren in their Maladies and Infirmities, and that thou may'st know by your own Experience, that they are to be comforted and encourag'd, and not to be dishearten'd and cast into despair, as the Young Hermit was, who address'd himself unto thee. The Devil did not attack him so smartly, whil'st he let thee alone; but because, seeing more Piety in him, than in thy self, he was the more touch'd with jealousy
and

and envy, thinking that so steady a Virtue, could not be assaulted by too strong and too violent Temptations. Learn then by thy self, to pity others; to stretch out thy Hand to him, that is ready to fall; and to support him by words of Compassion and Comfort, and not to over-whelm him by too rough a treatment, and thereby become the occasion of his greater fall. This is what the Prophet *Isay*, teaches us by these words, * *The Lord hath giv'n me a Learned Tongue that I might know how to support him, that is Weary with a Word*, and 'tis what our Saviour himself has practis'd, to whom Saint *Matthew* apply's this passage of the same Prophet *Isay*. † *The Bruis'd Reed he will not break, and the Smoaking Flax he will not quench*. To conclude, continues the Saint, since we cannot but by the help and Grace of God resist the motions, and quench the heats of Concupiscence, let us fly to him, and beseech him to deliver us from the Temptations which torment us, * *For he wound's and heal's, he strik's and his Hands make whole again*. † *He kill's and restores Life, he pull's down and sets up again*. They then fall to their Prayers, and as it was throu' the Prayers of the holy Abbot, that this Temptation came upon the Old Man, so God deliver'd him from it by the same Prayers; and thus both the Young Hermit, and the Old one too, met with such a remedy and instruction as they stood in need of.

* Dominus dedit mihi linguam eruditam, ut sciam sustentare eum, qui lassus est verbo.

Isai. 50. 4.
† Calamum quassatum non conteret: & linum fumigans non extinguet.
Isai. 42. 3.
Matth. 12. 10.

* Quia ipse vulnerat; & medetur; & medicat; & manus ejus sanabit.

Job. 5. 18.
† Dominus mortificat; & vivificat; humiliat; & sublevat.
† *Reg.* 2. 7.

CHAP.

C H A P. X.

*Of the Remedies against Temptations, and first
of all, that we must keep up our Courage,
and be joyful in 'em.*

* De cætero,
fratres, con-
fortamini in
Domino, &
in potentia
virtutis ejus:
induite vos ar-
maturam Dei,
ut possitis stare
adversus infa-
dias diaboli.
Ephes. 6. 10. 11.

*S. Ignat. lib.
Exerc. Spirit.
Reg. 12. ad
motus animæ
discernendos.*

† Resistite di-
abolo, & fu-
giet à vobis.
Jacob. 4. 7.
*Gregor. lib. 5.
Moral. ca. 16.
in illud: Ti-
gris perijt, cò
quod non ha-
beret prædam.*
Job. 4. 11.

* **F**INALLY my Brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the Power of his Might, put on the Armor of God, that ye may withstand the Snare of the Devil. Saint Anthony, who was so well exercis'd in this kind of War-fare: which the Faithful are to carry on against the Devil; was us'd to say, that one of the chief means to overcome him, was to their resolution and joy in Temptations; because he is then troubled and loses the hopes of doing us any harm. In the Book of the Spiritual Exercise, Saint Ignatius hereupon gives us an Instruction which agrees very well with this. He says, that the Devil deals with us in Temptations, as a Woman that quarrel's with a Man; if the Woman sees that the Man bears up to her, her Heart fails her, and she withdraws; but if she finds that he is afraid of her; she thereby becomes more bold and insolent; so that she behaves her self more like a Lioness than a Woman. In like manner, when the Devil tempt's us; if he sees us resolute and steady, he loses courage and is dishearten'd; but if he perceives us yielding, he reassumes new strength, and becomes a formidable Enemy. † Resist the Devil, says Saint James, and he'll fly from you: And the Observation which Saint Gregory makes upon these words of Job, *The Tiger perisht, because he had no Prey*, agrees wholly with what has been say'd: For what is call'd Tiger in this place, is by the Septuagint or Seventy Interpreters, call'd *Myrmecoleon*, that is, *Lion-Pismire*; for the Devil, add's the Saint, is meant by this word. He is a Lion and Pismire both together; a Lion to those, who are to him but as Pismires; and a Pismire to such who behave themselves to him as Lions. The holy Writers
therefore

therefore admonish us not to be troubl'd in Temptations, lest thereby we may lose courage; but to resist with Joy, as the *Maccabees* did, of whom the Scripture says, † *That they fought with chearfulness, the battel of Israël*; for that is the true way, to overcome as they did.

† Et præliabantur prælium Israël cum Ietitia.
1 Mac. 3. 2.

There's yet another reason for us, to behave our selves thus; because the Devil, being the Enemy of our happiness, is certainly troubl'd at our chearfulness, and rejoyces at our sorrow: So that were it for nothing else, but to disappoint him of so malicious a joy, we ought always to do our utmost, to let him see our chearfulness and courage. The joy and constancy which the holy Martyr's express'd in their torments, was as cruel a punishment to their Tyrants, as all the pains which their extraordinary cruelty made 'em suffer. And 'tis by this holy joy and resolution, that we ought to be reveng'd upon the malice of the Devil; and because 'tis one of the best means we have, to Conquer him; I shall in the following Chapters, speak of some things, that may most of all contribute to the keeping up, of this joy and courage in our Hearts.

CHAP. XI.

That the Devil is able to do but very little against us.

TO encourage us in Temptations, 'twill be a very great help, to consider the weakness of our Enemy; and how little he can do against us; seeing he cannot make us fall into any Sin, against our own Will. * *Behold my Brethren*, says Saint

Bernard, *how weak our Enemy is, he can overcome him only, who has a mind to be overcome*. If a Man who is a going to fight, were sure to overcome if he wou'd; how joyful wou'd he be? Wou'd not he think himself sure of a Victory, which depended only upon his own Will? With the same confidence and joy we may fight against the Devil: For we know very well, that he cannot Conquer us, if we our selves

* Videte, fratres, quam debilis est hostis noster, qui non vincit nisi volentem.
Bern. serm. in Dominic. 2.
Quadr. c. 73.
in Cant.

*Hieron. sup. c. 4.
Mitt. in illud:
1 Mitte te de-
orium.
Matth. 4. 6.
Vox diabo-
li est, qui sem-
per omnes ca-
dere deorium
desiderat: per-
suadere potest,
præcipitare
non potest.*

selves will not. 'Tis this that Saint *Hieron* very well ob- serves upon the words, that the Evil Spirit sayd to our Sa- viour, when having carry'd him up to the Pinacle of the Temple, and counsell'd him to throw himself down head-long, † *Cast thy self down*, sayd the Tempter, * *And this, adds the Saint, is the true Language of the Devil, who desires nothing so much as the fall of all Men. He can indeed persuade 'em to throw themselves down, but he cannot throw them down, himself.* The Voice of the Devil that tempts you, says, throw your self down into Hell. You must answer him; do you do so your self; you know the way; as for me I will not do it; for he cannot have the power to make you, if you have not the mind to do it.

A certain Person, finding that he was continually tempted by the Devil, to make himself away, discover'd to his Con- fessor the trouble and perplexity he was in. His Confes- sor having convinc'd him that the motions of the Evil Spirit, cou'd have no further power over him, than what he himself wou'd give him, advis'd him, that as often as he found himself troubl'd with that Temptation, he shou'd answer, I am resolv'd I will not do what you wou'd have me; and that he shou'd come again to him eight Days after. This Man did what his Confessor bad him, and by that means was deliver'd from the Temptation that tor- mented him, and so came to thank him afterwards for the remedy he had prescrib'd him. And 'tis of this sort of re- medy, that I shall now speak.

*Aug. serm. 167.
de Temp.*

The Opinion of Saint *Austin* agrees very well with what I have now asserted. He says, that the Devil was not bound before the Birth of our Saviour, and that till then he did freely exercise his Tyranny over Men; but that Jesus CHRIST by coming into the World, Chain'd him up as Saint *John* declares to us in the *Apocalipsc.* † *And I saw an Angel coming down from Heaven, having the Key of the bottomless Pit, and a great Chain in his Hand; and he lay'd hold upon the Dragon, that Old Serpent, which is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand Years, and cast him into the bottomless Pit, and shut him up, and set a Seal upon him, that he shou'd deceive the Nations no more, till the thousand Years shou'd be fulfill'd, and after that he must be loos'd for a little season. God has therefore*

† Et vidi An-
gelum descen-
dentem de cæ-
lo, habentem
clavem abyssi,
& catenam
magnam in
manu sua. Et
apprehendit
draconem, ser-
pentem anti-
quum, qui est
diabolus, &
Satanas, & li-
gavit eum per
annos mille:
& misit eum
in abyssum,
& clausit, &
signavit super illum, ut non seducat amplius gentes, donec consummatus milli anni. Et
post hæc oportet illum solvi modico tempore.

Apoc. 20. 1.

Chain'd

Chain'd up the Devil, continues the holy Doctor, and do you know how he has done it? after such a manner that he permits him not, to do the Evil he might and wou'd do, if he had the liberty of tempting and deceiving Men, by all those ways and artifices of which he is capable: But you may say, if he be Chain'd up; how comes it so pass, that he still do's so much mischief? 'Tis true, answers the Father, he do's much indeed, but 'tis to those who take no care of themselves, he is Chain'd up like a Dog, that is so ty'd that he can bite none but those that come near him, † *He is able to bark, he is able to fawn and flatter, but he cannot at all bite any one, except such as will be bitten by him.* So that as, add's the Saint, we laugh at a Man, that permit's himself to be bitten by a Dog in a Chain, so we may also laugh at those who let themselves be overcome by the Devil; because he is so fast ty'd, that he can do no hurt to any, but such as come near him; wherefore 'tis your fault, if he do's you any hurt in the State you are in; since he cannot hurt you, unless you will your self, so that you may even condemn him as much as you please: 'Tis this, which the Saint teaches us, explicating these words of the Psalmist. * *The Dragon which thou hast form'd to serve us for sport or divertisment;* have you not seen, says he, how Children takes pleasure to look upon a Bear, or any other wild Beast that is Chain'd, and how they make sport with it? You may also mock at the Devil as often as he tempts you, for he is like a Dog in a Chain, who can only bark and make a noise, but cannot bite you, unless you will your self.

The Devils once appear'd to Saint Anthony, under several horrid and frightful shapes, and surrounded him as if they were ready to devour him; but the Saint only laugh'd at 'em, saying, if you have power to hurt me, the least of you is able to do it, but because you have not, you come in troop's to fright me. If God has given you any power over me, behold here I am, devour me; but if he has not, all your endeavours are in vain. We may make the same answer in all our Temptations; because since JESUS CHRIST became Man, the Devil has no power left; as he one Day told Saint Anthony, who answer'd him, tho' you are the Father of Lies, yet you have at present spoke truth against your will. For this reason our Saviour bid's us confide and take Courage: † *I, says he, have overcome the World:* And therefore let us say with Saint Paul, * *Thank's be to God, who gives us the Victory throu' our Lord JESUS CHRIST.*

Tom. II.

X x

CHAP.

† Lattare potest, sollicitare potest, mordere omnino non potest, nisi volentem.
Aug. lib. 20. de Civit. c. 8.

* Draco iste quem formasti ad illudendum ei.
Psal. 103. 26.
Aug. ubi sup.

† Confidite, ego vici mundum.
Joan. 16. 33.
* Deo autem gratias, qui dedit nobis victoriam per Dominum nostrum Jesum Christum.
1 Cor. 15. 57.

C H A P. XII.

*That 'tis a great help in Temptations, to think
that we fight in God's Presence.*

THE consideration that God beholds us fighting, is a farther help to encourage us, and to give us new strength in Temptations. A Souldier that fights under his General or Prince's Eye, thereby becomes more courageous; we truly fight in the Presence of God, in all our Temptations; wherefore in all those attack's we have to sustain, we must make an account, that we are enter'd into the Lists, that all the Saints and Angels are Spectators of the Combat, and expect with impatience the success thereof; and that God is the Judge and Rewarder of our Victory: This thought the holy Fathers had, which is founded upon the words of the Gospel, where it takes notice, that after the Devil had tempted our Saviour to no purpose, and had quitted him. † *The Angels came and serv'd him.* We Read in the Life of Saint Anthony that one Night, when the Devils had beaten and bruised him with many blows, he lifted up his Eyes and saw a bright light, which piercing the top of his Cell, dispers'd the darkness thereof, and drove away all the Devils; and in a moment free'd him from all the pain of those strokes he had receiv'd; who presently addressing himself to our Saviour, sayd: O Lord where were you whilst your Enemies so cruelly treated me? Why came you not in the beginning of the Combat to hinder 'em, and deliver me out of their hands? To whom a Voice answer'd, *Anthony, I was present at the beginning of the Combat, and all along have been Spectator of it, and because thou hast fought with such courage, I will always continue to assist thee, and render thy Name famous all the World over.* Wherefore in all our Temptations we may assure our selves, that we have God and the Angels for witnesses of our resistance, and who is there that would not encourage himself to do well, before such Spectators as these?

Moreover

† Et ecce Angeli accesserunt, & ministrabant ei.
Matth. 4. 11.
Vbi sup. c. 5. 28
fine.

Moreover, since with God 'tis the same thing to look upon us, and to help us; we ought to consider that he regards us, not only as our Master and Judge to Crown us, if we become Victorious; but as our Father and Protector, to help us, if we stand in need of his assistance; according to these words of the Scripture: † *The Eyes of the Lord, Contemplate the whole Earth, and give Strength and Fortitude.* * *The Lord is upon my right Hand, lest I shou'd be mov'd.* 'Tis recounted in the fourth Book of Kings, that the Prophet *Elisens*, being in the City of *Dotain*, the King of *Syria* sent by Night part of his Army to take him; *Giezi*, the Prophets Servant, going out early in the Morning saw the City quite surrounded with Troops, he run's presently to give notice to his Master believing himself lost, and cry'd out: † *Alas, alas, alas my Lord what shall we do? Fear nothing,* says the Prophet, *for we have more for us, than they have on their side?* Whereupon he betook himself to Prayer; to beg of God, that he wou'd please to open the Eyes of *Giezi*, and presently he saw a Mountain cover'd with Horse-men and Fiery Chariots; whereby he was free'd from his fear. We have no less subject of confidence; because we know God is always ready to succour us. * *Set me by thee,* says *Job*, *and let whose will attack me.* † *The Lord is with me,* says *Jeremy*, *as a powerful Warriour that protects me. Wherefore they who persecute me, shall fall; they shall become Weak against me, and remain cover'd with Confusion.*

Saint *Hierom* Writing upon these words of the Psalmist, * *Thou O Lord hast Crown'd us, with the Buckler of thy good Will,* says, that in the Language of Men, there is a great difference, between a Buckler and a Crown; but in the Language of God, they are one and the same thing; because when he covers us with the Buckler of his Love. The Buckler which is our Protection and Defence, is also our Crown and Victory; wherefore let us conclude with the Apostle † *If God be for us, who shall be able to be against us?*

† *Oculi enim Domini contemplantur universam terram, & præbent fortitudinem.*

2 *Par.* 16. 9.

* *Quoniam à dextris est mihi, ne commovear.*

Psal. 118. 8.

4 *Reg.* 6. 14.

† *Heu, heu, heu, domine mi, quid faciemus? At ille respondit: Noli timere: plures enim nobiscum sunt, quam cum illis.* *Ibid.* ver. 5.

* *Pone me iuxta te, & cuiusvis manus pugnet contra me.*

Job. 17. 3.

† *Dominus autem mecum est, quasi bellator fortis:*

idcirco qui persequuntur me, cadent, & infirmi erunt: confundentur vehementer.

Jerem. 20. 11.

*Hieron. supra illud: * Domine, ut scuto bonæ voluntatis tuæ coronasti nos.*

Psal. 5. 13.

† *Si Deus pro nobis, quis contra nos?*

Rom. 8. 31.

C H A P. XIII.

Of two reasons which may excite us, to fight with confidence and courage in Temptations.

*Basil. serm. 21.
ex 28. de variis
argumentis.*

S AINT Basil says, that the reason why the Devil is so inrag'd against us, do's not only come from the envy he has to Man, but from the hatred he bears to God; and since he is able to do nothing against God, he turn's all his fury against Man his Image, and thus in some measure endeavours to Revenge himself upon God. He do's, says Saint Basil, as a Man do's, who being not able to Revenge himself upon his Prince, tears his Picture in pieces; or like a mad Bull, who finding it self prick'd on all sides, and not being able to catch those that prick him, discharges his rage upon a Man made of Paste-board, which is on purpose plac'd before him, and tears the Image in pieces. From this truth, the Saints draw two Reasons, very proper to excite us to fight courageously in Temptations. First, because our Glory is not only concern'd in it, but also the Glory of God, whom the Devil endeavours to offend in our Person; and this consideration ought to move us rather a thousand times to lose our Lives, than to give the Devil an occasion to Revenge himself of God upon us: For then 'tis not only that we fight for our selves, but for God also; 'tis God's Interest and Cause which we defend, and therefore we ought to Die in the Quarrel, rather than to suffer his Glory to be diminish'd.

The second reason is, that since 'tis out of hatred to God, that the Devil makes War against us; we may secure our selves, that God will take our part against him, and help us to overcome him; because as in the World, when a Prince or great Man, sees another engag'd in a Quarrel upon his account, he fails not ordinarily to take his part, and to make his Quarrel his own. 'Twas out of hatred to *Mardocheus*, that *Amon* would have destroy'd the Jews, and *Mardocheus*, took upon him so well their defence, that he destroy'd

Esper. c. 8. 9.

tray'd *Amon* himself: With how far greater reason ought we to expect the same thing from God? Wherefore we may wish *David* thus address our selves to him with confidence, saying, † *Arise O Lord, Judge thy own Cause, * Take up thy Armes and Buckler to defend me.*

† Exurge, Domine, judica causam tuam. *Psal.* 73. 22.
* Apprehende arma, & scutum, & exurge in adiutorium mihi. *Psal.* 34. 2.

C H A P. XIV.

That God permits none to be Tempted above their forces, and therefore we ought not to be discourag'd, how long or violent soever the Temptation may happen to be.

* **G**OD is faithful, says the Apostle, and will not permit yee to be tempted above your strength, but that yee may be able to resist Temptation, he will give yee help proportionable to the attacks, yee shall have to sustain. This ought to be a great subject of comfort, and confidence to us in Temptations. We already know that on the one side, the Devil has no power but what God gives him, and can tempt us no farther than God permits; and on the other, as *Saint Paul* assures us, that God will not permit the Devil, to tempt us above our forces: Who is there to whom this assurance ought not to give comfort and courage? There's no Physician, that so proportions the Drugg's he ordains, according to the forces and need of a Sick Person, as this Heavenly Physician proportions those Temptations and Afflictions, with which he permit's us to be try'd. If the Potter, says *Saint Ephrem*, when he puts his Vessels of Clay which he has prepar'd, into the Fire, know's precisely how long he must leave 'em there, to render 'em serviceable; and that if he leaves 'em too long a time in it, they'll fly in pieces; or if for too short a time, they'll easily break only by touching 'em: With how far greater reason then, ought we to believe that God, whose Wisdom and Bounty are Infinite, know's how to keep the same measures towards us in Temptations.

Saint

* Fidelis autem Deus est, qui non patietur vos tentari supra id quod potestis, sed faciet etiam cum tentatione neproventum, ut possitis sustinere. *1 Cor.* 10. 13.

*Amb. l. 6. sup.
Luc. in illud :
† Ascendite
Jesu in navi-
culam, secuti
sunt eum Dis-
cipuli ejus, &
& ecce motus
magnus factus
est in mari, ita
ut navicula o-
periretur flu-
tibus, ipse ve-
rò dormiebat.
Matth. 8. 23.*

** Si moram
fecerit Domi-
nus, expecta
illum, quia
veniens veni-
et, & non tar-
dabit.
Habacuc. 2. 3.*

*Aug. epist. 143.
ad Dem. virg.
in illud :
† Infirmitas
hec non est
ad mortem,
sed pro gloria
Dei, ut glori-
ficetur Filius
Dei per eam.
Joan. 11. 4.*

Genes. 41.

*Chrys. in illud :
* Qui exaltas
me de portis
mortis.
Psalm. 9. 15.*

Saint *Ambrose* upon these words of Saint *Matthew*.
† *JESUS being ascended into the Ship, his Disciples follow'd him, and presently there arose a great Tempest in the Sea, so that the Ship was all cover'd with Waves, but he in the mean time slept*; says, that the Elect of our Lord, and those that accompany him, are tempted as well as others; nay, it even sometimes happens, add's the Saint, that God makes as if he Slept, thus industeriously hiding the Love he bears his Children, that he may the more oblige 'em to have recourse to him: But he Sleep's not, nor do's at all forget 'em: * *If he makes any stay, expect him*, says the Prophet, *for he will soon come, and make no delay*. It seems to a Sick Person, that the Night is longer than ordinary, and that the Day is very long a coming, notwithstanding there is no such thing, for the Day comes at the ordinary time; after the same manner, tho' God seems to you who are Sick, to stay longer than he shou'd do, yet there's nothing of this, he knows at what time precisely he ought to come, and will not fail to come when he shou'd.

Saint *Austin* explicates to this purpose, our Saviours conduct, when the Sisters of *Lazarus* sent him word, that their Brother was Sick: † *This Sickness*, says he, *is not unto Death, but has happen'd for the glory of God, and that thereby the Son of God shou'd be glorifi'd*. After this he expected two Days longer, to render the Miracle, he design'd to do, the greater? 'Tis after this manner, add's the Saint, that God sometimes treats his Servants, he leaves 'em for sometime in Temptations and Sufferings, and seems as if he had forgot 'em, but the reason for which he do's this, is, thereby to procure greater advantages for 'em. After the same manner, he had a long time let *Joseph* remain in Prison, but he afterwards drew him out of it, with greater glory, to make him Governor of all *Egypt*; so if he leave you for a long time in Temptations and Sufferings, 'tis to draw you out of 'em, after a manner more advantageous, to his own glory, and your Salvation. Saint *Chrysostom*, makes the same remark upon these words of the Psalmist. * *Thou who do'st elevate me from the Gates of Death*, take notice, says he, that the Prophet do's not say, *Thou who do'st deliver me*; but *thou who do'st elevate me from the Gates of Death*, because in effect, God is not contented only to deliver his Servants from Temptations, but make Temptations serve to their greater elevation and glory. Wherefore tho' you feel your self over-whelm'd; and
imagine

imagine your self, to be already within the Gates of Death; yet you ought not to leave off, the having a firm confidence, that God will draw you from thence. † *For the Lord gives Death and gives Life, he conducts even to the Gates of Hell, and brings back again; * And tho' he shou'd kill me, says Job, I will always hope in him.*

† Quia Dominus mortificat, & vivificat. deducit ad inferos & reducit.
1 Reg. 2. 6.

* Etiam si occiderit me, in ipso sperabo.

Job. 13. 15.

Saint Hierom, reflecting upon Jonas's adventure, take notice says he, that Jonas found his Salvation, where he thought, himself assuredly lost. They cast him into the Sea, and presently he was devour'd by * *A Whale, that God had plac'd there ready, not to devour him, but to receive him into his Belly*, as into a Vessel to carry him ashore. 'Tis after this manner, continues the Saint, that it often happens that we esteem, that the occasion of our Destruction, which procures our Salvation; † *And that we there meet with Life, where we thought we shou'd certainly have found Death.* Moreover the Servants of God, who know by their own experience, what his conduct is over Men; and that he humbles, to exalt; that he wounds, to cure; and that he kill's, to give life; do not lose courage in dangers and adversities, by the knowledge of their own weakness. But they intirely cast themselves into God's Hands, and are satisfi'd by knowing, that they are in too good Hands, to fear or apprehend any thing from their own frailty.

Hier. in illud: * Preparavit Dominus piscem grandem, ut deglutiret Jonam.
Jona. 2. 8.

† Animadvertendum est: quod ubi putabatur interitus, ibi custodia fit.
S. Hier. ibid.

'Tis reported in the Ecclesiastical History, that the Abbot Isidore sayd, 'tis now forty years, since I have been set upon by a violent Temptation; and have never yet yielded to it. We see also a great many examples of divers Fathers in the Desert, that all their Lives long, were attack'd with violent Temptations: Which they always sustain'd with a steady and equal confidence. † *These were those Giants, according to the expression of the Prophet, who understood what belongs to War.* 'Tis in this we ought to imitate 'em; and Saint Cyprian desiring to inspire us with the same steadiness and confidence, makes use of the words of God in the Prophet Isay. * *Fear nothing; because I have redeem'd thee, and have call'd thee by thy Name: Thou art mine, when thou shalt pass throu' the midst of Waters, I will be with thee; and the Waves shall not cover thee; when thou shalt walk in the*

† Ibi fuerunt gigantes scientes bellum.
Baruch. 3. 26.
Cyp. Exh. Mari.

* Noli timere, quia redemit te nomine tuo. Meus es tu; cum transieris per aquas, tecum

ero, & flumina non operient te. Cum ambulaveris in igne, non comburetis, & flamma non ar-

Fire,

debit in te,
quæ ego Do-
minus Deus
tuus sanctus
Israel salva-
tor tuus.
Ipsi. 43. i. 2.3.
† Ad ubera
portabimini,
& super ge-
nua blandien-
tur vobis:
Quomodo si
cui mater
blandiatur,
ita ego con-
solabor vos.
Ipsi. 66. 12.13.

* Memor
eæo verbi
tui servo
tuus, in quo
mihi spem
dediti.
Hæc me
consolata
est in hu-
militate
mea, quia
eloquium
suum vivificavit me.

Fire, thou shalt not burn, and the flame shall not hurt thee; because I am the Lord thy God, the holy one of Israel thy Saviour? These other words also of the same Prophet, are most proper to strengthen us, in the same holy confidence; † *Thou shalt be as sucking Children, carry'd in the Breast of their Mother, who are caress'd upon their Lap. So I will comfort thee as a Mother, that Caresses and Cherishes her Child.* Imagine with what markes of Love a Mother receives her Infant, when being frighted at any thing, it casts it self into her Armes; how she imbraces it, how she hugs it against her Breast, how she kisses, flatters, and tenderly caresses it; but the tenderness of God, for those who have recourse to him in Temptations and Dangers, is without comparison far greater; and 'twas this that gave so much comfort to the Psalmist, when he cry'd out to God; * *Remindful of the promise which thou hast made to thy Servant, which thou hast giv'n me hopes of. This comforted me in my Humiliation; because thy promise gave me Life.* Let us animate our selves with the same hope, and let us make it the Subject of our comfort; because that, as the Apostle says, † *'Tis impossible that Almighty God should lye, or not keep his Word.*

Psal. 118. 49.

† Impossibile est mentiri Deum. Heb. 6. 18.

CHAP.

C H A P. XV.

That 'tis a good means to overcome Temptations, to diffide in our selves, and to place all our confidence in God; and why God particularly protects those, who only confide in his help.

ONE of the best means to overcome Temptations, is to diffide in our selves, and to place all our confidence in God; and as the Scripture takes notice in several places, 'tis this which chiefly moves him, to assist us in our Temptations and Sufferings. † *I will deliver him; because he has hop'd in me.* * *Thou savest O Lord those that hope in thee; † The Lord is a protector of those that hope in him:* The Prophet alledges no other reason to God, than this, to oblige him to have pity of him; * *Have Mercy upon me O God; have Mercy upon me; because my Soul puts it's confidence in thee, and I will hope under the shadow of thy Wings.* 'Twas the same reason that *Azarias* made use of, in the fiery Furnace, when he beg'd of God, to accept the Sacrifice of his Life; † *Because,* says he, *those that Confide in thee, cannot suffer Confusion:* The Wise Man in like manner assures us, that * *Never any one was Confounded, who trusted in God.* And lastly the holy Scripture is so fill'd with such like Testimonies, that 'tis to no purpose to stay any longer, in proving so clear and known a truth.

But now let us see why this intire diffidence in our selves, and confidence in God, is so proper a means to Merit his help in our necessities. We have already touch'd the reason in several places, and God himself has giv'n it us, when he say'd by the Mouth of *David*, † *Because he has hop'd in me, I will deliver him; I will protect him; because he has known my Name,* that is to say, according to *Saint Bernard*, * *I will protect him, and I will deliver him upon condition, that ac-*

Tom. I I.

Y y

knowledging

† Quoniam in me speravit, liberabo eum. *Psal.* 90. 14.

* Qui salvos facis sperantes in te.

Psal. 16. 7. † Protector est omnium sperantium in se. *Psal.* 17. 31.

* Misere mei Deus, miserere mei, quoniam in te confidit anima mea. Et in umbra alarum tuarum sperabo.

Psal. 16. 1. † Quoniam non est confusio confidentibus in te. *Dan.* 3. 40.

* Scitote quia nullus speravit in Domino, & confusus est.

Eccles. 2. 11. † Quoniam in me speravit, liberabo eum: protegam eum quoniam cognovit nomen meum.

Psal. 90. 14. * Si tamen cognoverit

nomen meum,
ne sibi tribuat
quod liberatus
est, sed nomi-
ni meo det
gloriam.
*Item. form. 15.
sep. P. Qui ha-
bitat.*

† Non in for-
titudine equi
voluntatem
habebit, nec
in tibis viri
beneplacitum
erit ei: Bene-
placitum est
Domino super
timentes eum,
& in eis qui
sperant super
misericordia
ejus.
Pf. 145. 10. 11.

* Non ut
dammemur, sed
ut humiles fi-
mus: Com-
mendans bon-
is gratiam
suam, ne fa-
cilitatem in
omnibus as-
secuti, nostrum
putemus esse
quod ejus est:
qui error mul-
tum, est religi-
oni, pietati-
que contra-
rius.

*Aug. lib. 2.
de pecc. merit.
& remis. c. 19.*

† Ecce non
est auxilium
mihi in me.
Job. 6. 13.

* Perumque
enim virtus
habitat, deter-
ius quam si
deceffer, inter-
est, quia
dum ad sui
confidentiam
mentem

erigit, hanc elationis gladio transigit:
et ad interitum videlicet pertrahit,
evellit. *Greg. lib. 7. Mor. capit. 9.*

knowledging his deliverance to come from me, he attributes it not to himself, but giv's all the glory of it to my Name. The reason therefore, why God so particularly protects those that hope in him, is, because they attribute nothing to themselves, and give the glory of all to God. So that minding not at all their own glory, but only God's, he takes their cause in hand, do's his own work, and makes it his own business, as a thing that purely regards his own honor and glory. He do's not the same to those, who confide in their own lights, and rely upon their own forces: But since they attribute all to themselves, and thus usurp a glory which belongs to God alone; he also leaves 'em to their blindness and weakness; and permits not, that they shou'd succeed in any thing; for according to the Prophet, † *He loves not him who confides in the strength of his Horse, or in the swiftness of his Legs. But the Lord loves those who fear him, and hope in his Mercy:* These are those whom he is pleas'd to protect, and abundantly to favor with his Graces.

Saint *Austin* says, that God sometimes defers the success of his Grace, and permits, that for a long time there shou'd remain in us an inclination to certain Vices, without our being able to compass, an intire Victory over 'em: * *And this not to damn, but to humble us, to the end that we may more esteem his Grace; and for fear also, that if we shou'd find a facility in all things, we shou'd believe that to belong to us, which is his; which error is dangerous to Religion, and very contrary to Piety.* Without doubt, if things became so very easie, we shou'd have less esteem of 'em, and believe, we were beholding to none but our selves for 'em. Saint *Gregory* explicating these words of *Job*, † *Behold there is no help to my self in me:* says, that * *It often happens that some Virtue which we possess, becomes a very dangerous instrument of our destruction; and that we shou'd have been better without it; because it happens to fill us with Pride; by inspiring a vain confidence in our selves; and by means of this Pride it kill's the Soul. Whilst it seems to give it new strength; and hereby casts it into a precipice, after that it has separated it by presumption, from that Interior confidence it ought to have had in God.* 'Tis this

Quamque eam quam roborando vivificat, elevando a-
quam per spem propriam ad interna fortitudinis speciosa

abuse we make of God's Grace, which is the cause, that he often refuses to give 'em unto us, permitting in a thousand occasions, that we shou'd know by experience, how little force we have of our selves, to do any thing that is good; suffering us to remain a long time in this state, to teach us Humility, and not at all to confide in, nor to attribute any thing to our selves; but to render the glory of all to God alone: When we shall be in such a holy disposition of mind as this is, then we may assure our selves of his Divine assistance, and Sing with the Mother of Samuel; † *The Bow of the Strong is broken, and the Weak are an arm'd with Strength.*

† Arcus fortium superatus est, & infirmi accincti sunt robore.
1 Reg. 2. 4.

C H A P. XVI.

That Prayer is one powerful remedy against Temptation; and of some short and fervent Prayers; which we make use of in time thereof.

P RAYER is another remedy, of which we ought to make great account; and is a general one, which both the Scripture and holy Fathers recommend, as one of the chief we can make use off. Our Saviour himself teaches us the same truth in the Gospel, and do's not only do it, by these words, * *Watch and Pray, that yee enter not into Temptation.* But he also teaches us by his own example; preparing himself by his Prayer in the Garden, for all the Pains and Ignominies of his Passion: Which he did not perform; because he wanted the help of Prayer; but because he wou'd teach us, to have recourse to it, in all the attack's we shou'd meet withal. The Abbott John Sayd, that a Religious Person ought to be like a Man, who carry'd Fire in one Hand, and held Water in the

* Vigilate, & orate, ut non intretis in tentationem.
Matth. 26. 41.

Ref. l. 3. vir.
S. S. Patr. num.
208.

Ibid. num. 109.

† Ante oculos
pennatorum,
frustra jacitur
rete.Prov. 1. 17.
* Oculi mei
semper ad Do-
minum: Quo-
niam ipse e-
vellet de la-
queo pedes
meos.
Psal. 24. 15.* Domine,
vini prior
responde pro
me.Isai. 38. 24.
* Exurge,
quare obdor-
mis, Domine?
Exurge, & ne
repellat in fi-
nem. Quare
faciem tuam
averis? Obliv-
isceris inopi-
am nostram,
& tribulatio-
nis nostram.Psal. 43. 23, 24.
† Apprehende
arma & scu-
tum, & exurge
in adiutorium
mihî: Dic a-
nimæ meæ,
Solus tuus ego
sum.Psal. 34. 1, 3.
* Uiquequò
Domine, ob-
livisceris me
in finem, ut
uquequò avertis
faciem tuam à
me? Uiquequò
exaltabitur
inimicus me-
us super me?Respicere, & exaudire me, Domine Deus meus.
Psal. 12. 1. 3, 4, 5. † Adjutor in opportunitati-
bus, in tribulatione, Psal. 9. 10. † In umbra alarum tuarum sperabo. Psal. 36. 2. † Et in velamento a-
larum tuarum exultabo. Psal. 62. 8.

the other, to cast upon it as occasion serv'd; in like man-
ner when the Fire of Concupiscence begins to kindle in us,
we ought presently to extinguish it by Prayer; he made
use also of another comparison to our purpose, saying,
that as a Man who ly's at the foot of a Tree, and sees
wild Beasts coming towards him to devour him, wou'd
presently climb to the top of it, to save himself; so a Re-
ligious Man, who perceiv's himself beset with Temptations,
ought to climb up to Heaven, and retire into the Bosom
of God, by the help of Prayer; and by this means he will
be deliver'd from all the attack's and snares of the Devil;
† Because 'tis in Vain to cast a Net, in the presente of
Birds; and the Devil will in vain set his to take us, if
we raise our selves to Heaven upon the Wings of Prayer:

* My Eyes are always lifted up to the Lord, says the
Prophet, 'tis he who will free my Feet from Snares.

I have spoken at large in the First Part of this Work,
of the advantage of Prayer in Temptations: 'Twill therefore
suffice at present, to set down here some short and fervent
Prayers, which upon occasion we may make use off. The
Holy Scripture is full of passages, very proper for this end,
and chiefly the Psalms are fill'd with 'em. † O Lord I
suffer Violence answer for me: * Arise O Lord, why dost
thou Sleep, do not always reject me; why dost thou turn thy
Face from me, and forgettest my Miseries and Oppression.
† Take up thy Armes and Buckler, arise to help me: Say
to my Soul I am thy Saviour: * How long O Lord wilt
thou be forgetful of me? Wilt thou always be so? How
long wilt thou O Lord, hide thy beautiful Face from me?
How long shall my Enemy be too strong for me? Cast thy
Eyes upon me and hear me, O my Lord and my God.
Illuminate my Eyes and permit not the Sleep of Death
to shut 'em; nor that my Enemy shou'd brag, that he has
prevail'd against me? † 'Tis thou O Lord, who art my help
in time of Affliction. * I will hope under the shadow of
thy Wings. And when thou shalt cover me with 'em, I
will rejoyce. Saint Austin touch'd with the Idea this Fi-
gure gave him, sayd to God, † Lord place me in security
under thy Wings: Because I am still so weak, that if thou
dost not defend me, the Kite will take me away. The

Respicere, & exaudire me, Domine Deus meus. Illumina oculos meos, ne unquam obdormiam in morte: Ne-
quando dicat inimicus meus: Prævallui adversus eum. Psal. 12. 1. 3, 4, 5. † Adjutor in opportunitati-
bus, in tribulatione, Psal. 9. 10. † In umbra alarum tuarum sperabo. Psal. 36. 2. † Et in velamento a-
larum tuarum exultabo. Psal. 62. 8. * Sub umbra alarum tuarum protege me. Psal. 16. 9.

beginning

beginning of the Sixty Seventh Psalm, is above all, of great power in Temptations; and Saint *Athanasius* assures us, that many Servants of God, have found in themselves Miraculous effects of Grace, by saying with the Prophet, † *Let God arise and let his Enemies be scatter'd, and let those that hate him fly before his Face.* 'Tis because, we then oppose not our selves against the Devils, with our own proper force, but by that of God; whose help we invoke against 'em; whereby they presently lose courage, seeing very well that God will not fail to take up our Quarrel; and fight in the behalf of his Champion.

We may therefore help our selves with these Words which are very efficacious, or of any other like 'em taken out of the Scripture; or of those which the present necessity of the occasion we are in, may dictate to us: But however it is, we must never fail in Temptation, to have recourse to God, by means of Prayer. 'Tis for this reason that Father *Avila* sayd, Temptation addressees it self to you, do you address your self to God; and say, * *I lifted up my Eyes to the Heavenly Mountains, from whence help will come unto me. My help is from the Lord who made Heaven and Earth.* But above all, these Prayers and Cry's which we address to God, must not only come from our Mouths, but from the bottom of our Heart, according to the words of *David*, † *O Lord I address'd my Cry's unto thee from the bottom of my Heart*; upon which words Saint *Chrysostom* takes notice, * *That the Prophet Pray'd not only with his Mouth and Tongue, because we often speak without thinking what we say, but he Pray'd from the bottom of his Heart, he Pray'd with Fervor, with Joy and Confidence, and lastly 'twas his whole Heart and Mind with which he Pray'd.*

† Exurgat Deus, & dissipentur omnes inimici ejus: & fugiant qui oderunt eum, a facie ejus. *Psal. 67. 1.*

In vit. M. Avila.

* Levavi oculos meos in montes; unde veniet auxilium mihi. Auxilium meum a Domino, qui fecit celum & terram. *Psal. 10. 2.*

† De profundis clamavi ad te Domine. *Psal. 129. 1.*

* Non dixit solummodo ex ore, neque solummodo ex lingua, sed ex corde Profundissimo studio & mag-

na animi alacritate, ex ipsis mentis penetralibus.

Chrysost. hom. 1. sup. Psal. 129.

C H A P.

C H A P. XVII.

Of two other Remedies against Temptations.

Bern. de interi-
dom c. 47.
Idem,
Abb. Serenus
ap. Cass. coll.
7. c. 15.

SAINTE Bernard says, that when the Devil designs to deceive us, he before-hand examines our temper, our humor and inclinations; and always attack's us in those things, he finds us most inclin'd to. Those whom he finds of a sweet and easie Nature, and that easily receive Impressions of Joy and Pleasure; he attack's with Vanity and Impurity; and those whom he knows to be of a more rough and harsh temper, he sets upon with continual motions and provocations to Anger, Choler, Indignation and Impatience. Saint Gregory makes the same remark, and says, that as the greatest slight of those that take Birds, is to be well acquainted with those places they most of all haunt, that they may draw them the more easily into their Nets: So the chief care of the Devil, is to know to what we are more naturally inclin'd, to make us thereby to fall more easily into his Snares.

In prefat. lib.
Mor. c. 4.

Thus it was, that he perceiving the great Love, that Adam bore to his Wife, he made use of her to tempt him; he triumph'd also over Sampson, by means of Dalila, and got out of him the sense of the Riddle, and a discovery of the thing in which all his Strength did consist. The Devil imitates a skilful Warriour, who before he attack's any place, endeavours to find where 'tis weakest: He carefully observes which is the weakest part of our Soul, what Passion most of all domineers in us, to what our Natural Inclination most of all carries us, and there he never fails to attack us. The best means to resist this craft, is, with care to find out, which is the weakest part of our Soul, and the least fortifi'd; that is to say, what those things are, to which we find our Natural Inclination, Passion, or Constitution of Body lead us; and endeavour to fortifie our selves well on that side, where we fear to be most in danger.

Masters

Masters of Spirit propose also another remedy, not unlike to this, they say, that the general Maxim to defend our selves from any Temptation, is, presently to have recourse to what is most contrary to it. Physicians use the same method in Corporal Diseases, according to their Maxim, *Contraries are cur'd by contraries*. If the Diseases come from cold, they make use of hot remedies; if they proceed from dryness and heat, they apply such remedies as are refreshing; reducing after this manner, the Humors of the Body, to the just temper they ought to have. We ought to make use of the like conduct, in the Diseases of our Soul; and this is what Saint *Ighadius* teaches us, when he says, we ought to cure those Temptations we are subject unto, by practising what is contrary to them, for example, when we find our selves carry'd away with Vanity and Pride, to exercise our selves in Servil Works, and so in all other occasions, always resist our bad Inclinations.

† *Contraria contrariis curantur.*

3. P. Confir.
c. 1. §. 13. &
regula 14.
Summo.

CHAP. XVIII.

Of two other Important remedies, which are,
to crush Temptations in their beginning,
and to avoid Idleness.

ANOTHER excellent remedy which the Saints still propose to us, and is no less general than profitable, is, strongly to resist Temptations in their Beginning. Whilst * *Your Enemy*, says Saint *Hierom*, is still weak and feeble, Kill him, Crush the Serpent in the Egg, for if you let him go and fortify himself, perhaps you'll not be able afterwards to compass what you aim at. Temptation is † *Like a small Spark which still increases till it becomes a great Fire*; if it be not presently Extinguish'd. * *Apply a Remedy to the Disease in the beginning*; otherwise, as an Ancient Poet says, *If you permit the Disease to increase, the Remedy will come too late*. 'Tis according to this sense, that

Saint

* *Dum parvus est hostis, interice: Nequitia elidatur in semine.*
Hier. Epist. ad Euseb.

† *A scintilla una auctur ignis.*

Eccles. 11. 34.

* *Principijs obsta: Sero medicina paratur, cum*

males per longas invaluerint moras. *Ovid.*

Ille, ubi sup.
 † Beatus qui
 tenebit & ali-
 lidet parvulos
 tuos ad pe-
 tram.
Psal. 136. 9.
 * Capite no-
 bis vulpes par-
 vulas, quæ de-
 moliantur vi-
 neas.
Caust. 2. 15.

Saint *Hierom* explicating the words of the Psalmist. † *Happy is he that shall take thy Children and dash 'em against a Stone*, and those other words of the Canticles. ‡ *Catch for us those little Foxes which destroy the Vineyard*. When a thought of Detraction, Pride, or particular Affection either to others, or to your self, begins to discover it self in you, and are as yet weak and tender, dash 'em against the corner Stone, which is *JESUS CHRIST*, hunt presently away whatsoever may prejudice the Lords Vineyard: 'Tis not in our power, to hinder Temptations or ill Thoughts, but happy is he, who know's how to cast 'em away as soon as they come. 'Tis of great importance presently to resist 'em, when the Enemy is yet weak, 'tis easie to overcome him. But if you let him get Strength, resistance and Victory will become very hard.

Saint *Chrysostom* explicates this thought by a comparison, when a Sick Person, says he, has a mind to Eat something that is hurtful to him, and he permit's not himself to do so, he frees himself from that prejudice it wou'd have done him, and also advances his Cure; but if he has not so much power over himself, as to abstain from it: His Disease, may get the upper-hand in such a manner, as 'twill be very hard to Cure, nay it may perhaps become Mortal, which wou'd not have happen'd, if he wou'd have abstain'd from what did him hurt; the same thing happens, add's the Father, in Temptations; if for example, as soon as a thought presents it self, that we shou'd look upon any Object, the sight of which may become dangerous to the Soul; we us'd but a little Violence, rejected the thought and withdrew our Eyes from the Object; we shou'd free our selves from all that pain, which this Vain curiosity might otherwise occasion; and avoid the danger we might fall into by consenting to it; but if on the contrary we use no Violence to our selves at the first; this pleasure of a moment, which we shall enjoy, by permitting our selves to be carry'd away with curiosity, is afterwards capable to destroy our Soul; or at least to engage it in a hard and long combat: So that what wou'd in the beginning, have cost us nothing, will afterwards prove very uneasie and toilsome: Whereby we see of how great importance it is, to resist Temptations betimes.

'Tis reported in the Lives of the holy Fathers; that the Devil once appear'd to Saint *Pacomius*, in the shape
 of

In vita Patr.
 1. P pag. 913.
 & in vit. 5.

of a very handsome Woman: And the Saint having told him, that all his endeavours were to no purpose against the Servants of God. But they are to the purpose, answer'd the Devil, if the first ill thoughts with which we tempt 'em, make any impression in their Hearts, for then 'tis easie for us to increase the Fire, and move 'em to Sin; but if they presently resist, and shut the door against those dangerous imaginations, we represent in their Minds, we are then constrain'd to fly, and are dispers'd before 'em, like as Smoke is in the Air.

*Pacem. 3. quod.
Auth. Grace
scrip. & Latine
Versa ab Dio.
Abb. Rom.
cap. 43.*

'Tis also another excellent remedy against Temptations; to be always employ'd in doing something, and *Cassian* takes notice, that the Hermits of his time, taught continually to their Disciples, and carefully practis'd themselves, this Maxim which they had learn'd of the Ancients, † *Let the Devil always find you Employ'd.* 'Tis a means that God taught Saint *Anthony*, how to persevere in his Solitary Life, and how to defend himself from the many Temptations, to which he was subject; for one Day complaining of the Temptations he had in Prayer, he sayd to God; Lord what shall I do? I wou'd fain be better than I am; and never think upon any thing but your self. But an infinity of other thoughts molest me, and draw my Imagination after em, whereupon he heard a Voice that sayd to him. * *Anthony, If thou wou'dst please God Pray, and when thou canst not Pray, Work and Labour with thy Hands, and always employ thy self in something; do what thou art able to do on thy side, and help from on high, shall not be wanting to thee?* Others say, that this Lesson was taught him by an Angel, who appear'd to him, in the Shape of a Young Man, who did nothing else, but Work and Pray; going successively from Work to Prayer, and from Prayer to Work. However it happen'd, 'tis certain that Idleness is the Source of many Temptations, and Evils; and therefore 'tis of very great importance, that the Devil shou'd never find us Idle.

† Semper te
diabolus occupa-
turus inven-
iat.
Cass. instit. 20.
c. 24. de Abb.
Paulo.

* Antoni, si
cupis Deo
placere, ora:
& dum orare
non poteris,
labora: Et
semper aliquid
facito. fac
quod in te est,
& non tibi
deficiet auxi-
lium de sancto.
Aug. serm. 17.
ad fratres in
eremo.

C H A P. XIX.

*Of Temptations that disguise themselves to us,
under the appearance of good; and that 'tis
a great remedy against all sorts of Temp-
tations, to know them well.*

Procell. 4.
Relig. c. 12.

† In via hac
qua ambula-
bam, abicon-
derunt laque-
um mihi.

Psal. 141. 4.
* Bonus nun-
quam, nisi bo-
ni simulatione
deceptus est.

Bonav. ubi sup.

S AINT *Bonaventure* gives us a very necessary ad-
vertisement, upon the Subject of Temptations, which
is to take care, that the Devil do's not some-
times disguise himself, under the appearance of an
Angel of Light; who makes use of holy appea-
rances, to seduce the Servants of God. We are wont to mix
Poison, says Saint *Hierom*, with some other pleasant Liquor;
and we hide the Hook, under the Baite; the Devil do's thus
also, † *He secretly layes his Snares in the Path's in which the
Servants of God walk.* For thou'd he attack 'em openly,
under the appearance of Vice, he wou'd fright 'em, and
gain nothing upon 'em, * *For the good*, as Saint *Ber-
nard* says, *are never deceiv'd, but under the appearance
of good.* But the Devil is very subtil and industrious,
he knows where to attack any one; and therefore that he
may more certainly work his Intent, he disguises himself and
his design's to the good. He first begins, says Saint *Bo-
naventure*, to propose such things to them, as are good in
themselves; afterwards he mixes something that is bad with
them: Then under the appearance of some false good, he
presents what is truly bad; and lastly when he has so in-
tangl'd 'em in his Nets, that they cannot without great
difficulty free themselves, he then discovers his Venom,
and makes 'em fall into open Sins. How many times
have we seen Friendships, continues the Saint, that ap-
pear'd holy in the beginning? And which perhaps were
so in effect, and in which we propos'd nothing but how
to seek God and to advance our selves in Perfection:
Notwithstanding as we discover'd afterwards, 'twas by an artifice
of

of the Devil; † *Of whose designs we are not Ignorant:* This friendship which he proposes to make, is at first Innocent on both sides, and the Motive even appears very Holy, we speak only of God in the beginning, but afterwards we seek after one another with eagerness, and make more frequent Visits, and in the long Conversations we have together, we mix other Discourses; and entertain our selves, with the affection we have for each other. We give mutual assurances thereof one to another, and confirm our assurances by Presents, and by a thousand other marks, that a holy friendship is ignorant off. 'Tis then the Devil begins to mix some bad thoughts with good ones, and to draw us to evil under the deceitful appearance of good; and 'tis after this manner in these sorts of friendships, and in many others that he seduces an infinite number of Persons, - and artificially hides under the outside of Virtue, his interior Suggestions which are dangerous and criminal. He do's like *Joab*, who kill'd *Amasa* pretending to Imbrace him; and like *Judas* who made use of a Kiss of Peace, to Betray his Master, and deliver him into the Hands of the *Jews*. Wherefore we must have a great care of these sorts of Temptations, that disguise themselves under the appearance of Virtue, and disside so much the more in 'em; for the less they are known to us, the more dangerous they are. For as the Prophet says, 'tis God who will discover * *The Devils designs at Midday*. And Saint *Bernard* takes notice here-upon, that the Devil is not content to transform himself only, but he transforms himself even into light, making that which in it's self is obscurity and darkness, appear more clear and bright than Noon Day. That we may have no doubt at all to possess, nor any danger to fear, such things as in themselves, are very bad and dangerous: There are some Robbers so well Cloath'd, and so well and handsomely made; that no one who sees 'em, wou'd take 'em for such; for it cannot enter into our Imagination, that such Persons as have the Air of honest Men; shou'd be capable of Robbing. We must have taken 'em in the Theft, to be able to believe 'em guilty of it, and then we are astonish'd, that it shou'd be possible they shou'd Exercise so Ignominous a Calling. The same may be sayd of Temptations, which disguise themselves under the false appearances of Virtue.

† Non enim
ignoramus
cogitationes
eius.
1. Cor. 2. 11.

* Ab incurfu
& dæmonio
meridiano.
Psal. 90. 16.
Bern. serm. 33.
sup. Cant.

'Tis the common sentiment of all Masters of Spirit, that as to defend our selves from an Enemy, 'tis a great advantage to know him to be one; so 'tis a great remedy against Temptations, to know that they are such. But the better to comprehend this truth, if as soon, as these bad thoughts and desires begin to rise in your Mind and Heart, you shou'd perceive a frightful Devil, incite you to follow them, what wou'd you do? Wou'd you not presently have recourse to God? And wou'd it not be sufficient to resist 'em, when you perceiv'd the Devil Inspir'd 'em? But 'tis certain that thus it happens in Temptations. God has giv'n to each one of us an Angel for the guard of our Souls, as great Persons in the World, give their Children, a Governour to take care of their Conduct and Education. This Doctrine is grounded upon these words of our Saviour, *† Take care yee contemn not one of these Children, for I say unto yee, that their Angels in Heaven, behold continually the Face of my Father, who is in Heaven.* And Saint Hierom Explicating the same words, says, * *That the Dignity of our Souls must needs be very great, since all have an Angel assign'd to guard 'em, from the first moment of their birth.* But now to return to our Subject; since we have each of us an Angel that guards us from Evil, so each of us have also a Devil who continually sollicitates us to what is bad, who excites bad thoughts and dangerous motions continually in us; who watches without ceasing for an occasion to surprise us, and let's none scape: And the Devils to compass their design, observe with study and care all our Inclinations, and lastly make use even of our selves, and our Concupiscence to destroy us. 'Twas for this reason that God sayd to the Devil, who tempted Job, *Have you consider'd my Servant Job; whereby we perceive that he speak's to him as to one that had been a long time a Spy upon Job, and had always been by his side: So that when you shall have thoughts and motions that incite you to Sin, be as much assur'd that 'tis a Temptation of the Devil; as if you then saw him; using these endeavours to draw you to Evil; and presently have recourse to God, who alone is able to deliver you from so cruel an Enemy.*

Saint Gregory recounts a Story, which very much confirms what I here say, there was a Young Man, says he, who having imbrac'd the Rule of Saint Bennet, afterwards finding it too Austere had a mind to leave it. For this end he often address'd

† Videte ne contemnatis unum ex his pusillis: Dico enim vobis, quia Angelorum in celis semper vident faciem Patris mei, qui in celis est.

Matth. 18. 10. * Magna dignitas animarum, ut unaquodque habeat ab ortu natiuitatis, in custodiam sui Angelum deputatum.

Hier. in Ioum Matth. suprad.

address'd himself to the Saint, from whom he had receiv'd the Habit; who having always told him, that 'twas a Temptation of the Devil, and having endeavour'd without any success to withdraw him from his design; he was at last by his importunity, constrain'd to yield to him; notwithstanding his great Charity, was the cause he cou'd not see him depart, without great sorrow and regret; wherefore betook himself to Pray for him, and the Young Man was scarce got to the Doors of the Monastery, when he saw a frightful Dragon come towards him with open Mouth, ready to devour him. Then all trembling with fear, he began to cry out for help. Saying, help, help my Brethren, help, behold a Dragon stands ready to devour me; the Religious running to him at his call, saw no Dragon, but found the Young Man half Dead; whom they carry'd in this condition into the Monastery. Into which he was no sooner enter'd, but he made a Vow, never more to leave it so long as he liv'd. And from that time forward, he never had the least Temptation, to return into the World: Whereupon Saint Gregory observes, that the effect of Saint Benner's Prayer, was to obtain, that the Religious shou'd see the Dragon, which was ready to devour him; and which he follow'd till he came to see him. He follow'd him, says this holy Father, because he did not see him, but as soon as he perceiv'd him, he conceiv'd a great horror of him, and cry'd out for help, to be deliver'd from him. Whence we see by this Example, and what has been already sayd, that 'tis not only an imagination that the Devil tempts us; but that he really do's so; and actually sets upon us by Temptations. The Apostle Saint Peter as a good Pastor, do's advertise us of this truth; And the Church, which know's of how great importance this advertisement is, as a careful Mother, Daily in *Compline*, puts us in mind of it: † *Brethren be yee Sober, and Watch; because the Devil your Enemy, like a roaring Lyon, Daily compasses yee seeking an occasion to devour yee, wherefore resist him, remaining firm and stedfast in Faith*: And think continually how to defend your selves whilst he attack's you, taking great care you be not surpris'd by him.

† Fratres, sobrii estote, & vigilate; Quia adversarius, vester diabolus, tanquam leo rugiens circuit, querens quem devoret: cui resistite fortes in fide.
1 Pet. 5. 8.

CHAP.

C H A P. XX.

How we ought to behave our selves, in Temptations against Faith and Purity; and what remedies we ought to make use of.

THERE are some unexperienc'd Souls, who by thoughts against Faith and Purity are cast into such a disquiet, as if that which then pass'd in 'em, were a sign that God had forsaken 'em; wherefore here in the beginning, 'tis good to let 'em know, that this is a great Error and Illusion. *Gerson* reports a Story to our purpose, how that a certain Hermit, being afflicted with the like thoughts, remain'd for twenty Years together, without daring to speak of 'em to any body, imagining that 'twas a most horrible and unheard of crime, and that 'twould Scandalize the Person to whom he shou'd discover it. At the end of which time, he resolv'd to address himself to an Ancient Father of the Desert, but even then he durst not do it by word of Mouth, but by a writing, which he gave him to Read, The Holy Old Man having, Read it, began to Smile, telling him, Son lay your Hand upon my Head: The Hermit having obey'd him, I take upon me, says he, your Sin; for the future be not at all in pain about it. How Father reply'd the Hermit, astonish'd at his answer, it seem's to me that I have one Foot already in Hell, and do you bid me be out of pain? Son, reply'd the Ancient Father, do you take any pleasure in such thoughts as these? The Hermit having answer'd him no. But that they always caus'd a great deal of sorrow and trouble to him. Since 'tis so reply'd the Man of God, 'tis a sign you have nothing to do with 'em, and that 'tis the Devil that raises 'em in your Mind, to draw you thereby to Despair; wherefore Son follow my advice, which is, that if ever any such thoughts as these come

*Gerson. p. 3.
f. 71.*

come again to you, that you tell the Devil he is the Author of 'em. Saying, a mischief on you foul Spirit; let these Impurities and Blasphemies light upon your self, I'll have nothing to do with 'em; I'll adhere and stick fast to what the Church believes, and will rather dy a thousand times, than ever offend God. These words of the holy Old Man, so comforted and strengthen'd the Hermit, that for the future, he was never set upon, nor tormented with the like thoughts. Wherefore 'tis to the purpose here to take notice, for the Instruction of those, who have a difficulty to discover their thoughts and Temptations to their Directors, that it costs 'em a great deal more disquiet, to hide 'em from 'em, than to make 'em known to them. The Example I have just now propos'd, proves this truth: This Hermit suffer'd a continual disquiet of Mind for twenty Years together, because he did not discover the state of his Soul. Which as soon as he made known, he was intirely comforted. How many disquiets, wou'd he have avoided, had he done in the beginning, what he did after Twenty Years? I shall treat this matter more at large hereafter, however by what has been here sayd, we see that this kind of Temptation is no new thing, and therefore we ought not to wonder at all at it.

What is to be done at present, is to see what we are to do in the like occasions. There are some sort of People, who take 'em in a far different manner, than they ought, and when these kind of Temptations come to them. They press their Temples very hard with their Hands, knit their Browes, shut their Eyes, and shake their Head, as if they wou'd say hereby, that they will give 'em no entrance: And sometimes alas, if they do not actually speak, they think they have done nothing, and that they have consented to them, they do themselves more hurt by these contentions and endeavours, than the Temptation it self cou'd have done 'em. And are like in this, to *Abner*, who lying in the Night by *Saul*, who slept, and hearing a Voice call him a far off; he began to cry out with all his force, to him that call'd him: † *Who are you that cry out so loud, and hinder the Repose of the King?* So these complaining of the noise that the Temptation makes without, and the trouble it gives 'em, disquiet and trouble themselves within far more, than the Temptation cou'd have done. Take good notice of this; because 'tis a thing which disturb's and turns the Brains of many Persons, and chiefly of such as

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† Qui es tu qui clamas, & inquietas regem.
1 Reg. 26. 14.

are Scrupulous: Neither Prayer nor Spiritual Exercises, are the thing that lessen their Health, or dry up their Brain: Their Vain Scruples, are the things that do them hurt; and 'tis also what the Devil aims at, to draw them from their Devotion. He sees such Persons as these far from consenting to these detestable thoughts he presents 'em; all that he aims at is thereby to disquiet and trouble 'em, and so he can but do this he is content. Lastly take notice, that 'tis not with shaking of the Head, that we shake off Temptations.

*Clim. grad. 13.
art. 6.*

What therefore must we do to overcome them? 'Tis not, as the Saints and Masters of Spirit say, by forcing our Imagination, and by breaking our Head to resist 'em; we must only condemn 'em and not stay at all upon 'em. They are, say they, like little Dogs, that bark after a Man that passes by, who if he stops to drive 'em away, they bark more fiercely than they did before; we must therefore do like a Man who walk's in a Street, where the Wind blow's the Dust in his Face, he covers his Eyes and walks on his way, without troubling himself either with the Wind or the Dust. In a word the remedy against all these thoughts, and the means to be quickly deliver'd from 'em, is not to torment our selves with 'em. But that which ought to move those who are thus attack'd, to make use of this remedy, and to put their minds in quiet, is what the Saints moreover add, that the more terrible and detestable they seem to be, the less account they ought to make of 'em; because, at the same time they are less dangerous. What thoughts for example can be more horrible, than such as are against God and Religion? Notwithstanding these are less dangerous than others, because the more horrible they are, the farther also we are by God's Mercy, from consenting to them; wherefore we must not afflict our selves when they pass our Minds; because that is not our fault, nor is it in our power to hinder 'em; because they come not from our selves, but from the Devil, who frames 'em against our Will, that he may either cast us into Despair, or into great disquiet of Mind.

In ejus vita.

'Tis recounted of Saint *Catharine of Sienna*, that one Day, as she was extremely tormented with these kind of thoughts, our Saviour appear'd to her, and by his Presence dissipated 'em all; to whom she thus tenderly complain'd, saying, where wert thou O, Lord when such horrible thoughts rise

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in my Heart? Daughter reply'd our Saviour, I was in the midst of thy Heart. Alas sweet Lord, reply'd he, couldst thou remain amidst such filthy and shameful thoughts as those were? Alas Daughter reply'd he, wert thou pleas'd in beholding of 'em? No Lord reply'd the Saint, I was pierc'd to the very Heart with sorrow, and I know not what torment I shou'd not rather have chosen, than to have suffer'd 'em: What then, reply'd he, cou'd give thee such horror, but my self, who was in the midst of thy Heart? So that how wicked, and how shameful soever the thoughts may be, that arise within us; so long that instead of entertaining 'em, we are troubl'd to have 'em, we may be so far from believing, that God has forsaken us, that 'tis an infallible sign that he remains within us. Because 'tis he alone, who is able to give us this horror of Sin, and this fear of losing his Grace: † *'Tis in time of Affliction that he is with us*, as he himself assures us by the Mouth of the Prophet; and 'tis our of the midst of the Flames and Thornes of the ardent Bush, that he speaks to you, as he did to *Moyse*.

† Cum ipso
sum in tribu-
latione.
Psal. 90. 15.

* *The Combat against Temptations*, says Saint Bernard, is a painful, but a very profitable one; because the Recompence is proportionable to the Pain; and the Thoughts they occasion cannot hurt us, unless we consent to them: But on the contrary, the harder the Resistance is, the greater will be the Crown. *Blosius* is of the same Opinion, and says, that a thought of Vain Complaisance in our selves, with which, we only once permit our selves to be carry'd away, is more displeasing to God, than all the foul and shameful thoughts that can be imagin'd, to which we give no consent. Wherefore we must no more afflict our selves, nor be in any more pain, than if all this happen'd without us, as in effect it do's; because, says a Saint, these bad thoughts are not properly within us, but when we give consent to them, wherefore so long as we consent not, they cannot enter into us: And only knock at the Door to no purpose.

* Molestæ est
lucta, sed fru-
ctuosa, quia
si habet pec-
nam, habebit
& coronam:
Non nocet
scelus ubi non
est consensus:
Imò quod res-
istentem fati-
gat, vincen-
tem coronat.
Bern. de inter.
Domo c. 19.
Blos. in specul.
spirit. c. 6.

The Masters of Spirit give us hereupon yet another Document, which is, that 'tis very dangerous to be much afraid of these kind of Temptations; and to make too much account of 'em; because this helps only to increase 'em, and to give 'em more strength. The reason hereof is very Natural, and Daily Experience confirm's it, which is, that fear weakens the Imagination, and that frequent Re-

fections upon the same thing, cause it to make deeper impressions upon the mind, and work more powerfully upon it. We see for example, that a Man easily passes over a narrow Plank, that lyes upon the Ground; but if we raise it very high, he cannot do so; because being then seiz'd upon with fear; the Blood and Spirits retiring to the Heart, he cannot sustain himself so firmly upon his Leggs as he did before; and so will be in great danger of falling. The same thing happens in Temptations of Impurity, when we are so weak, as to be too much afraid of 'em; and therefore to free our selves the more easily from 'em, we must not at all fear 'em, lest this makes us fix our imagination too long upon those Objects, of which we ought not to think at all, but only how to cast 'em away. But if upon this account 'tis advantagious not to have too great a fear of 'em, yet on the other side, says *Gerson*, we cannot have too great a horror of Sin in general. 'Tis in the imagining with fear, and in the withdrawing our minds from the particular thoughts of Impurity with which we are attack'd, that we must continually begg of God, that he permitt's nothing to separate us from him; and make a firm resolution, rather to Die a thousand times, than to commit one Mortal Sin.

I add one thing more, which the Saints extreamly recommend to us, and which may serve for a general remedy against all interior Temptations: Which is, that when any bad thought occurs, we must endeavour to turn our mind from it, by applying it to some other Object; for example, upon the Death and Passion of our Saviour, or upon some such like Object; but this must be done, without using any great violence to our imagination, or by too much striving against it; but only by endeavouring handsomly to avoid the stroke, the Devil makes at us, warding off the blow by some good thought or holy occupation. 'Tis after this manner, that a Man who sees another, whom he has no mind to speak to; that has something to say to him, quickly passes from one matter to another, to give him no leisure to do so. 'Tis also like a prudent Man, who hearing injuries sayd against himself, turns his Head aside, without putting himself in pain to answer 'em, or even to lend his Ear to them. This way of resisting Temptations is very easie and secure; because so long as we have our mind fill'd with good thoughts; we have no leisure to consent

Gers. ubi sup.

consent to bad ones: And that which may be of the greatest help to us in this, is, that it extremely assists us in Prayer, to penetrate those holy Meditations wherewith we ate most of all touch'd, and render 'em the more familiar; whereby that we may afterwards find in 'em, a remedy and secure refuge upon all occasions. Wherefore some to this end betake themselves to the Wounds of our Saviour, and chiefly to that of his Sacred Side, as to a secure place of Refuge, retiring, *† Into the holes of this Rock, and into the ruins of this Wall.* Others have their recourse to the thoughts of Death, and Hell; saying with Job, * *Who will grant me O Lord thy Protection, against the attack's of Hell, and who will hide me till thy fury be past.* Each one must betake himself to that, he knows to be most profitable for him, and to be most able to excite him to Fervor; and when he shall have chosen a fit Subject; he must endeavour to penetrate it, after so profound a manner as he is able, that he may have recourse thereunto, when he shall be in any necessity, and find therein a secure retreat, against all the attack's of the Enemy.

The Abbot *Smaragdus* recounts one thing upon this Subject, which may be very profitable to us, tho' 'tis neither very Grave nor Authentical; he says, that a Religious Person, saw one Day two Devils discoursing together, and that they ask'd one another an account, of what progress they had made against two Religious, whom they were employ'd, to tempt. I find my self very well, says the one, with him that I have to do withall, I need only to present a thought unto him, and presently he takes hold of it, entertains himself with it, and immediately taking himself in this thought, he repasses in his mind the whole series thereof, he thinks how long he has stay'd in it, whether it came by his fault, whether he resisted it, or consented to it, from whence and how it came to him, whether he gave occasion for it, or whether he did all he shou'd do to give none; and lastly, as often as I will, I put him upon this Rack, and almost even out of himself. For my part, says the other, I lose all my pains and measures I take, with him whom I tempt, for as soon as I suggest a bad thought, he has presently recourse to God, or to some Pious Meditation, or he thinks of something else, to hinder him from thinking of what I propos'd to him; and thus I know not how to deal with him: Whereby we may see that the Devil

† In formibus petrae, in caverna mactetur.
Cant. 2. 14.
* Quis mihi hoc tribuat, ut in inferno protegas me, & abscondas me, donec pertranseat furor tuus?
Job. 14. 13.

is pleas'd when we amuse our selves to dispute with him upon any bad thought he suggests; for then he neither wants Will, nor Craft, to make it pass from the Mind to the Heart: and on the other side we see, that 'tis a very good means to resist it, not at all to give ear to it, or to oppose it, but only to turn our mind presently from it, without giving any attention thereunto; but if we can compass this, by applying our selves to some good thought, 'tis assuredly the best way, but if this be not sufficient, 'tis good also to have recourse to some exterior employment.

CHAP.

C H A P. XXI.

That according to the difference of Temptations, we must help our selves with different means to resist 'em.

SAINTE John Climacus tell's us, that we ought to use different means for the resisting different Temptations: Because as there are some Vices that are bad and disagreeable in themselves, as Choler, Envy, Hatred, desire of Revenge, Impatience, Indignation, Peevishness, Bitterness of Heart, Obstinacy, the Spirit of Contradiction and such like. So there are others, which are naturally accompany'd with Pleasure; such as all those are; that regard Impurity, or the satisfaction of our Senses; and the more satisfaction we take in these, the more they draw us to themselves; therefore we ought for this reason, says he, to fight by flying 'em, that is to say, not only avoid the occasions that intice us to them, but even turn our Minds and Eyes, from all things that may make us think of 'em. But as to those of the first sort, we must set upon 'em, to be able to overcome 'em; we must examin the Nature and Deformity of 'em, which will be sufficient to secure us from 'em; because there is nothing of Contagion in 'em; thò in regard of Choler and Revenge, 'twill also be very good, add's he, to avoid 'em, by hindering our selves from thinking of any thing, that may excite us to them.

Saint *Bonaventure* and *Cassian* teach the same Doctrine, and say, that as to the first, we may desire to exercise our selves in fighting against 'em; and in seeking occasions to do so, by applying our selves, for example, to haunt the Company, of disquiet, peevish, and untractable Persons, to exercise our selves in the Virtue of Patience; and by submitting our Will's to the Will of another, to learn how to become Humble and Obedient: But in regard of the Vice of Impurity,

*Clim. grad. 26.
be discret. arg.
188.*

*Cass. coll. 19.
c. 14. & 15.
Idem de justit.
ven. lib. 6.
Et Bonav. de
reform. monast.
cap. 1.*

twould

'twou'd be a great indiscretion and very dangerous, to put our selves upon trial, and expose our selves to occasions thereof: Our Saviour himself, wou'd never permit the Devil to Tempt him in this kind, to teach us, say they, that we ought not to expose our selves to these kind of Temptations, what hopes soever we may have, of triumphing over 'em; because our propension to Impurity is so great and so very Natural to us: And because 'tis a Vice which extremely flatters the Senses, we ought always very much to fear, lest they shou'd give it entrance into our Heart: Saint *Bonaventure* says very well, that as when there's any Intelligence with the Enemy, in a place that is Attack'd, 'tis easier for him to become Master of it; so after the same manner, 'tis easier for the Devil, who keeps a strict intelligence with our Fleth, to reduce thereby us to his Subjection: Wherefore we ought herein, to stand extremely upon our guard, by carefully avoiding all occasions, that may carry us to what is bad; and rejecting all thoughts, that proceed from thence. *Cassian* and Saint *Thomas* say, that 'tis in this sense we ought to understand the precept of the Apostle. † *Fly Fornication*, and that he wou'd teach us by these words, that Impurity is not resisted, but by flying from it.

† Fugite for-
nicationem.
2 Cor. 6. 18.

Chron. Ord. S.
Francisci, 1. P.
lib. 6. cap. 38.

'Tis reported in the Chronicles of the Order of Saint *Francis*, that Brother *Giles*, Brother *Rufinus*, Brother *Simon* of *Affsinum*, and Brother *Juniper*, being met together in a Spiritual Conference; Brother *Giles* ask'd the rest what they did to resist Temptations of Impurity. I consider, says Brother *Simon* how great the Infamy of this Sin is, and how shameful before God and Man. Because how impudent soever those are, who abandon themselves to this Vice: They yet hide themselves in committing it; and this Consideration gives me so lively a horror of it, that I find my self presently freed from the Temptation. I for my part, says Brother *Rufinus*, cast my self upon the Ground, and with Tears implore the help of God and the Blessed Virgin, till I find it quite gone. And I says Brother *Juniper*, when I find it coming, and that it begins to take possession of my Senses, I presently shut all the Avenues or out-works of my Heart, and set a guard of many holy thoughts upon it, and then when those that the Devil sends, wou'd enter into my Heart, I cry out that the place is already taken, and that there's no room left for them; and thus I hinder

hinder 'em from entering, and chase 'em away with shame. Then Brother *Giles* having well consider'd, what the other three had sayd, cry'd out, I am for the practise of Brother *Juniper*, which certainly is the best of all: For the best way to fight against Impurity, is to fly from it. Wherefore the best and surest means, and also the most easie to resist Temptations of this nature, is to cast from us all bad thoughts, and to stop all the Avenues of our Heart, because if once we let 'em enter, it will be hard afterwards to cast 'em out. We must keep Enemies at a distance from the place, that we desire to hinder 'em from taking, or from becoming Masters of: For when they shall have gain'd the Gates, 'tis a Miracle if the place be not lost. In the Third Part, I shall speak more at large of this kind of Temptation; and of the remedies we must help our selves withall, for the overcoming it; and these remedies also may be of great help to us, against all other Temptations.

Part. III. In
the Treatise of
Chastity.

C H A P. XXII.

Of several very profitable Directions for the time of Temptation.

WE have already spoken of several remedies against Temptations, but 'tis impossible to take notice of all; for in the Distempers of the Soul, no less than in those of the Body, the remedies are infinite; and many things must be left to the prudence and discretion of the Physicians; so that according to the state and disposition of the Sick Person; and according to the nature and circumstances of the Disease, he may make use of such, as he shall Judge most proper. Wherefore the Masters of Spirit say, that the great remedy against all sorts of Temptations, is, to discover 'em betimes to the Spiritual Physician; but because I shall speak of this more fully in the Third Part, I shall content my self here, to set

set down some few advertisements; that the Saints give us concerning this matter. Saint *Basil* says, that as we do not discover the Diseases of our Bodies, to all sorts of Persons, but only to Physicians, who ought to take care of 'em; so Temptations which are the Diseases of the Soul, ought not to be discover'd to all the World, but only to such Spiritual Physicians, as God has appointed for this end; which are Confessours and Superiours: This advertisement is conformable to the words of Saint *Paul*. † *But we who are Stranger, ought to support those who are Weak and Feeble.* It agrees also very much with one of our Rules, which would have us in occasions of this nature, to have recourse to the Prefect of Spiritual things, or to the Confessor or Superiour. And lastly 'tis of greater importance, than many People imagine; for it sometimes happens, that we hide Temptations from those, to whom we ought to discover 'em; and discover 'em to those from whom we ought to hide 'em; and as it may happen, that your Brother may be subject to the same Temptations as you are. 'Tis to be fear'd, lest that Example, shou'd give too great an assurance one to another; and that this confidence shou'd prove equally prejudicial to both. Wherefore to avoid this inconvenience, and for several other Reasons, we ought not to discover our Temptations and Spiritual Diseases, but to Spiritual Physicians; to whom we may believe they will not prove contagious, and from whom we may expect some help: And this is what the Wise Man recommends unto us, when he says, * *Lay not open your Heart to all the world: † Tho you may have many friends, yet take Counsel only of one, whom you have chosen amongst a thousand.*

† Dedemūt
autem nos fir-
miores, imbe-
cillitates infir-
morum susti-
nere.
Rom. 15. 1.

* Non om-
ni homini
eor tuum
manifestes.
Ecl. 8. 22.

† Multi pa-
cifici sūt tibi

& consiliarius sūt tibi unus de mille.

Ecl. 6. 6.

Another advertisement of great importance for the time of Temptation, is to take care not to relent at that time in your Spiritual Exercises, nor to quit or retrench any of 'em: For tho the Temptation, shou'd have no other Evil in it, than to discourage us in our Spiritual Duties: Yet the Devil wou'd believe he had done a great deal, and be very well satisfi'd. On the contrary 'tis in Temptations, we must continue them with a new fervor, in which we have rather reason to add, than to diminish our Devotions; because if we let our Spiritual Armes fall our

of our Hands, wherewith we defend our selves against him, 'twill be very easy for him to do with us what he please. We must therefore at this time, be extream faithful to God; and 'tis herein, whereby he knows who are his true Servants, according to what he says himself to his Apostles; † *I see are those who have always remain'd with me in my Afflictions.* And moreover, 'tis no wonder that in the calm and sweetness of Devotion, we persevere in the practise of Spiritual Exercises, but to persevere in 'em, amidst those Tempests which excite Temptations; and in spight of that dryness and bitterness that God sends us; this is what is praise-worthy, this is that which shews we Love him, and that we Serve him purely for himself.

† Vos estis
qui perman-
istis mecum
in tentationi-
bus meis.
Luc. 22. 28.

We must moreover in time of Temptation, intirely take care not to change any thing in our Spiritual conduct, nor make any new resolutions; that time being very improper for it. One can see nothing in the Water so long as 'tis troubl'd, till it again becomes clear, and then you'll perceive the Dirt which has sunk to the bottom: That trouble and agitation that is caus'd by Temptation, permits you not to see, what is most proper for you; * *Because Evils have surrounded me, says David, I could not perceive any thing;* so that this is not a time to deliberate upon any thing, or to take new measures: Let the Temptation pass, and then your Mind will be in more Peace and Tranquillity: Then you'll be able to know what to do. All Masters of Spirit take notice of this, as of an essential Point; and Saint Ignatius recommends it particularly to us, in the Rules which he gives for the Discerning of Spirits: The reason he gives for it, is, that as in the time of Spiritual Consolations, the Spirit of God inclines us to what is good; so in the time of Temptation, the bad Spirit draws us to what is evil; and therefore 'tis then very dangerous to follow those new lights and thoughts that occur to us.

* Quoniam
circumde-
runt me mala,
& non potui,
ut viderem.
Psal. 39. 16.

We must moreover in time of Temptation, take great care to have recourse to the remedies I have already set down, and not remain idle; and this is what the following Example will give us a better sight of. 'Tis reported in the Lives of the Fathers, that an Hermit being extremely tormented with the Spirit of Impurity, went

Tom. 11.

B b b

to

to find out one of the most Ancient Fathers of the Desert, to beseech him to obtain of God, that he would deliver him from so troublesome a Temptation. The holy Old Man having promis'd him his Prayers, and not having ceas'd to address himself to God upon this subject, the Hermit return'd again to him a little while after, telling him the Temptation had not yet left him; and conjuring him still to redouble his Prayers: He did so, he Wept, he Sigh'd and Groan'd; yet the Hermit, came still Daily to him to tell him he found no help at all from all his Prayers; at last he came so often, that the holy Man not knowing what to do, or to what to attribute the cause of his Temptation, was much afflicted and astonish'd at it, and complain'd thereof to God: One Night as his mind was full of this thought. God let him see by Revelation, the Hermit sitting carelessly upon a Chair, and the Impure Spirit representing before him, divers Figures of Women, which he look'd upon, with Attention and Pleasure. He perceiv'd also that the Angel of our Lord, seem'd to be in great Indignation against him; because that instead of prostrating himself upon the Earth, and having recourse to God by means of Prayer. He remain'd lazily in his place, and permitted himself miserably to be flatter'd with these sorts of Imaginations; whereby he easily understood, what 'twas that hinder'd God from hearing his Prayers, and that 'twas the negligence of the Hermit, and the small endeavours he us'd to resist the Temptation, that was the cause thereof. Wherefore the first time that he came again to him: Brother, says he, 'tis your negligence, and the satisfaction with which you entertain those bad thoughts, which is the cause that God do's not hear me; let what Prayers soever be offer'd for you; you shall never be deliver'd from this Spirit of Impurity, if you use no endeavours your self, to free you from it; and if that by Fasting, by Prayer, by Tears, and by Sighs, you put not your self into a condition, to obtain of God, that he gives you the Grace to resist it: As in Corporal Diseases the most proper Remedies, given also in due time, become unprofitable to the Sick Person, if he on his side, do's not abstain from all things that may do him hurt; so in Spiritual Diseases the Prayers and good Works which we offer to God for our Neighbour,

bour, give him no help at all, if he do's not help himself; and if by Prayer and Mortification he do's not endeavour to draw the Mercy of God upon himself. These words touch'd the Hermit after such a manner, that from that time forward, he resolv'd to follow the holy Old Mans Counsel; and in effect he put it afterwards so well in practice, that by his Prayers and Austerities, he deserv'd that God shou'd have pity on him, and shou'd deliver him from that Temptation that had for so long a time afflicted him. 'Tis after this manner that we must carry our selves in the Temptations that afflict us, forgetting nothing that may be able to overcome 'em, and doing whatsoever depends on us, for this end: For 'tis only at this price, that God will afford us the Victory over 'em.

But since in the manner of resisting Temptations, there may be a greater or less resistance; 'tis good to take notice here, that we must not content our selves simply to resist, but must resist with all our forces.

We Read in the Chronicles of Saint *Francis*, that one Day God desiring to discover to Brother *John* of *Auvern*, the different manners that Religious resist Temptations, and chiefly those of Impurity; he set before him an innumerable multitude of Devils, that did nothing else but shoot Arrows against his Servants. Some presently with violence cast 'em back again, upon the same Devils from whence they came; who then fled away with great out-crys. The Arrows of others were blunted and lost their points, upon the Persons against whom they were shot, and so fell at their Feet, without doing 'em any hurt; others enter'd as far as the top of the Iron; and the Arrows of others, pierc'd quite throu'. According to this Vision the best manner of resisting, and that which we ought to take, is to Wound the Devil, and drive him away with the same Weapons, with which he attacks us: Which we shall do, if we apply our selves to draw profit from those Temptations he makes use of to destroy us; if for example, when he suggests a Proud thought, we Humble our selves and debase our selves so much the more before God and our Brethren; or if by a Temptation of Impurity, we take occasion to have a greater horror of this Vice, a greater love for Chastity, a greater watch over our selves, greater zeal, greater fervor

* Draco iste quem formasti ad illudendum ei.
Psal. 103. 27.

† In laqueo isto quem absconderunt, comprehensus est pes eorum.
Psal. 9. 16.

* Captio quam abscondit, apprehendat eum, & in laqueum cadat in ipsum.
Psal. 34. 9.

† Convertetur dolor ejus in caput ejus, & in vasisceum ipsius iniquitas ejus descendet.
Psal. 7. 17.

and greater care to have recourse to God in our necessities. Saint *Austin* upon this passage of the Psalmist, * *The Dragon which thou hast form'd to Play or make Sport withal*, says, that 'tis thus that the Servants of God Play and make Sport with the Devil; because 'tis then he finds himself taken in the same Nets with which he pretended to take them, according to these words of Scripture; † *They are taken in the same Snares they had hid for others.* * *They are surpris'd in the Ambush they had layd; they are themselves intangl'd in their own Nets.* † *Let his Malice return upon him, and his Iniquity descend upon his own Head.*



THE

THE FIFTH TREATISE

O F Disorder'd Affection towards Parents.

C H A P. I.

*How much it imports, to avoid making
Journeys to Visit our Parents?*



IS a Rule which is common to all sorts of Religious, that Saint Ignatius has left us; concerning Affection towards our Parents. All those, says he, that enter into the SOCIETY, must not only make account, that they quit Father, Mother, Parents, Friends, and whatsoever they Possess in the World; but must believe those words

of our Saviour JESUS CHRIST to be address'd to them, when he says, * *He that hates not Father, Mother, Brothers and Sisters, yea and his own Soul, cannot be my Disciple.* Let 'em apply themselves then, to reduce all those sentiments which Flesh and Blood shall suggest towards their Parents, within the bounds of Christian

* Qui non odit Patrem suum & Matrem, Fratres & Sorores, adhuc autem & animam suam, non potest meus esse discipulus. LUC. 14. 26.

Christian Charity; and let 'em look upon themselves as Persons dead to the World, and the love thereof; and that live only to JESUS CHRIST, whom they take in place of Father, Mother and all other things. 'Tis not sufficient that we quit the World with our Bodies, but we must quit it also with our Hearts, breaking off all those ties it had to the World.

'Tis not ill done to love our Parents, but we ought not to love 'em, because they are so, more than others: For if this love be grounded only in the sentiments of Nature, this is not to love 'em like a Christian, much less like a Religious Man; since the most Barbarous People love their Fathers, and such as by Blood are a Kin to them, after this manner. A Christian, but especially a Religious Man, says Saint Gregory, ought to purifie this affection of Flesh and Blood in the Fire of Divine Love; whereby taking away from it what is Terrestrial, and contrary to the Love of the Supreme good, they love their Parents not so much because Nature carries 'em to do so, but because God commands 'em to love 'em. They love 'em in God alone, and for his sake alone; as God himself Loves 'em, and as he ordains us to love 'em. 'Tis this that Saint Ignatius requires in the Rule before cited, whereupon, I shall take notice of one thing by the by, which is, that in his other Rules, he thinks it sufficient to imply and nakedly to propose 'em as he receiv'd 'em from God; without fortifying 'em with the Authority of Scripture, as he might easily have done; since the Morality of our Constitutions is intirely taken out of the Gospel. But here where he treats of Regulating so natural a sentiment, and so deeply rooted in us, as the love of our Relations is, he presently has recourse to Holy Scripture; he do's the same also, when he recites how we ought to dispose of our Goods, when we quit the World: For here he confirms his Doctrine by the words of the Prophet David: * He distributed and gave his Goods to the Poor; and by those also of JESUS CHRIST. † Go and sell what thou hast and give it to the Poor.

'Tis a matter of great importance for Religious, which is here in Question: And as Saint Basil, Saint Gregory, Saint Bernard, and many others treat very largely of it; so I shall here set down what they say upon this subject. To begin with Saint Basil, he says, that 'tis a matter of great consequence, that a Religious Person shou'd avoid all Visits and Commerce

Cap. 4. Exem.
§. 7. & 78.
§. 1. Jamn.

Cap. 4. Exem.
§. 1.

* Dispersit,
dedit pauperi-
bus.
Psal. 111. 9.
† Vade & ven-
de quæ ha-
bes, & da
pauperibus.
Matth. 19. 21.

Commerce with his Parents, and the reason which he gives is this; because * *Besides the little help we are able to give 'em, this troubles the tranquillity and regularity of our Life, and draws us into occasions of Sin.* They entertain us with their Domestick Affairs, their Suits, Losses and all other things that give 'em any trouble, so that we return home charg'd with all their discontents; and the worst of it is, that this exposes us to very great dangers: For the memory of the Life we led in the World, coming again to strike our imagination, may happen to open old sores, which afterwards are not so easily cur'd. There needs only the sight of a place and person, to renew those Ideas which time had remov'd far from us, and almost quite blotted out: And when we easily pass from one thing to another, we insensibly let our selves be carry'd away with these kind of imagination, which at last destroy the peace and tranquillity of our Soul. Wherefore all Masters of Spirit Counsel us, that even when we wou'd detest any of our past Sins, that we shou'd only make a general reflection upon 'em, without descending to particulars, which might bring dangerous imaginations into our mind. But if we must with so great care avoid this, in so holy an Action, with how far greater reason ought we to remove far from us, such unprofitable occasions, which may produce the like effects in our imagination? When you neglect to avoid 'em, and when this interior peace you enjoy, begins to be molested by them, of whom can you complain? Since you find nothing but what you sought your self, and which thereby you deserv'd to have.

That also which happens from our Conversation with our Parents, is what Saint Basil also says, that their bad habits and inclinations, hereby by little and little take impressiion in our heart; and fill our Soul with Secular thoughts, cool it to the things of the next World, deprive it of that fervor and constancy it had in it's good resolutions, and render it again altogether Secular, and, as I may say, draw it insensibly to return to the World. † *They liv'd and convers'd with the Gentils, says the Prophet, and have learnt to do like 'em; they ador'd their Idols and became a scandal to them, and the cause of their destruction.* The like will happen to you by your Conversation with Worldlings; you'll soon speak their Language, and follow their fashions and manners. You are already taken with their Idols, which are Vanity and Self-love; you are already fill'd with your self, and seek your own glory and satisfaction,

* Nam supra hoc quod illis nullam utilitatem exhibemus, insuper & nostram, ipsorum vitam tumultibus & turbatione, replemus, & peccatorum occasiones attrahimus.

Basil. in qu. fufus disp. 32.

Memoria prioris vitæ. Idem ibid.

† Commixti sunt inter Gentem, & dixerunt opera eorum, & convenerunt in similitudinem eorum, & factum est illis in scandalum. Ezech. 105. 35.

and

and are not these sufficient marks, that you are already replenish'd with the Spirit of the World?

*S. Basil. ubi
sup.*

Saint *Basil* adds still another reason, why we ought to avoid all Commerce with our Parents; which is, lest the natural tenderness of affection we have for 'em, renders us too sensible of what happens to them, and makes too lively an impression upon our selves. Because 'tis impossible to Visit 'em frequently without naturally rejoycing at their Prosperity, or afflicting our selves for their Adversity; disquieting our selves with their Interests, and imbroyling our selves with a thousand cares. We are continually thinking, if they stand not in need of something: What it is they want; whether such an employment will turn to their profit; whether such a design will succeed; and whether they'll acquit themselves with honor in such an affair. All these thoughts and disquiets, do weaken the Spiritual Man within us, that the least Temptation is able to cast us down. * *We are in this state*, says Saint *Basil*, *only like Religious Statues, that bear the habit of Religious, but neither have the Life nor Virtue of such*; and whilst our Body is shut up in our Cell, our Mind is elsewhere, and our imagination rambles amongst our Relations in the World.

* *Eoque promover, ut habitum Religionis tantum instar statuarum circumferamus, illi nullo pacto virtutum studio correspondentes.*

Idem ibid.

Cellas, 24. c. 4.

Cassian reports, that an Hermit being retir'd to a place near his Fathers House, from whence he was help'd with all things necessary, liv'd for some time after this manner; where finding this kind of Life, wherein he had nothing else to do but to attend to Prayer or Spiritual Reading, was very sweet and holy. He one Day went to Visit Saint *Anthony*; the Saint asking him where he liv'd, he answer'd, near his Parents; who having the Charity to take care of him, he had the advantage to give his whole time to God. But the Saint asking him, whither when any ill accident arriv'd to his Parents, he was not afflicted thereat, nor pleas'd when any subject of joy happen'd to them? The Hermit cou'd not but confess, that he was not able to hinder himself from bearing part in what happen'd to them; alas Child, reply'd the Saint, know you not, that you shall bear those Company in the next World, with whom you have been afflicted and rejoyc'd in this? He who interests himself in Worldly things in this Life, will have no place in the next, but such as Worldlings have.

It imports us therefore very much to avoid the Conversation of our Relations; for what we see not, makes little or no impression upon us; and as nothing more disingages us from

Part. 2. *Of disorder'd affection to Parents.* 385

from the World, than to abandon it in effect, and solemnly to have renounc'd it for ever; so nothing can more disengage us from this affection of Flesh and Blood, which we have to our Parents, but to see them no more; and to break off all communication with 'em. We must really separate our selves from 'em in effect; if we wou'd wean our Hearts from 'em in affection, the one cannot be done without the other. It often happens, that absence is not able to hinder our affections towards 'em, how great then wou'd they be, if we Daily saw them and convers'd with 'em?

'Tis, to prevent such inconveniencies as may happen, that our Constitutions forbid us to make Journeys to Visit our Parents, but that so holy and profitable a prohibition may have it's effect, we must on our sides contribute all we can thereunto. We must when our Parents ask leave for us, be the first that oppose it; we must by such good reasons, that will occur if we be well intention'd, endeavour to put these thoughts out of their heads, and so dexterously manage the matter, that they may have reason to be content, and think that you are so too. 'Tis this that your Superiors require of you, and moreover you do them a great pleasure, when you tell 'em from your self, that you'll endeavour to free them from your Parents importunity: For it often happens, that if you assist 'em nor, they'll not be able to defend themselves from such instances, as they'll make, or cause to be made; and therefore will be oblig'd to condescend, and to permit what's demanded, being forc'd to it against their Wills; but wou'd be very glad, were it in their power, to be freed from the necessity of such a permission. What we here say upon this subject, may serve for an advertisement upon other occasions. Your Parents or Friends, for example, desire something of you contrary to your Profession; go not about to send 'em to your Superior, this is to put him upon a necessity, either to fall out with 'em, or to grant 'em what they ask. You must not let things go so far, but must endeavour to dissuade 'em, from asking what they design'd, making 'em understand reason; and not do as some do, who for fear of disconcerting some one, they care not how much they perplex their Superiors. Saint Hieron upon these words of JESUS CHRIST. *Be ye Prudent as Serpents*, takes notice, that one reason why the example of a Serpent is propos'd to us, is, *Because to defend his head, in which his Life is contain'd, he hides it under the many wreaths of his Body.* We ought to

Tom. I. I.

Ccc

do

Hier. in illud:
Esfote prudentes sicut serpentes.
Matth. 10. 16.
Ponitur exemplum serpentis, qui toto corpore occultat caput, ut illud, in quo vita est, occultat.

do the same in regard of our Superior, who is our head; and not expose him, as we often do, to the complaints and murmurs of Seculars, to excuse our selves, and to be freed from trouble. We must take great care of this upon all occasions; for generally speaking, in those things that depend wholly upon us, 'tis but having a good Intention, and we shall be able to do whatever we have a mind to. Wherefore the Counsel, that I wou'd give, in regard of Journeys to Visit our Parents, is, first of all to do what we can, both with them and our Superiors, to exempt us from 'em, and never make 'em but by pure Obedience, and after having represented the inconveniencies to our Superior; yet after all this, we are not to be without fear, but believe that we have great reason to stand upon our guard.

Sirius reports in the Life of *Theodore* the Abbot, that a little after he took the Habit of Religion, his Mother, carrying a great many Bishops Letters with her, went to see him, and by their Recommendation obtain'd leave from *Saint Paschius*, who liv'd in the same Monastery, that she might do so. The Young Religious having understood this, went to the Saint, and told him, Dear Father, if you'll have me see my Mother, give me your warrant before-hand, that I shall not be accountable for this Visit, at the Day of Judgment; the holy Abbot was unwilling to give him this assurance, but told him, that he himself was to be Judge, whether 'twou'd be a prejudice to him or no, and if he judg'd it wou'd be so, he wou'd not oblige him to it. Whereupon *Theodore* refus'd to see his Mother, and this refusal turn'd to her great advantage: For she who had a great desire to see him, retir'd soon after, into a Monastery of Religious Women hard by, hoping that that Monastery, having her Son for their Director, she might sometimes see him there. Thus God bless'd her Sons refusal, and made it the occasion of his Mother's Vocation. Yet notwithstanding, it shew'd a very holy disposition in him, that he wou'd not see his Mother, but by pure Obedience, and with so great a precaution, as to charge his Superiors Conscience with it. A good Religious Man ought not to see his Parents but after this manner; and if we knew how dangerous, such Visits as these are for our Salvation, we shou'd be more afraid of 'em than we are, and take greater care to be dispens'd with 'em than we do. All Histories are full of Examples of Religious, that have been hereby lost. Let us become Wise at others expences, that we may not fall into the like inconveniencies.

* If you be Dead with JESUS CHRIST, and to your Relations according to the Flesh, why do you, says Saint Basil, seek again after 'em, and desire to have commerce with 'em? But if you desire it for love of them, and to re-establish that in your self, which you have destroy'd for the love of JESUS CHRIST; do you not deceive and betray your self? Wherefore let not their consideration make you leave the place where God has put you; for the farther you go from it, the farther you withdraw your self from the spirit of your Vocation. † The Blessed Virgin and Saint Joseph found not JESUS CHRIST amongst their Kinsfolks, and Acquaintance. * O most Amiable JESUS, cries Saint Bernard, how can I hope to find you amongst my Parents, since you were not to be found amongst your own? 'Tis in the Churches, 'tis in Retirement, and in Prayer, we must seek him, and 'tis there we shall find him.

* Si mortuus es cum Christo à cognatis tuis secundum carnem, quid rursus interfecos versari cupis? Si verò quæ destruxisti propter Christum, rursus ædificas: propter cognatos tuos, transgredieris teipsum constituis. Ne igitur ob cognatorum tuorum necessitatem secesseris à loco tuo, nam è loco discedens, fortassis ex æquo discedes à moribus tuis.
S. Basil. ep. ad Cælon.
Luc. 9. 62.

† Requirebant Jesum inter cognatos & notos, & non invenerunt. Luc. 2. 44.
ne bonè Jeshu, inter cognatos meos inveniam, qui inter tuos minime es inventus? Bern.

* Quomodo

We Read in the Life of Saint Francis Xavierius, that returning from Rome into Portugal, to go from thence into the Indies; and passing within Eight Miles of his Fathers House, he could not be persuaded to go out of his way, to see his Mother and Relations, notwithstanding all their intreaties; and tho' he knew if he lost this occasion of seeing 'em, he should never have the like again. Father Le Royre did the same, passing within Ten Miles of his Fathers House. And when Saint Ignatius, by an indispensable necessity, was oblig'd to go to Loyola, he retir'd into the Hospital, and would by no means lodge in his Brothers House.

Ccc 2 CHAP.

C H A P. II.

*That a Religious Person, ought to avoid the
occasion of receiving Visits from his
Parents, or of having any Commerce
with 'em by Letters.*

A Good Religious Man, who truly takes to Heart the Service of God, and his Spiritual advancement, and thinks, as he ought to do, why he enter'd into Religion, must not only forbear to make Journeys to his Parents, but must also as much as he can, deprive himself of their Conversation, hindering 'em from Visiting him. Saint Ephraim says, we must try to oblige 'em to reduce their Visits, to one or two at most in a Year. And adds moreover, *If you can quite free your self from so unprofitable a Conversation, you'll still do much better.* He calls their Conversation unprofitable not without reason; and Saint Ignatius in his Constitutions calls it so too; and 'tis not only unprofitable but dangerous also, as we have already sayd; whereas God has been pleas'd to shew, by the examples of Saints and Miracles, how pleasing to him the refusal of seeing our Relations, and our coldness towards 'em in the like occasions, have been to his Divine Majesty.

'Tis reported in the *Spiritual Meadow*, that a holy Anchorit call'd *Syriacus*, hearing some knock at the Gate of his Cell, and knowing they were his Parents that came to Visit him, he betook himself presently to Prayer, to beg of God that they might not be able to see him. Which being done, he opens the Door passes throu' the mid'st of 'em, without their seeing him, and retir'd himself a great way farther into the Desert; nor wou'd he return home, till he understood they were gone. *Surius* recounts of Saint *Pacomius*, that his Sister coming to Visit him, to know how he did; he bid the Porter of the Monastery, tell her he was very well; and that she might return home in peace; and this refusal of his, touching her

* sed si inutilem illorum conversationem penitus praecluderis, melius ages. Ephr. tom. 2. tract. de van. doct. ca. 55.

In Prat. spir. Joan. Mos. ca. 55.

Sur. in Vit. S. Pacem. 14. Nidj.

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her no less, than that of *Theodore* did his Mother; she shut her self up in a Convent not far off from her Brother, as the other did; and there spent the rest of her Days after a most holy manner.

But a good Religious Man, ought not only to avoid seeing his Parents, but must, as much as he can, abstain from having any Communication with 'em by Letters; since this Commerce is proper for nothing, but to give him disquiet and trouble: For as by making 'em no Visits, we free our selves from their making any to us; so we shall free our selves from their Letters, by Writing none unto them. * *If you understand*, says *Thomas à Kempis*, *how to leave Men to do their own business, they'll leave you the liberty to do yours.* All consists in your Will to do this; because if you have a mind to do it, you'll find means enough. We have already left our Country, our Home and our Parents, for the Love of God; let us make an end, of doing so for good and all, and endeavour even quite to forget 'em, that being disingag'd after this manner, from all Earthly things, we may think of nothing else, but of loving and serving God.

Cassian makes mention of an Hermit, who was very much addicted to Prayer and Contemplation, which the better to attend to, he endeavour'd to keep his Heart continually withdrawn from all Worldly thoughts. At the end of Fifteen Years retreat, there came a great Packet of Letters from his Country. As soon as he had the Letters in his hand, he began to think, and say within himself: If I open these Letters, what thoughts will they not give me? How many different motions will they cause in my Heart, either of joy if my Parents be in prosperity; or of sadness, if I find any misfortune has happen'd to them? For how long time will my imagination be fill'd, with the thoughts of those that Write to me? What trouble; what distraction will these cause in time of Prayer and Meditation? The Lineaments of their features, the things which they have heretofore told me, and those which they now Write, will continually come into my mind. How long time will it be, before I shall be able to deface these Images, which they'll cause in my imagination? What pain shall I have, to return to that tranquillity, and peace of mind I now enjoy, together with that profound forgetfulness I now have, of all Worldly Objects? Lastly, what will it avail me to have quitted my Parents, if my heart and imagination be still with 'em, and

* Si tu scis
homines di-
mittere, ipsi
bene te dimit-
tent tua facta
facere.
Imit. Christi
li. 1. ca. 22.

Cass. lib. 5. de
Instit. reman.
ca. 32.

* Ita cogitationes patriæ pariter concremami: ne me u terius ad illa, quæ fugi, revocare tentatis.

In ejus Vita lib. 2. ca. 5.

and I begin again to take a satisfaction in their Conversation. Whilst he was thus agitated, and disturb'd in mind, he takes the Packet just as he had receiv'd it, and cast it into the Fire, saying, * Be gone ye thoughts and tenderness for my Country and Relations, go and be consum'd with my Letters in the Fire, that ye may never be able to prevail with me, to return any more to those things I have already quitted. Nay, he wou'd not only forbear reading the Letters that were sent him; but wou'd not so much as open the Packet, to see their Supercriptions, lest coming to know their hands, that might give him such a remembrance of 'em, as might disturb his interior peace and tranquillity. They report the self same thing of Saint Ignatius, and those who do not content themselves with once reading those Letters they receive, but keep 'em, to Read 'em over again, to call to mind their Parents, and entertain themselves with the thoughts of 'em, ought to profit by this example. But if we have not so much courage as to burn 'em before we Read 'em, let us at least do so after we have Read 'em, thereby to free our selves from those thoughts of Flesh and Blood, which serve only to disquiet us.

C H A P. III.

That a Religious Man ought not to return to his own Country, even tho' there to go Preach there.

SOME out of hopes to draw their Parents to Gods Service, let themselves be overcome with the Temptation of returning to their own Country; and when these Temptations, disguise themselves after this manner, under the appearance of good, they are ordinarily so much more dangerous; because we then look upon 'em not as Temptations, but as holy Inspirations. Saint Bernard upon these words, *Catch for us those little Foxes, which destroy the Vineyards*, says, that one of these Foxes that spoil our Lords Vineyard, and which to his knowledge had been the ruin of

Bern. serm. 6. sup. Cant. in illud. Capite nobis vulpes parvulas, quæ demoluntur vineas. Cant. 2, 15.

many

many Religious, was the desire they had, to Convert their Parents to God. And ordinarily speaking, Kindred or Alliance, is a hinderance to that fruit, that might be wrought amongst Souls; because your Relations, who have familiarly convers'd with you in the World, can scarce have that respect and veneration for you, which the Ministry of the Gospel requires; and 'tis for this reason, that our Saviour himself assures us, saying, * *Verily I say unto ye, that no Prophet is well receiv'd in his own Country.* And when God would make Abraham, the Patriarch of the faithful, he commanded him to leave his Country, to quit his Parents and Friends, and to go into Mesopotamia, where no body knew him. The Divine Providence also us'd the like conduct in regard of Saint Paul, † *He was in the Temple of Jerusalem, and on a sudden was Ravish'd in Spirit, and beheld our Lord; who said to him, make hast, go presently out of Jerusalem; for they will not receive that Testimony thou shalt give of me; to whom Saint Paul answer'd, Thou art not ignorant, O Lord, that they know very well, that I have led many into Prison, who believ'd in thee, and that I have persecuted 'em in their Synagogues, and when they spilt the Blood of thy Martyr Stephen, I assisted at his Death, to which I consented, and kept the Habits of those that Ston'd him.* 'Tis no matter, replies our Lord, Go, for I will send thee a great way off, amongst the Gentils. God sent the Apostle into a Country far distant, that he might produce greater fruit in Souls; and do you think, that you shall be able to produce the like amongst your Relations? What fruit will you there be able to produce? How can you draw them to a contempt of those things of the World, and of the commodities of this Life, whilst you are with 'em, and they see you enjoy the same; and so long as this tenderness of Flesh and Blood, causes you to remain amongst 'em?

* Amen dica vobis, quia nemo Propheta acceptus est in patria sua. Luc. 4. 24.

† Fadum est autem revertenti mihi in Jerusalem, & ornatu in templo, fieri me in stupore mentis, & videre illum dicentem mihi: Festina, & exi velociter ex Jerusalem: Quoniam non recipiant testimonium tuum de me. Et ego dixi: Domine, ipsi sciunt, quia ego eram concludens in carcerem, & credens per Synagogas eos qui credebant in te. Et cum funderetur sanguis Stephanus testis tui ego astabam, & consentiebam, & custodiebam vestimenta interficientium illum. Et dixit ad me: Vade, quoniam ego in

Nationes longe mittam te. Act. 22. 17. 18. 19. 20. 21.

Petr. de Ribadeneira in dialog. manuscript.

Father Ribadeneira recounts a pleasant passage to this purpose, that happen'd to one of ours, who having a great tenderness of affection for his Mother, went to Messina, where she liv'd, to Visit her, where entering one Day into a Church, where they were Exorcising a Possess'd Person, before a great multitude of People, and he presently assisting the Priest, by conjuring and threatening the Devil in God's Name, the wicked Spirit gave no other answer to all he said, but by counterfeit-

ing

ing the Voice of an Infant, when it calls and crys after it's Mother. All that assisted, who knew the Religious, and the cause of his return home, presently understood the Devils pleasant conceit; and fell into a loud laughter; but he on the other side stood astonish'd full of shame and confusion. May they not treat you after the like manner, when you are amongst your Parents, Preaching of Mortification and all other Virtues.

*Sever. Sulp. 1.
Dial.*

Sulpicius Severus recounts a Story of another nature, upon the same subject, which ought to make us tremble, he says, that a Tribune of *Ægypt*, a very Rich Man, and of no less Quality, being oblig'd upon account of his Office, to pass throu the Desert of the Anchorits, where having had a long Conference with Saint *John* the Abbot, of things appertaining to Salvation, he left him, being extreemly touch'd by his words, who altho he was Marry'd, and had a Son, yet he presently quite left the World, and took so much to heart this new kind of Life he had imbrac'd, that in a short time he surpass'd even the most Ancient Hermits, that were most renown'd for their Virtue. Being in this state or disposition, a thought occur'd to him, that since he was so disabus'd of the things in this World, 'twou'd be better for him to go and labour for the Salvation of his Wife and Son, than to live in Solitude only to procure his own; and being deceiv'd by this apparent Zeal and Charity, after having liv'd Four Years in the Desert, he put himself upon the way to return home; the Religious of a Monastery where he pass'd, and to whom he had Communicated his design, endeavour'd to dissuade him from it, by representing to him, that 'twas an illusion of the Devil, who had already deceiv'd many others after the same manner. Notwithstanding he gave no credit to all they sayd; so that persisting in his resolution, he took his leave of em; but when he was scarce out of the Gates of the Monastery, he was upon a sudden possess'd by the Devil, and that after so violent a manner, that he foam'd at the Mouth, and tore his own Flesh with his Teeth. They report, that nor without great pain and trouble to the Monastery (where they were forc'd to shut him up, and in Chains) neither the Prayers of the holy Religious offer'd for him, nor the Conjurations they us'd in the Exorcism's of the Devil that tormented him, were able to have any effect for Two whole Years together; at the end of which time, it pleas'd God to deliver him; whereupon he return'd to the Desert, well Corrected and Chastis'd, serving

ving for an example and lesson to others, to persever in their holy Vocations, and not permit themselves to be seduc'd by the false appearance of Zeal. By this example we may see how a Religious Man, ought to reject all thoughts that persuade him to return into his Country, and to Visit his Parents. Because if this, according to the Opinion of Saints, be a dangerous Temptation, even when 'tis perform'd with a prospect of their Salvation; how great a one must it needs be esteem'd, when 'tis done only for their own or their Parents satisfaction?

CHAP. IV.

That a Religious Man ought to take care, not to meddle with his Parents Affairs.

TIS the Duty of a Religious Man, above all things, not to embroil himself, with the Affairs of his Parents; it being very dangerous to do so. We see, says Saint Gregory, that very many after they have renounc'd the World, and which is more themselves also, have still such a tye to their Parents, that Flesh and Blood continually draw them back to what they have left. Whereby forgetting the Duty of their Profession, they permit their minds to be fill'd, with the Interest of their Relations, imploying themselves in their Affairs with Secular Powers, intermeddling with their Suits and Intrigues; and hereby losing the sweetness of Interior Peace, they ingage themselves again in Worldly Commerce, with great danger of their Salvation. Saint Isidore also, says almost the same thing. *There are many Religious, says he, who out of Affection to their Parents, undertake a thousand cares in their behalf, even so far as to embroil themselves by following their Suits, and whilst they thus imploy themselves in what regards the good and advantage of their Relations, they eternally lose their own Souls.*

Greg. Moral. li. 8. ca. 24.

Multi Monachorum amore parentum non solum terrenis curis, sed etiam forensibus jurgis involuti sunt, & pro suo-

ram temporali salute animas suas perdidierunt. Isidor. lib. 1. de sum. bono.

Tom. II.

Ddd

The

*Basil. in Const.
Monast. ca. 21.*

*Cum Factor
rerum privaret
semine Cle-
rum, ad Sa-
rang vorum
successit turba
nepotum.
Cass. coll. 24.
ca. 9.*

The natural affection which we have for our Parents, can not produce any thing that is more dangerous for a Religious Person, than this concern and care for their Interest is, experience teaches us, that the meddling never so little with 'em, is like a Quagmire, which one has great difficulty to get out off again, and this, as Saint Basil says, proceeds from the jealousy of the Devil, who not being able to suffer that Religious Persons shou'd gain the advantages of so Heavenly a Life, which he has lost by his own fault, uses all his power, to carry them, under fair pretences of Duty and Piety, to embark and turmoil themselves in Worldly affairs, thereby to make 'em lose the Peace of their Soul, to relent in their Love to God, and in their Fervor to Perfection. 'Tis a strange thing to see, how the Devil takes this to heart; how he uses all imaginable means to prevail; and for the same end, makes use of our own Parents; who never fail to address themselves to their Religious Relations in all their Affairs: In their Intrigues, in their Law Suits, in their Marriages, and lastly, in all the events that happen to them in this Life. It seems as if they look'd upon 'em, as charg'd with the whole business belonging to their Family; and 'tis always to their advice they have recourse, as most for their own turn, they being less employ'd in other Affairs, and having no business but what concerns them. Whereupon, Ludolphus of Saxony the Carthusian, speaking of all Ecclesiastical Persons in general, says very well, *That at the same time that God obliges 'em to a single Life, and wou'd deliver 'em from the cares and troubles of Children; the Devil has rais'd 'em a croud of Nephews, to bring 'em back again to the tumultuous Commerce of the World.* In effect when the Devil endeavours to ingage you, either in the Advancement of a Nephew, or the Marriage of a Niece; 'tis not their advantage, but your loss he seeks after. Wherefore 'tis a sad thing that a Religious Man, who has quitted what he had in the World, renounc'd all honors and commodities of this Life, to free himself from the trouble of it, shou'd plunge himself again into it, for the interest of another; and thereby be charg'd with the whole Affairs of his Family, whereby he loses the fruit of his Vocation. Cassian recounts a passage very proper for this subject; how that the Brother of the Abbot Apollo, came one Night and knock'd at his Cell Door, to beg his help to draw his Oxen out of the Mire, in which they were stuck fast, he being not able to get 'em out

out alone. The Abbot ask'd him why he did not rather address himself for help, to his other Brother in the World; who answer'd, that he had been Dead Fifteen Years, and I, replies the Saint, have been Dead Twenty, and been so long buried in this Cell; out of which I cannot go to assist you. 'Tis thus, a true Religious Man ought to do, when his Parents address themselves to him, about their Temporal Affairs, and if he has the courage to do it; he may be assur'd, that whatsoever reason may occur to undertake 'em, he will find in the end that 'twas a bad one.

What we here say, is confirm'd by the Authority of Saint Hierom; How many Religious, says this Father, who by taking compassion of their Fathers and Mothers, have lost their own Souls? How many have lost their Vocation, and renounc'd to their Profession; because they wou'd meddle with the Interests and Advancements of their Relations? How many Apostates do we Daily see, who after having quitted their Order, under pretence of going to assist and comfort their Parents, serve only in the end, to ruin 'em by their continual expences, and to render 'em unhappy in their Old Age, by their disorderly Life? Experience furnishes us, but with too many Examples, and therefore Saint Basil says very well, *Since we know how great a prejudice this tie and affection to our Parents brings along with it; let us avoid the taking care of their Interests, and defend our selves against so dangerous a weapon as this is, which the Devil makes use of to overcome us.*

Moreover, we must not believe our selves secure, and imagine all is right, upon account that we ingage our selves in nothing, for which we have not before-hand obtain'd permission of our Superiors; because we must look upon this leave as we ought to do upon that, which is given us to Visit 'em. The Superiour who gives it you, very much desires you wou'd not meddle with your Parents concerns; because he sees 'tis best for you not to do so: And only permits it, out of an Indulgence to you. 'Tis not an Obedience he imposes upon you, but 'tis a permission he grants you; in which, you do rather your own Will than his. And if Saint Theodore refus'd to see his Mother; because his Superiour, who gave him leave, wou'd not take upon himself the prejudice that thereby might happen to him; what ought not you to do, in regard of the concerns of your Relations? Where there is a great deal more danger for you, and with

Quanti Monachorum, dum Patris, Matrisque miserentur, suas animas perdidit? Hier. in reg. Monach. quam collegit Lupus de Olivero.

Scientes itaque intolerabile detrimentum hujus affectus, fugimus illorum curam tanquam diabolicam, ad impugnandum nos armaturam habentem. Basil. in cons. Monast. ca. 11.

In Vita S. Pacom. 152 sup.

how much greater reason ought you to avoid meddling with 'em, at lest if your Superiour obliges you not to it by Obedience, and takes not upon himself and his own Conscience, what préjudice soever may thereby happen to you?

C H A P. V.

In which what has been already sayd is confirm'd by Examples.

*In Prato.
Spir. rom. 2.*

THE fame of the Sanctity of the Abbot *Pamen*, being spread all over *Ægypt*, the Tribune of that Province, had a great mind to see the Saint, and for this end sent to him, to beg he wou'd permit him to give him a Visit, as he pass'd by to Visit the Province. This Message very much afflicted the holy Abbot, who after he had consider'd with himself, that if he receiv'd this Visit from the Tribune, all People wou'd tire him out with Visits, whereby his Spiritual Exercises and the peace and tranquillity he enjoy'd in his Retirement wou'd be hinder'd, which might also be the cause of his loss of Humility, and give him thoughts of Vain-glory: At last he resolv'd to beg his excuse, and not to receive his Visit. The Tribune, who was extreamly Mortifi'd, when he understood the Answer, sayd, that he attributed this refusal to his Sins; and conceiving still a greater Opinion of the Servant of God, resolv'd to see him at any rate. After he had for some time thought with himself, what means to take to obtain this end; he at last pitch'd upon a thing, which he believ'd wou'd oblige the Saint to receive his Visit, or to come himself to see him; which was, he put the Son of the Saints Sister into Prison, and under-hand to acquaint his Mother, that thò her Son Merited to be punish'd, yet he wou'd take him out of Prison, upon condition that the Abbot *Pamen* wou'd come to beg this favor of him. This Woman went presently to find her Brother out in the Desart, knocks at his Cell Door, and with Sighs and Tears, represented the danger

ger her Son was in, and conjur'd him to go to the Tribune to intercede for him; but seeing he wou'd neither open the Door, nor make any Answer, to the complaints he heard her make, she at last falling into a great Passion, gave him injurious words, calling him, a Cruel Barbarous Man, void of all Compassion; reproach'd to him the hardness of his Heart, telling him, he must have Bowels of Brass, not to be touch'd with the Tears of a Sister, and of a Mother, that pleaded in the behalf of her only Son. Hereupon the Saint turning to his Disciple, go, says he, and tell that Woman in my Name, that *Pæmen* never had any Children, and therefore he knows not what it is, to be afflicted for their loss; and without making any other Answer, he sent away his Sister with a very sad and heavy Heart. The Tribune understanding this, and perceiving he must not expect a Visit from the Saint, endeavour'd that some of his friends shou'd persuade him at least, to Write to him in favor of his Nephew; many of which having press'd him very much, he at last resolv'd to Write, thereby to be deliver'd from their importunities: And Writ to him after this manner; I beseech your Greatness, that you wou'd carefully Examine the Affair of this Young Man; and if you find he has deserv'd Death, to let him suffer it; that undergoing the punishment of his Crimes in this World, he may in the other avoid the torments of Hell.

We Read in the Life of the Fathers, a passage very like this, of the Abbot *Pastor*. He thought it so dangerous a thing to meddle with the Interests of Flesh and Blood; that tho' never so many importunities were us'd, that he wou'd intercede for one of his Nephews, who was condemn'd to Death, yet they cou'd never prevail with him to do it.

We Read in the Life of Saint *Ignatius*, that he cou'd never be persuaded to meddle with the Marriage of his Niece, who was Heiress of his Family, nor so much as to Write one Letter to her; and being very much press'd by divers Persons of Quality, and particularly by the Dukes of *Naxer*, and *Albuquerque*, he answer'd, that these sort of Affairs, did not any more belong to him; and that now he was not of that Profession; that he had a good while ago renounc'd to the World, and was dead to it; and therefore ought not to return to what he had left, nor meddle with things that did not

*In ejus Vita
lib. 5. cap. 5.*

* Expoliavi
me tunicā
meā: Quo-
modo induar
illā? Lavi pe-
des meos quo-
modo inquini-
nabo illos?
Cant. 5. 3.
In Vita S.
Francisci de
Borgia lib. 4.
cap. 6.

not at all belong to his Vocation; and lastly, * *That he wou'd not take again the Coat, he had cast off, when he had quitted the World, nor foul his Feet again after he had wash'd 'em.*

Neither was it possible to obtain of Saint Francis Borgia, that he shou'd ask a Dispensation from Rome, for Don Alvarez Borgia, who desir'd to Marry one of his Nieces, a Rich Heiress; notwithstanding he might thereby have gain'd a considerable Fortune for his Son, to whom she wou'd have brought the Marquisship of Alcañez; and tho' the Saint had so much Power with the Pope, that he might hope for any thing from him he desir'd. The Emperour Charles the Fifth, came to understand by his own knowledge, in another occasion, the truth of what had been told him; that the Saint liv'd without the least tye to Flesh and Blood: For having once fall'n upon a Discourse concerning an Affair that touch'd the Interest of his Eldest Son, the Duke of Gandy, the Saint took no more notice hereof, than if he had spoken of the Interest of a Stranger, which extreamly Edifi'd the Emperour, and confirm'd him in the high Opinion he before had of him.

Let us notwithstanding consider what sort of Affairs those were, that these Saints refus'd to meddle in; what means they us'd, soon to determin'e 'em; and let us take notice on the other side, into what difficulties and intrigues Religious now a Days thrust themselves. But if such great Saints as these, apprehended the infection of Secular Affairs; how comes it to pass, that we who are far from being Saints, have no apprehension at all of 'em? 'Tis in reality; because we are not Saints, and therefore do not think of what is to come: For if we truly aspir'd to Sanctity and Perfection; we shou'd fear as they did those dangers, that are inseparable from these sorts of Affairs; and we shou'd avoid 'em as they did.

C H A P. VI.

*Of many other Evils, occasion'd by our too great
Affection to our Parents, and how IESUS
CHRIST himself warns us to take
care hereof.*

S AINT Basil says, that the irregular affection to-
wards our Parents, causes sometimes Religious Per-
sons even to commit Sacrilege, making 'em steal
the Goods of their Order, to succour 'em in their
wants; but if they do not directly take what be-
longs to their Order to help 'em, they at least hinder,
what Charitable Persons design'd to give to the Order, to
turn it to their own particular profit; they take what they can
get from those Persons they direct, and this with very great
prejudice to the Ministry they exercise: For how can they
perform their Duty, with such an intire liberty as they
ought, towards those Persons whose assistance they stand in
need off; and to whom they have these sorts of obligations?
How can it also happen, but they must needs have Scruples
about the Vow of Poverty? Which how can you free your
self from, whether it be to your self, or to another they
give it; and whether 'tis you who in reality afterwards give
it, or whether another gives it by your hand? But that
which is the worst of all, is, that this inconsiderate tender-
ness we have for our Relations, do's sometimes so pre-
possess us, that we scarce take notice of these things; but
looking upon 'em as permitted, which indeed they are not,
we imagine we do nothing against the Vow of Poverty,
even when we directly break it. But shou'd a Religious
Man Rob his Order of nothing else, but of that time he
employs in his Parents Affairs, this alone were a Robbery
of very great importance. For, says Saint Basil, you are no
longer your own; you belong to your Order, to which
you

*Basil. in Const.
Monach. ca. 11.*

you have intirely giv'n your self, and for this reason, 'tis charg'd no less with your Body than your Soul, and is to take care of the one and the other. But if you employ your care and time in the Service of your Relations, besides the scandal you give to those, who see you thus ty'd in affection to things of the World; is not this to steal time from your Order, which nourishes you, and furnishes you with all things necessary for your Subsistence.

Si quis venit
ad me, & non
odit Patrem
suum, & Ma-
trem, & Uxo-
rem, & Filios,
& Fratres, &
Sorores, ad-
huc autem &
animam suam,
non potest
meus esse di-
scipulus,
Luc. 14. 26.
Greg. lib. 31.
Moral. ca. 14.

Inimici ho-
minis dome-
stici ejus.
Matth. 7. 6.

Chron. 5. Fr.
1. Part. ca. 20.

ubi sup.

If any one comes to me, says our Saviour, and hates not his Father, Mother, Wife, Children, Brothers, Sisters, yea and his own Soul, he cannot be my Disciple. And Saint Gregory takes notice upon this passage, that God no less recommends to us the hatred of our Parents, than the hatred of our selves: And by reason we have not a greater Enemy than our selves, we are therefore oblig'd to a hatred of our selves, and to make our selves feel the effects thereof by a Mortification of our Senses, and a continual opposition to these irregular desires and inclinations of Flesh and Blood; so we ought also to have a holy hatred of our Parents, and to have no condescendency at all for 'em in those things, that may be an obstacle to our Salvation, and to our advancement in Perfection. Because our Parents are a piece of our selves, and consequently our Enemies, as well as we our selves are, according to the words of Scripture: *The Enemies of Man are his Domesticks, or those of the same House and Family.*

'Tis reported in the Chronicles of Saint Francis, that a Secular Person, telling Brother Giles that he wou'd absolutely become a Religious Man; the Servant of God answer'd him, if you have truly a mind to be so, go Kill all your Relations. This Man astonish'd with his answer, fell a Weeping, and begg'd of him that he wou'd not oblige him to commit, such enormous Crimes as these were; whereupon the Brother reproaching him, for not rightly understanding him; I do not bid you, says he, to go and really cut the Throats of your Relations, but that you go, and endeavour to destroy the affection you have for 'em in your Heart, by absolutely casting it away: Because JESUS CHRIST teaches us, that *He that hates not his Parents, cannot be his Disciple.*

'Tis a thing worth taking notice off, how often this Doctrine is repeated in the Gospel; for one time our Saviour

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viour answers him that desir'd to follow him, and who ask'd his leave, first to dispose of what he had. † *Whoſoever put's his Hand to the Plow and look's back, is not fit for the Kingdom of Heaven*; another time he tell's one whom he Commanded to follow him; who first begg'd leave of him first to go Bury his Father: * *Let the Dead Bury their Dead*; but go thou and declare the Kingdom of Heaven; what fear and apprehension ought not this first Answer to give, to those that look back; that is, who embroil themselves in Worldly business, after they have begun to follow the Evangelical Counsels? Ought they not to apprehend, that God will reject 'em as unfit for his Kingdom? And, as *Theophilact* says, upon the second Example, † *If that Man were not permitted to Bury his Father: Woe be to those who having embrac'd a Religious Life, return to the affaires of the World, which they have quitted!*

BUT JESUS CHRIST is not only contented by his own words, and by the Example of others, to teach us to live without any ties at all to our Parents, but would also by his own example, move us to do so; and this appears in divers places of the Gospel; where we see, that to the exterior, he even shews a severity and coldness to his most Holy Mother; * *Why did yee seek after me, says he, when she found him in the Temple? Know ye not, that I ought to go about my Fathers business?* And again at the Marriage of Cana, she tell's him that there was no Wine left: † *Woman*, reply'd he, *what's that to thee and me?* Whereby, says *Saint Bernard*, he teaches us, how we ought to carry ourselves towards our Parents, when they would divert us from the employments of our Religious Profession; and that then we ought to answer 'em as he did, I ought only to employ my self in the business of my Father; I ought only to labour for my Salvation. Do's not this also appear to be a very cold answer which he made, when one told him; † *Master speak to my Brother that he divides the Inheritance with me*: *Man*, says he, *who has appointed me for thy Judge, or Umpire, to make this division between yee?* And do's not this teach us, that a Religious Man cannot be too cautious, in avoiding to meddle with Worldly business, which is not at all his Profession?

† Nemo mittens manum suam ad aratrum, & respiciens retrò, aptus est regno Dei.

Luc. 9. 62.
* Sine ut mortui sepeliant mortuos suos: Tu autem vade, & annuntia regnum Dei.
Luc. 9. 60.

† Si autem illi neque patrem sepelire licuit; vix his qui monasticam vitam professi, ad mundana regrediuntur negotia!

* Quid est quod me quaerebatis? nescitis quia in his, quae Patris mei sunt, oportet me esse.

Luc. 2. 49.
† Quid mihi & tibi est mulier?
Joan. 2. 4.
Bern. serm. 2.
Dom. 1. post. fest. Epiph.

† Magister, dic fratri meo, ut dividat hereditatem: Homo, quae me constituit iudicem, aut divorum super vos?
Luc. 12. 14.

C H A P. VII.

That irregular Love to our Parents, sometimes disguises it self, under the pretences of Duty and Piety; and what remedy we ought to apply therunto.

THERE are no Temptations more dangerous, than those that hide themselves under the Vail of Duty and Piety; of which Nature, too great a tie or affection to our Parents is; wherefore Saint Ignatius to prevent those inconveniencies, that may happen to us from hence, ordains in his Constitutions, that we must exact from all those that wou'd Enter into the SOCIETY, to promise, that as often as they think themselves oblig'd to help their Parents, that they will not rely upon their own proper Lights, but upon the Judgment and Decision of Superiours; for in what regards our Parents, we are ordinarily prevented, and carry'd away with Passion, as commonly also we are in what concerns our selves; and therefore we cannot be good Judges in these sorts of occasions. But the Remedy which our Holy Founder has establish'd for this, leaves not the least Subject of Scruple or Disquiet behind it? But on the contrary puts us into, and leaves us in, a very great tranquillity of Mind; obliging us to adhere to the Opinion of the SOCIETY, which being prudent, and so enlighten'd and fill'd with the fear of God; cannot fail to examin all things very well, and to decide 'em according to Conscience and truth. Wherefore in the beginning, we propose to all those who Enter amongst us, whether they'll be contented to submit themselves in this Point, to the Judgment of the SOCIETY, which if they refuse to do, we do not Receive 'em; and 'tis a great Favor of God, for which we ought to render

Cap. 3. Exam.
9. 3.

der him thank's, that hereby, we may rest contented, and be in quiet of Mind about this Point, and have nothing to think off, but our own Salvation and Spiritual advancement.

'Tis moreover that we may avoid the deceits of Flesh and Blood, that the same Saint ordains, that when we are about to distribute our Goods amongst our Poor Relations, we ought to take Counsel of two or three Persons, which we may make choice of, with the approbation of our Superiour; who shall be Judges of the Poverty and Necessity of our Relations. So that how Poor soever they may be, we cannot dispose of our Goods in their behalf, but by the advice of others: Tho' we are left to an intire liberty, to dispose of what we have to our Poor Relations, without consulting any one. And he ordains this, lest the Natural affection we have to our Relations, shoud deceive us. Saint Gregory also speaking of the Person, whom our Saviour woud not permit to go to Bury his Father, takes notice, that what he woud not have forbidden him, to have been done to a Stranger; but woud rather have Counsell'd it, as a Work of Mercy, he forbids him to do, in regard of his Father; to teach us, says the holy Doctor, that even such Charities as our duty requires of us towards Strangers, ought not to be practis'd towards our Relations, the reason is; because the Natural tenderness we have for 'em, is subject to a great many illusions; and because 'tis not of Edification, to see a Disciple of JESUS CHRIST, incurber himself with the interests of Flesh and Blood. In effect 'tis very certain, that we take to Heart the concerns of our Relations after another manner, than we do those of Strangers; these leaving our Minds in an intire tranquillity; whereas the others rob us of the Peace of our Soul, and trouble us in our Spiritual Exercises. Wherefore, when we are about to succour or help our Parents, 'tis far better that it shoud be done by another Religious, than by our selves; and this is the advice of Saint Basil, and what our Rules also prescribe: For if they shoud give the care to us, and we shoud not be free from the sentiments of Flesh and Blood; we woud always desire that our Parents shoud be Rich, and at their ease: Notwithstanding that God perhaps, woud have 'em remain Poor and to suffer, thereby to Humble 'em, and to save their Souls.

*Lib. 7. Mor. c.
14. Luc. 9. 60.*

E c c 2 .

But

But there is also another reason for this; which is, that sometimes vanity has so much prepossess'd the Minds of certain Religious Persons, that they make use of that credit and access, which their Habit giv's 'em to great ones in the World; to raise their Parents to such Promotions, as they themselves wou'd otherwise never have thought of, nor of the way how to be able to compass 'em: And herein they shew themselves to have nothing but the Name and Habit of Religious Persons, for instead of being more Humble than those in the World are, they are notwithstanding more puffed up with Presumption and Vanity.

And since it happens but too often, that many quit Religion, as they pretend, to assist their Parents in the World, 'tis good to observe here, that ordinarily speaking, this is not the Motive that leads 'em out, and renders 'em unfaithful to their Vocation: But 'tis their Spirit of Immortification, their want of fervor and courage, to support the holy Asceticities of their Rule, and other hidden causes, they are not ignorant off, which makes 'em quit their Religious Profession: But because they dare not alledge the true Motives, they have recourse to these other specious pretences. But it falls out notwithstanding, and we Daily perceive, that such Persons as these; after their going out, become rather a charge and burden than a help to their Parents; and that ordinarily they have neither the Power nor the Will to assist 'em, nor have so much care of 'em, as to take the least pains to help 'em. 'Twas not therefore the design of assisting 'em, that made 'em leave Religion; because in it, they were in a better condition to do it; but 'twas the Spirit of Libertinisme, their impatience of Religious Discipline, and the inclination they had to live as they pleas'd, that made 'em do so. They may deceive Men, but they cannot deceive God; and woe be to him, who begins not to walk right towards God, by not sticking to the decision of his Rule and Superiours!

Whosoever therefore wou'd arrive to the end, he ought to propose to himself in his entrance into Religion, must renounce to all commerce with his Relations, and intirely disengage himself from the care of their concerns. † For these who have sayd to their Father and Mother, I know yee not; and to their Brethren, I have no acquaintance with yee; and are ignorant of their Children; these are they

† Qui dixerunt patri suo, & matri suae: Nescio vos: & fratribus suis, ignorant vos: & nescierunt filios

O Lord who have kept thy Commandments, and have faithfully kept their League with thee. A true Religious Man, says Saint Bernard, ought to be like another Melchisedech, of whom the Apostle speaking, says, he had neither Father nor Mother, nor even Birth, not but that he had so in effect, because he was a Man; but the Scripture speaking of him in that place, considers him only as Priest, and makes no mention of his Genealogy, nay not so much as of his Birth, nor of the end of his Life: To teach us, says the Saint, that the Priests of our Lord, but above all Religious Men, ought to have no tie or relation to Flesh and Blood, but to be so imploy'd in Spiritual things, as if they descended from Heaven; and lastly they ought to be Melchisedech's in their Hearts, that is to say, they ought intirely to cast off, whatsoever may in the least hinder their progress towards God.

fuos: Hi custodierunt eloquium tuum, & pactum tuum servaverunt.
Dut. 33. 9.
Ad Heb. 7. 3.

Let us conclude, and say with Saint Bernard; † Remain in Solitude like a Turtle: Let there be no tie between the World and thee, no commerce between thee and Man, forget thy Country and thy Fathers House, and the King will be inamour'd with thy Beauty. Saint Hierom therefore upon these words of the Prophet, had reason to say, 'twas a great recompence indeed; nor can there be a greater, than that which is annex'd to the forgetfulness of his Father; because thereby he becomes, the Object of the Love of the King of Kings.

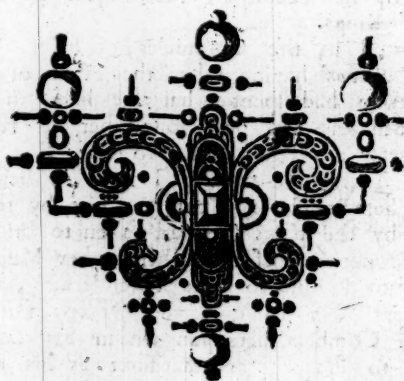
*† sede itaque soli: tarius huc turtur, nihil tibi, & turbis, nihil cum multitudine ceterorum, etiamque ipsum obliviscere populum tuum, & domum patris tui, & concupiscet rex decorum tuum.
Psal. 44. 11.
Bern. serm. 4. in Cant.
Ateron. in reg. Monach. à Lup. de Olereto coll. 2. Part. Chron. S. Franc. c. 13.

'Tis reported in the Chronicles of Saint Francis, that a Doctor of Sorbon having taken the Habit of the Order; his Mother who had spent what she had, in maintaining him in his Studies, and now found her self reduc'd to an extream Poverty; presently ran to the Convent, where all bath'd in Tears, she Cries and Sobs in her Sons Presence, opens her Breasts, and conjures him by those he had Suck'd, and by the pains she had taken to bring him up, that he wou'd not now forsake her in her Misery, whereby she at last mov'd him to such a tenderness, that he resolv'd the next Day to quit the Order; notwithstanding finding great Combats hereupon within his Soul, he betook himself to Prayer; and as soon as his Mother was gone, prostrating himself before a Crucifix, his Heart being heavily oppress'd with sorrow, cry'd out, O Lord I will never leave thee, permit not that this shou'd ever happen; I will only assist my Mother in her extream necessity:

He

He had no sooner pronounc'd these words, having his Eyes fix'd on the Crucifix, but he perceiv'd Blood running from it, and heard a Voice that sayd to him, *Hast thou not cost me more than thy Mother?* Because I have Redeem'd thee with my own most Precious Blood? Wherefore then wilt thou leave me for her? Which words and Vision touch'd his Heart after such a manner, that preferring JESUS CHRIST before that Natural tenderness and compassion he had for his Mother, he continu'd to serve him in that Order, in which he faithfully Persever'd to his Death.

Tho' what I have sayd in this Treatise, may seem only to belong to Religious Persons; yet it ought also to have place and make impression after such a manner, upon those of the World, that for the future they may never endeavour to ingage any Religious Person in the incumbrances of their Affairs, and that the Religious themselves, may not hereafter sollicite for any imployments for their Parents and Friends, or for the change of their abode; which will be a great advantage both for the one and the other.



THE SIXTH TREATISE OF JOY and SADNESS.

CHAP. I.

*Of the great Evils that Sadness do's
occasion.*



AST Sadness far from thee, says the Wise Man, because it has kill'd many, and is good for nothing. Cassian, in a particular Treatise he Compos'd Of the Spirit of Sadness, says, that 'tis a Disease more dangerous and harder to be cur'd, than all other Spiritual Infirmities, and he proves the grievous effects it produces,

by the Authority of Scripture. Take heed, says he, to admit Sadness into your Soul, for if it once gets the Mastery over you, 'twill soon take away all your gust and comfort in Prayer, and Spiritual Reading; 'twill make you think the time long, and cause you to afford to each, less time than ordinary; nay sometimes, 'twill make you quite leave off both, and lastly 'twill fill all your Spiritual Exercises, with such a disgust and tediousness; that 'twill be almost impossible

Tristitiam longē repelle à te: multos enim occidit tristitia, & non est utilitas in illa. Eccl. 5o. 14. l. 9. de infir. remitt.

† Dormitavit
anima mea
per radio.
Psal. 118. 28.

* Tristis ex
propinquo ha-
bet iram.
Greg. lib. 31.
Moral. cap. 17.

† Non est sen-
sus ubi est a-
maritudo.
Eccle. 21. 15.

* Sicut tineæ
vestimentis, &
vermis ligno:
ita tristitia viri
nocet cordi.
Proverb. 25. 20.

possible for you not to lay them quite aside. *Cassian*, adds that the Royal Prophet very well expresses all this, in these few words; † *My Soul is asleep with tediousness*, he do's not say, that his Body is asleep, but that his Soul is so, because in effect Sadness, and Spiritual Drowlines, give so much tediousness and disgust to the Soul, in all Exercises of Devotion and Holy things, that it falls as it were asleep, and becomes capable of doing nothing that is good. Nay this disgust go's sometimes so far, that the Soul even feels it self disquieted and displeas'd, with the Fervor of others, and endeavours even to withdraw them from it.

Cassian says, also that Sadness causes another Evil, which is, that it makes us harsh and rude towards our Brethren. Saint *Gregory* says, * *That it easily provokes to Choler*, and in effect we Daily Experience, that when we are troubl'd, all things anger us, and every little matter go's to our Heart. Moreover it renders a Man impatient, suspicious and untractable, and sometimes it so troubles our Mind, that it even deprives us of our Judgment, according to these words of the Wise Man, † *Where there's Bitterness of Heart, and Sadness, there's no reason*. Do not we also often perceive, that when we are set upon by this passion, we have fears, diffidences, and such wild imaginations, that they who are in their Senses, cannot consider 'em but as effects of madness, and to proceed from the want of our being in our Wits. And even Persons of great Merit and Wisdom, sometimes abandon themselves so far to this deep Melancholy Humour, as to Weep like Children before all the World, so that when they perceive the Passion a coming, they are forc'd to shut themselves up in their Chambers, that they may Weep with more liberty, and not do themselves the prejudice, of being seen by others in this strange condition.

If you wou'd know from the bottom, says *Cassian*, the bad effects that Sadness produces in the Heart, the Holy Ghost will teach you by these words of the Wise Man, * *As Moths Eat Garments, or the Worms Eat Wood, so do's Sadness, Gnaw the Heart of Man*? As a Habit therefore Eaten by Moths is of no service, and becomes good for nothing; and as Wood that is Worm-eaten, is neither fit to be wrought, nor to be lean'd upon, because it falls to pieces as soon as 'tis touch'd; so a Man who is Gnaw'd and Eaten by Sadness, becomes unserviceable and unfit for all

all things. But it's Evil stops not here, for Sadness causes that which is still worse; it causes many Temptations, and even very great falls; according to these words of the Scripture: *Sadness has kill'd many*, from whence it comes, that some call it the Retreat of Devils, and apply to this sense those words of *Job*, speaking of the Devil: † *He Sleeps in the Shade*, that is say they, in this dark and black Humour of Melancholy, in which you entertain your selves, and 'tis in these thick darkneses which obscure your Mind, to which the Devil retires and reposes himself; and 'tis just then when you are in this State, that he takes his time to attack and destroy you. They explicate also in the same sense these words of the Prophet: * *You have spread Darkness all over, and the Night is come, all the Wild Beasts walk about*; for as Wild Beasts expect the obscurity of the Night, to go out of their Dens; so the Devils expect that the obscurity of Sadness thou'd over-spread you, that then they may disquiet you with all sorts of Temptations: † *They keep their Arrows ready in their Quiver, to shoot in Darkness at those who are right, at Heart.*

Saint Francis was wont to say, that Sadness in the Heart of a Christian, was a subject of Joy to the Devil; because then 'twas easie for him to deject, and even to cast him into Despair, or else to make him turn aside to the pleasures of the World: Mark this very well; for 'tis a truth of great importance. In effect that which happens to those that give themselves over to Sadness, is, that sometimes the Devil casts 'em into Despair, as we see in the Example of *Cain* and *Judas*: Sometimes he go's another way, as believing it better to compass what he aims at, and proposes to them Pleasures and Divertisments, as the best means to draw themselves out of this dejection of Spirit, into which they are plung'd. Sometimes also, he represents Impure thoughts, and endeavours to make 'em entertain themselves therein, under the same pretence. But these sorts of Temptations, which regard Pleasure and Impurity, and are but too frequent in those Persons who give way thereunto, are very dangerous: For a Religious Man hereupon begins to imagine that he thou'd have been happier in the World, becomes discontented with his Vocation, and easily renounces thereunto: * *The Soul*, says Saint Gregory, *can never be without Pleasure, it must either take it, in the things of Heaven, or in those of the Earth.* Wherefore when it begins to have no

Tom. II.

F F F

gust

ubi sup.

† Sub umbra
dormit.
*Job. 40. 16.** Posuisti te-
nebras, & fa-
cta est nox:
in ipsa per-
transibunt
omnes bestiae
silvæ.
Isai. 13. 20.† Paraverunt
in pharetra,
ut egerint in
obscuro rectos
corde.
*Isai. 10. 3.** Sine delectatione anima non potest esse: nam aut infimis delectatur, aut summis.
Greg. lib. 18. Moral. c. 8.
Idem. notat S. Bonav. de proc. scilicet. rel. c. 2.

gust in those of Heaven: The Devil, who knows perfectly well what Man is, represents to him thoughts of Impurity, and the Ease and Comfort that these Objects of Pleasure give him in his Sadness, cause him to embrace 'em as a fit Remedy for his Disease.

Last of all, Sadness produces so many Evils, that the Wife Man says, † *That Sadness of Heart, is the greatest of all Wounds, and that it presently causes Death.* Nay, as Saint *Austin* says, it causes the Eternal Death of Hell: And 'tis in this sense, he applies these words of *Jacob* to his Children, * *Yee'll be the cause that in my Old Age, Sorrow shou'd carry me to Hell,* *Jacob*, says he, was afraid, that the sorrow he suffer'd for the loss of *Benjamin*, might be capable of putting his Salvation in danger, and of precipitating him into Hell, and 'twas for this reason, add's the Saint, that the Apostle advises us to take care thereof; † *Lest any Root of Bitterness coming to spring up, shou'd hinder Grace, and that thereby many shou'd be defill'd.* Moreover is it not for our satisfaction and particular advantage, that the Scripture and Saints so carefully advise, not to give way to Sadness? For if it were upon any other account, it matter'd not, whether we were Sad or no: But because Sadness is the source of an Infinity of Evils, and Sins, and also because the Devil do's all he can to cast us into this dejection of Mind; 'tis therefore they give us this warning of it.

† Omnis plaga tristitia cordis est.

Ecc. 25. 17.

A tristitia festinat mors.

Ibid. 38. 19.

Aug. de Gen. ad litt. in illud:

* Deductis canos meos cum dolore ad inferos.

Gen. 42. 38.

† Ne qua radix amaritudinis fustum germinans impediatur, & per illam inquinentur multi.

Heb. 12. 15.

C H A P. II.

That we ought to serve God with joy, and the Reasons that oblige us to do so.

REJOYCE always in our Lord, says the Apostle, I say again unto yee Rejoyce. The Psalmist also recommends to us very often the self same thing. † Let the Just, says he, Rejoyce in the Lord, and Exult with Joy; and let those of an upright Heart glory in him. * Let all those who seek after thee O Lord, Exult and Rejoyce in thee. † Let all the Earth Rejoyce in God; let it serve the Lord with Joy, and present it self before him with Gladness. * Let the Heart of those that seek our Lord Rejoyce: He exhorts us also in divers other places to serve God with Joy. And when the Angel Raphael saluted Toby, he sayd nothing to him but this, † Let Joy always be with thee. Saint Francis was wont to say, that 'twas for the Devil, and Wicked Men, only to be Sad, But those who are true Religious Men, ought always to Rejoyce; * The Cry's of Joy for their Salvation, ought only to be heard in the Tabernacles of the Just. And how is it possible we shou'd be Sad? We whom God has chosen from amongst so many, to place us in his own House and Family.

What I have already sayd of the effects of Sadness, and the care the holy Scripture takes, so often to invite the Just to Rejoyce, do sufficiently shew, how much it imports us to serve God with Joy: But to the end we may be the more excited thereunto, take a sight of those advantages we draw from it, wherefore I shall here touch some Reasons that ought to move us to it. The first of all is, that God would be serv'd after this manner: For as Saint Paul says, † God loves him, who gives him what he has with Joy, and not with Discontent or Constraint: The Wise Man also Teaches the same in these words, * Whatsoever thou givest, give it always with a Cheerful Coun-

F f f 2

tenance.

Gaudete in Domino semper, iterum dico, Gaudete. Philip. 4. 4.

† Letamini in Domino, & exultate just, & gloriamini omnes recti corde.

Psal. 147. 14. * Exultent & lætentur in te, omnes qui querunt te.

Psal. 149. 5. † Jubilate Deo omnes terra, servite Domino in lætitia: Introite in conspectu ejus in exultatione.

Psal. 99. 1. * Lætetur cor quærentium Dominum.

Psal. 104. 3. † Gaudium tibi sit, semper.

Trb. 5. 11. * Vox exultationis, & saltus in tabernaculis justorum.

Psal. 117. 15.

† Non ex tristitia, aut ex necessitate: hilarem enim datorem diligit Dominus.

2. Cor. 9. 7. * In omnidato hilarem fac vultum tuum.

Ecl. 35. 11.

tenance. As in the World Masters desire to be serv'd by their Domesticks with Joy, and cannot indure they shou'd serve 'em with Sadness: So God who is our supream Lord and Master, desires to be serv'd with Joy and Affection, and rejects those that serve him with Disgust, and Sadness. The Holy Scripture takes notice, that when the People of *Israel* offer'd a great quantity of Gold, Silver and Precious Stones, for the Building of the Temple, they did it with *An exceeding great Joy*, and that *David* gave publick thanks to God, for the Zeal and good Will of the People. 'Tis this properly that God esteems; he regards not so much the Present that is made him, as the good Will and Affection with which 'tis made. Do they not in the World also, say, that they look upon the good Will above all the rest? Which gives an infinite value even to the smallest things, whereas without that, even the greatest Services are not at all grateful, but rather displeasing. They are good Meat but drest after such a manner, as spoils it, and quite takes away it's tast and favor.

The second Reason is, that when we serve God with Joy, this turns to his Honor and Glory; because it appears that hereby we do it with Affection; and that all we do is nothing, in comparison of what we desire to perform. 'Tis not so with those that serve God with Sadness. One wou'd say, that they think they do very much; because they groan under the Burden, and wou'd seem as it were oppress'd by the heaviness of the Yoke: But this extremely displeases God, and 'tis a very bad sign, and this was one of the Reasons, that made Saint *Francis* displeas'd, to see any of his Religious Sad; because Sadness is a sign of a Will much indispos'd, and of a heavy lumpish Body; whereas those that serve God with Joy and Promptitude, seem as if they wou'd tell us, that all they do is nothing, in comparison of what they have a desire to perform. † *All that I do for you O Lord*, says Saint *Bernard*, *seems scarce to take up an hours time, or if it takes up more, Love hinders me from perceiv'ing it.* But see what God requires of us when he tells us: * *Take care, when yee Fast, of being Sad as Hypocrites are; who render their Countenances Pale and Disfigur'd, to the end that Men may perceive they Fast: But for thy part, when thou Fastest Anoint thy Head, and Wash thy Face, that none may perceive thee to Fast.* 'Tis good to take notice here by the way, that some imagine that to remain

Cum ingenti
gaudio.
1 Par. 29. 7.

† Opus me-
um vix unius
est horæ; &
si plus, præ a-
more non sen-
tio.
Ben. serm. 14.
sup. cant.
* Cum jeju-
natis, nolite
fieri sicut hy-
pocritæ, tris-
tes. Extermi-
nant enim fa-
cies suas, ut vi-
deantur ho-
minibus jeju-
nantes.
Tu autem,
cum jejunas,
unge caput
tuum, & faciem
tuam lava,
ne videatis ho-
minibus jeju-
nans.
Matth. 6. 16. 17.

remain in a decent and Religious Modesty, they ought always to keep their Eyes fix'd upon the Ground, and carry Sadness in their Countenance; but they are deceiv'd herein, *† Religious Modesty*, says Saint Leo Pope, *ought to be Holy, but not Sad*. Their Modesty therefore ought to be mix'd with Cheerfulness, and their Cheerfulness temper'd with Modesty; which two things joyn'd together, cause a good effect, and are graceful in a Religious Person.

† Religioforum modestia non sit macula, sed sancta. Leo. Papa serm. 4. Quadragesimæ.

The third reason is, that God is not only hereby more honor'd; but that our Neighbour also is more Edify'd; and the esteem of Virtue more increas'd: And as Men naturally love Joy, whatsoever gives 'em hopes of finding it, more easily carries 'em to follow it. But we ought above all, we, whose Profession particularly ingage us in the help of Souls, and consequently in Worldly Commerce, to exercise our Functions with Joy: There being nothing more proper than this, to inspire the Love of Virtue and Perfection in others: And it has often happen'd, that the Joy and Satisfaction that has appear'd, in the Countenance of true Religious Persons, has been the cause that many have embrac'd a Religious State. All the World seeks to Live contented, and if they did but know the satisfaction a true Religious Man enjoy's, the World wou'd soon become a Desert. But this satisfaction is a hidden Manna, which our Lord discovers only to those, whom he is pleas'd to make choice of. He has discover'd this to you, and has hid it from your Brother; which is the reason that he remain'd in the World, and that you enter'd into Religion; and this favor ought also to oblige you, to render continual thanks for it to Almighty God.

The fourth reason, for which we ought to serve him with Joy, is, that our good Actions gain hereby a greater Merit, in his Sight, and become more holy and perfect: Because 'tis a Maxim in Philosophy, ** That Joy perfects a Work, and Sadness corrupts it*. And do we not Daily see, that there's a great difference between him that do's a Work with Cheerfulness, and another that performs it Unwillingly and with Regret; it seems that the one do's it slightly and superficially, and only to be able to say that he has done it; but the other applies himself to do what he do's well, and to acquit himself of his Duty after the best manner he is able. Add to this, what Saint Chrysostom says, that Joy and Contentment gives force unto

** Delectatio perficit operationem, tristitia corrumpit. Arist. lib. 10. Ethic. cap. 4. & 5.*

Chrys. hom. sup. Gen. 41.

us

† Viam mandatorum tuorum cucurri, cum dilatasti cor meum.
Psal. 118. 32.
* Current, & non laborabunt; ambulabunt, & non deficient.
Isai. 40. 31.

† Quomodo potui placere Domino in ceremonijs mente lugubri?
Levitic. 10. 19.
* Quomodo cautabimus canticum Domini in terra aliena?
Psal. 136. 4.
† In mœrore animi dejectur spiritus.
Prov. 15. 13.

us to perform good Works; wherefore the Royal Prophet told God, † *I have run the way of thy Commandments after thou hadst dilated my Heart.* But 'tis Joy which dilates the Heart, and 'tis Joy also that hinders the Just from finding any pain, from whatsoever they do. * *That they Run, and are not at all tir'd, that they Walk and feel no difficulty therein.* Sadness on the other side, shuts up the Heart, and takes from it, not only the desire, but even the force of acting; and causes that which before was very easie, to become very hard and insupportable. Aaron found this weakness in himself, when having lost his two Sons, whom the Fire of Heaven had destroy'd, and being reprehended by *Moyse*, for not having intirely consummated the Sacrifice. † *How was it possible, says he, I shou'd please God, carrying along with me so Sad a Heart to these Ceremonies?* And the Children of *Israël* also in the Captivity of *Babylon* cry'd out: * *How is it possible we shou'd Sing Canticles to our Lord, in a Strange Land?* Lastly experience Daily teaches us, not only that † *Sadness Dejects the Mind*, as the Wise Man says, but that it weakens the Body also to such a degree, that it seems neither to have any force nor vigour: And 'tis upon this consideration that the Saints Counsel us, not to let our selves be Dejected by Sadness in time of Temptation, for this do's nothing else, but discourage us, and renders us less able to resist it.

The Fifth Reason, why 'tis extremely to be with'd, that Christians, but above all Religious, wou'd serve God with Joy; is, because, when one begins in this manner to serve him, there's all the reason in the World to hope for a Perseverance therein; whereas when one begins after a different manner, there is reason to fear that they'll not go far or Persever. When we see a Man that is loaden, walk heavily and uneasily, and that he seems out of Breath, and stops almost at every step he takes to rest himself, or replace and refit his burden anew, and that he lets sometimes one thing, sometimes another, fall down; we judge presently, that he is a Man who is quite spent, and able to do no more, seeing him even ready to fall under his burden. But when on the other side, we see another who steadily carries his burden, and Sings all the way he go's, we very well imagine that he will carry it on, and that he will not fail upon the way. 'Tis the same with Religious; those who have Sorrow Printed upon their foreheads, whilst they perform

form the duties of their Profession; and seem to groan under their burden, give but a bad Opinion of their Perseverance, for to Row continually at the Oar as a Slave, is an employment very uneasie, to perform for any long time. But those who bear the Yoke of our Lord with Joy, and perform with Chearfulness even the meanest Functions, and most painful Exercises of Religion, and find nothing too hard: These give great hopes of remaining always faithful, and constant in their Vocation.

C H A P. III.

That the small faults into which we fall, ought not to make us lose our Chearfulness and Content of Mind.

THE Saints look upon this Chearfulness as so great a good, that they say, we ought not to be discourag'd, or contristated even in our Spiritual failings: For tho' Sin, as I shall soon prove, is one of the things that ought justly to give us Sadness, yet this Sadness ought to be moderate; upon account of the hope we have of Pardon, and throu' the confidence we have in God's Mercy, for fear, says the Apostle: † *Lest he who is in this condition shou'd be overwhelm'd by the excess of Sadness.* 'Twas for this reason that Saint Francis, who cou'd not suffer the appearance thereof, in the Countenances of his Religious, sayd one Day to one of his Companions that appear'd Sad: That a true Servant of God ought never to be Sad, but for having committed a Sin; and if you have committed any one, Repent, and be sorry for it; Confess it, and Implore the Mercy of God; saying to him with the Prophet, * *Render me O Lord the Joy of thy Salvation, and fortifie my Mind with the Spirit of thy all Powerful Grace.* Saint Hierom explicating this passage says, that these words, † *Render me the Joy of thy Salvation*, signifie as much as to say, *Render me O Lord*

† Ne fortè abundantiori tristitia absorbeat, qui ejusmodi est.
2 Cor. 2. 7.

* Redde mihi lætitiā salutis tuæ, & spiritu principali confirma me. Psal. 50. 14.
† Id est, redde mihi illam exultationem,

the

quam in Chri-
sto habui pri-
usquam pec-
carem.
Hieron. in
eum. loc.

M. Avila c. 13.
Sup. Audi filia,
&c.

the Joy I had in JESUS CHRIST before I Sinn'd, and this also declares unto us, with how great care the Servants of God ought to entertain this holy Joy in their Hearts, because 'tis the Portion of those, who are in the State of Grace.

Father *Avila* reprehends those very severely, who walking in the way of God, plunge themselves to no purpose into Sadness, and fill their Hearts after such a manner with bitterness, that they feel no more sweetness at all in the things of God: They appear, says he, languishing, dejected, troublesome both to themselves and to others; and this sometimes happens when they have not committed a Mortal Sin: But it proceeds, as they'll tell you, from their sorrow, for their Venial Sins, and the regret they have that they have not serv'd God as they ought, and as they desire to do: And 'tis for this Reason, that they are in this disconsolate condition. But this is an Error and a great Illusion; for this excessive Sadness into which they are plung'd, may give a deeper wound to their Souls, than the faults themselves, for which they are afflicted. For 'tis the occasion, that they permit their Disease to augment, which they might have cur'd with a little Prudence and Courage; and thus they fall from one inconveniency into another: And this is just what the Devil seeks after; which is to deprive 'em of strength and force to Act, and to hinder 'em from doing any thing else, but afflict themselves. That which the sight of our imperfections and weakness ought to produce in us; is to render us more Humble, and to excite us to beg a greater Grace from God; because we perceive how much we stand in need thereof. 'Tis lastly to make us stand more upon our guard, taking warning from what is past, for what is to come; and by the foresight of occasions, to endeavour to avoid 'em; and after this manner, we shall advance far more, than by letting our selves be dejected by Sadness. If we abandon our selves to this Passion, for the faults into which we Daily fall; who would ever, says Father *Avila*, have any Joy or Repose? † For if thou O Lord takest notice of our Iniquities, who shall be able to bear it. Apply your self seriously to the service of God, and in doing your Duty, and if you happen to fail in any thing, trouble not your self, and lose not courage for that, since all the World are failing in their Duty. You are but a weak Man, and neither an Angel nor a Saint; and God who

Avila ubi sup.
† Si iniquita-
tes observave-
ris Domine,
Domine quis
sustinebit?
Psalm. 129. 3.

who knows very well your weakness and misery, would not have you be discourag'd when you fall. He only would have you to have recourse to him; to get new forces, and to imitate Children, who as soon as they have fallen, do presently get up, and set themselves again a running. You must therefore presently raise your self, and begin anew, to run the way of God's Commandments.

Fathers, says Saint *Ambrose*, behold the falls of their Children, rather with Compassion than Anger; God do's the same to us: He loves us as his Children, he knows our frailty, and therefore our falls and weaknesses, excite him rather to a tender Compassion, than any Indignation towards us. † *As a Father pitties his Children, so our Lord has Pitty and Compassion, upon those that fear him; for he knows of what matter we are made, and he has not forgot that we are Dust.* One of those great Consolations, which those have, who serve God with that Fervor they ought, is the Knowledge they have, that thô we correspond not to his Goodness as we shou'd do, yet he ceases not to bear with us, and to love us; * *Because he is Rich in Mercy*; so that all our Sins disappear before his Infinite Mercy, and become like Wax that melts before the Fire. What sentiments of Zeal, Gratitude and Chearfulness, ought not this thought to excite in us; that the many Faults we Daily fall into, throu' our weakness; do not hinder God from loving us, according to his wonted Goodness; and do not at all diminish his Grace in us.

*Ambros. l. 2. de
reparat. gentium
c. 3. & ultim.*

† Quomodo
miseretur pa-
ter filiorum,
miseretur De-
us tementibus
se. Quoniam
ipse cognovit
figmentum
nostrum, & re-
cordatus est
quoniam pul-
vi sumus.
Psalm. 102. 13.

* Qui dives
est in miseri-
cordia.
Ephes. 2. 4.

C H A P. IV.

Of the Causes and Remedies of Sadness?

*Cass. l. 9. de
Inst. remitt. &
Bon. trait. de
reform. mentis.
cap. 12.*

LET us now go to the Root of the Evil, and see what are the causes of Sadness, to the end we may also know it's Remedies, and how best to apply them. *Cassian* and Saint *Bonaventure* say, that Sadness may arise from different causes. Sometimes it proceeds from the Constitution of our temper; and because the humor of Melancholy domineers over the rest of the humors of our Body: And then 'tis a disease that stands more in need of Physicians, than Directors. Notwithstanding we are to take notice, that this humor is nourish'd and augmented by those disquiet thoughts, in which we entertain our selves; and that 'tis so very dangerous to let our selves be carry'd away with these kind of imaginations, that *Cassian* says, we ought with as much care to cast 'em from us, as we wou'd cast those which are against Faith and Purity. Sometimes we cannot precisely say from whence this Sadness proceeds: For it frequently happens, that without any occasion we fall upon a sudden into such a profound Melancholy, that we take no pleasure in any thing; that every thing displeases us; that we avoid all Company, even of our best Friends, so that they can scarce get a word from us; and that even what we say, if full of coldness and peevishness. This lets us see, says *Cassian*, that our impatience and promptness, do not always proceed from any subject giv'n to us by our Brethren, but from a bad disposition within our selves; and because we do not sufficiently curb our Passions: So that the remedy we are to apply to this Distemper, is not to withdraw our selves from the Conversation of others; but to Mortify our Passions: For without that, what place soever we shou'd go to, or in what Desert soever we shou'd hide our selves; we shall carry along with us, the cause of our disquiet and impatience.

'Tis

Tis reported in the Life of Saint *Enthimus* the Abbot, that one of his Religious, whose hasty and cholerick humor, was become insupportable to all the rest; resolv'd to quit the Monastery, and to retire into the Desert; imagining, that when he had no occasion to dispute with any body, but was alone, he shou'd have no occasion to be angry, but shou'd live in peace. He executed his design, shut himself up in a Cell; and had scarce enter'd into it, but a Pitcher of Water he had brought with him, happen'd to be thrown down: He go's and fill's it again, and had no sooner set it upon the Ground, but it was spil'd again: He returns the second time to fill it, takes care also, how he sets it down, and yet the third time it was again spil'd. Whereupon falling into a violent Passion, he casts it against the Ground, and break's it into a thousand pieces. Afterwards coming to himself, he reflected upon the great Passion he had fallen into; and perceiving hereby that he ought not to cast the cause of his Passion and Anger upon his Brethren, but that he ought to attribute it, to the little care he had of repressing it; and so he return'd presently to his Monastery. You see then, that if you have motions of anger and hastiness, you ought not to think they proceed from your Neighbour, but from your self. Mortifie your Passions, says *Cassian*, and by this means you'll not only live in peace with your Brethren, but according to these words of Scripture, even † *The Beasts themselves will become tame, and live in Peace with you.*

Sadness, says Saint *Bonaventure*, do's also sometimes proceed either from some cross or affliction that happens to us, or from some great disappointment; because we miss our aim in something we earnestly desir'd. Saint *Gregory* and Saint *Austin* are of the same Opinion; and say, that Sadness in Worldly People, proceeds from the too great tie which they have, to the things of the World; for 'tis certain, that he who loves any thing, cannot be depriv'd of without some pain or regret; whereas nothing can afflict him, who has a tie to nothing, and who has God only, for the Object of his desires and comfort. There's no doubt, says Father *Avila*, that they are our desires, that cause disquiet and trouble in us; and that the more vehement they are, the more violent our disquiet is; and the less our desires are, the less also is our disquiet; so that when we have brought our selves to desire nothing, we then enjoy a perfect repose of Mind. Lastly we may truly say that our desires are our Execu-

*Serius in vita
S. Enthim.
mensis Januarii.
C. Ruf. l. 3.
vita. S. S.
Patr. num. 98.*

† Et bestie
terra pacifice
erunt tibi.
Job. 5. 23.

*Greg. l. 22.
Mor. c. 10.
Aug. Tr. 4. in
Joan. & sup. illud:
in illud: Con-
cepit dolo-
rem. &c.*

tioners, and keep us continually upon the rack, and are the cause of all our sufferings.

But that we may now pass from things in general to a particular application; I say, that often that which causes trouble and sadness to a Religious Person, is because he has not a sufficient submission and indifferency for all things that Obedience may injoyne him, he is in pain lest they shou'd take him from a place where he finds himself well; that they shou'd take him out of an Office with which he is pleas'd; and that they shou'd give him another to which he has a repugnance. Behold here that which makes him Melancholy, and so much out of the humor; † 'Tis, says Saint Gregory; *because he desires what he has not; or fears to lose what he has; and thus fear and hope continually agitate him, according to the State, in which he seems to find himself: happy or unhappy: He stirs continually like a Ship from one side to another, agitated with these Waves of his Passions, throu' the different changes that happen in those things to which he has any tie.* But the same happens not to a Religious Man, who keeps himself continually in an equal temper, and disposition of Mind; ready to imbrace whatsoever Obedience may oblige him to, and places his intire contentment in God; such a one is replenish'd with so perfect a joy, that nothing can trouble it. Superiours may take him out of the place and imployment he is in, but they cannot deprive him of that satisfaction he enjoy'd in it; because his satisfaction was not neither tied to the place, nor to that imployment he was in, but only to the accomplishment of God's Will concerning him; and therefore wheresoever he is imploy'd, he is always equally satisfi'd. Wherefore if you desire always to be so, place always your contentment in the Will of God, and permit it not to have any tie to any determinate thing, nor to follow it's own Inclination; for this is not the means to gain Content, but a means never to compass it, and to have a thousand disgusts and discontents instead of it.

Lastly, to dive yet more deeply into this matter: 'Tis ordinarily speaking, rather Pride than Melancholy that renders us sad; wherefore so long as Pride shall reign in you, assure your self, you shall never be without discontent; for you'll never want occasions of having it; and therefore you'll never enjoy any quiet or sweetness of repose. What I just now sayd of the effect of submission, to whatsoever

† Quia aut non habita concupiscit, aut adepta mutuit, ne amittat; & cum in adversis sperat prospera, in prosperis formidat adversa: Huc & illuc quasi quibusdam fluctibus volvitur, ac per modos varios rerum alternantium mutabilitate vertatur. Greg. ubi. sup.

soever Obedience shall require of us, may have place in what I am about to say here; for very often, when we are afraid of certain employments, 'tis not the difficulty that accompanies 'em, that makes us apprehend 'em; because those we seek after, have ordinarily far greater: But 'tis Pride, 'tis Self-love, 'tis Envy, whereby we wou'd draw consideration or esteem to our selves, which carries us to desire the one, and to avoid the other. Behold here what's the reason, that the less hard and more easie employments, seem to us so difficult, and uneasie; behold here that which renders us discontented in the Exercise of 'em; and that which makes even the only thought and apprehension of such an employment, to alarm and afflict us after such a manner as it do's.

The Remedy against this sort of Sadness, is to become Humble, and to love the meanest employments: † *Learn of me*, says JESUS CHRIST, *who am meek and humble of Heart, and yee shall find rest to your Souls*. If we imitate the Humility of our Saviour. says Saint *Austin*, upon these words, we shall be so far from finding any pain and difficulty in the Practise of Virtue, that we shall find it easie and delightful; for that which renders it hard, is the tie we have to our own Will, and our own proper Lights; 'tis Vanity, 'tis Pride, 'tis Love of our selves and of our pleasures and commodities. But Humility easily surmounts all these Obstacles; because it makes us have little or no esteem of our selves, to renounce our own Will, to condemn all the Goods, Pleasures, and Vanities of the World: Which being once gain'd, the Practise of Virtue finds no more difficulty in any thing; but on the contrary is fill'd with all sweetness and satisfaction.

† *Dicite 2 me, quia mitis sum, & humilis corde, & invenietis requiem animabus vestris, Matth. 11. 29.*

C H A P. V.

That Prayer is an excellent Remedy against Sadness?

Cast. l. 9. de
Inf. remitt. t.
ultim.

4 Tristatur
aliquis vel-
rum? Oret.
Jac. 5. 13.
* Renuit con-
solari anima
mea: memor
fui Dei, & de-
lectatus sum.
Psal. 76. 4.
† Cantabiles
mihi erant
justificationes
tuæ, in loco
peregrinatio-
nis meæ, id est,
erant mihi
cantica & so-
larium.
Psal. 118. 54.

CASSIAN says, that the Elevating our Mind to God in Prayer; and the hope of those Eternal Goods which he has promis'd us, is an excellent remedy against all sorts of Sadness; it dissipates all those Clouds of our Mind, and drives away this Evil Spirit of Sadness, after the same manner as David with his Harp, chas'd away that Evil Spirit which tormented Saul. The Apostle Saint James, proposes this remedy to us in his Canonical Epistle, when he says, † *If any one amongst yee be Sad, let him Pray.* And the Royal Prophet, tells us, that he was wont to make use of it: * *My Soul, says he, rejected all sorts of Comfort. I thought of God, and I found my self in Joy.* And in another place; † *Thy Decrees O Lord were the subject of my Songs of Joy, in the place of my Banishment.* Oftentimes the Conversation of a Friend is sufficient to drive away our Discontent, and to give us Joy: What Consolation and Sweetness therefore, ought we with greater reason to hope for, and also to find, in our Conversation with God? 'Tis not therefore in Conversation with Men, nor in Reading Prophane Authors, nor in the Harmony of Musick, nor in other Worldly Divertisments, that Religious Men ought to seek ease or help against Sadness. They must seek it at God's Feet by the means of Prayer; and 'tis there they'll infallibly find a true Joy and Consolation.

We Read in Holy Scripture, that after the Ark rested upon the Mountains of *Armenia*, that *Noe* might be able to know whither the Waters were quite fallen, he put a Crow out of the Ark, which return'd no more; and afterwards he cast out a Pigeon, which finding no place to rest it's Feet upon, return'd again to the Ark: The Holy Fathers hereupon object and say, that without doubt, since the Crow return'd

return'd not, it found some place to rest it self upon. How then comes it to pass that the Scripture says, that the Dove found none? 'Tis say they; because the Crow, which is a Bird of Prey, and unclean; found place to repose it self in the Mire, and upon dead Bodies; and that the Dove, which is an Image of Purity, cou'd not for a moment repose thereupon? 'Tis after this manner that a good Religious Man, and a good Servant of God carries himself. He finds nothing, in the vain amusements of the World, that gives him any pleasure; he cannot meet with any thing, in the Corruption of Worldly Objects, whereupon to rest himself; and therefore he presently returns as the Pigeon did to the Ark. That is to say, he recollects himself; he makes it his business to think of God, to Adore him, to pour out his Heart in his Presence, and to say unto him, O My God how can I be Sad in your Presence: You that are the Source of all Joy and Comfort. Saint *Austin* explicating these words of the Psalmist, † *Thou hast put Joy into my Heart, 'tis not without then, says he, that we must seek for Joy, but 'tis in the Interior Man, 'tis within our selves, and 'tis the retreat of Heart, which is proper for Meditation and Prayer.*

Sulpicius Severus, says, that Saint *Martin* found no other means to ease and refresh himself, when he was spent and tired out with Labours, than to apply himself to Prayer; and as Smiths in Forging of Iron, refresh themselves by sometimes leaving off striking upon the Anvil; so this great Saint refresh'd himself by having recourse to repose in Prayer, at that time when he was thought to give himself to rest. 'Tis Reported of another Servant of God, that being one Day in his Cell, and finding himself oppress'd with an extreme bitterness of Heart, whereby God was pleas'd from time to time to try him, he heard a Voice from Heaven, that resounded in the bottom of his Heart, saying, why do you permit yourself to be unprofitable, consum'd with Sadness; arise and Meditate upon the Mysteries of my Passion. He rise up, put himself into profound Meditation, and presently all his Sadness was dissipated; and he found himself fill'd with Fervor and Consolation; and this holy Exercise, which he Daily continu'd ever after, intirely deliver'd him from this troublesome Temptation.

Anc. in illud:
Dedisti lætiti-
am in corde
meo.

Psal. 4:7.

† Non ergo

foris querenda

est lætitia, sed

intus in intro-

iori homine

ubi habitat

Christus, in

ipso corde, id

est, in illo cu-

biculo, ubi

orandum est.

Sever. Sulp. in

vit. S. Martini

Episc. mensē

Nov. Henric.

Saso. in horo-

log. Sapient.

cap. 14.

C H A P. VI.

That Sadness is the cause of Tepidity in God's Service : And of the joy that a good Conscience gives.

N EGLIGENCE in God's Service, and in those things that belong to our Profession, is one of the chief, and most ordinary causes of Sadness. For is it not evident that 'tis the property of Sin to cause it ? And each of us may every Day Experience it in himself, whither he do's not feel a Joy, when he acquits himself well of his Duty. And also when he do's not do so, that he finds he falls into dejection and disquiet of Mind. † *A Wicked Heart*, says the Wise Man, *shall be charg'd with Grief.* * *And a Bad Heart occasions Sadness*: The Holy Scripture teaches us, that when Cain saw the difference that God made, between his and Abels Sacrifice, † *He was seas'd with Wrath, and his Countenance fell and became Dejected.* 'Twas an effect of the bad designs which he conceiv'd in his Heart, and which he cou'd not well hide there, which the change of his Countenance discover'd; wherefore our Lord asking him the cause of this change; † *If thou dost well, shalt thou not receive a Recompence; or as another Version has it, Shalt thou not lift up thy Head?* That is, *Shalt thou not have a chearful Countenance; but if thou dost ill, wilt not Sin presently present it self at thy Gate?* Will it not torment thee within with remorse of Conscience, and will it not appear without at the Gate, by the change of thy Countenance ? After the same manner Virtuous Actions bring Joy along with 'em; because they are conformable to Reason; as bad ones bring naturally discontent; because they are contrary to it; and because we must fight against the light of our own Conscience, and therefore the reproaches of Conscience will never let us be at rest.

There

* Cor ne-
quam gravabi-
tur in dolori-
bus. Eccl. 3. 29.

* Et cor pra-
vum dabit
tristitiam.

Ibid. 36. 22.
† Quare ira-
tus es ? Et cur
concidit facies
tua ?

Genes. 4. 6.

† Nōne si
bene egelis,
recipies ?

Legit alia ver-
sio, levabis ca-
put tuum ? Sin
autem male,
statim in for-
ribus pecca-
tum adest ?

Ibid. 7.

† There's not a greater punishment, says Saint Bernard, than a bad Conscience, which carries it's punishment along with it: 'Tis in vain to hide our Crimes from the Eyes of Men, and to appear Innocent before 'em, when we cannot hide 'em from our selves, nor hinder the Condemnation of our own Conscience. Because no Body can cast off the sense of feeling. Do what you will, seek Company and Divertiments, to free your self from it's reproaches, you'll never compass it, it will always continually torment you. 'Twas this that made Seneca say, that the greatest punishment of a Crime, was the having committed it: Plutarch compares the pain which one thereby suffers, to that which we feel in the cold and hot fit of an Ague, and says, that as Sick Persons are more indispos'd with the cold and heat occasion'd by a Fever, than those who are in Health; are by the cold and heat that proceeds from the diversity and inconstancy of Seasons; so the disquiets occasion'd, by our faults, and remorse of Conscience, torment us far more cruelly, than those which are caus'd only by accidents of Fortune. This above all is verifi'd in those, who have begun to taste what God is; and after having serv'd him for some time with Fervor, begin to relent and contradict themselves: For Misery is more sensible and painful to him, who has liv'd in Plenty, than to him that has been always Poor. When we remember the Fervor with which we serv'd God at other times, and the Favors we thereby receiv'd; and begin to compare the present, with what is past; 'tis impossible but we must suffer cruel regrets, and find our Hearts even pierc'd to the quick.

* If then, says Saint Bernard, you wou'd banish Sadness far from you, and Live always Content, Live as you ought to do: Think what your Obligations are, and apply your self to the performance of 'em, and to correct your Faults and Imperfections, since these are what disquiet the Peace of your Soul. A Virtuous Man is always chearful, and a Wicked Man, is always sad, and tormented in Conscience: And as there is not a more cruel punishment, than those that the sting and reproach of Conscience bring along with 'em; so there cannot be a more sensible Joy, than they feel, who have the testimony of a good Conscience: † There's not a greater pleasure, says the Scripture, than the Joy of the Heart, and a secure and quiet Mind, is like a continual Feast. And as at a Feast the different sorts of

Tom. I I.

H h h

Meat,

† Nulla poena
gravior est
pravi conscientie
proprie agitur
stimulus: si publica
fama non te
damnat, quoniam
nemo potest sensum
fugere.
Bern. de inter.
domo. c. 45.

Plutarc. ep. ad.
Pac.

* Vis nunquam esse tristis, bene vive: bona vita semper gaudium habet; conscientia rei semper in poena est. ubi sup.

† Non est oblectamentum super cordis gaudium.
Eccl. 30. 16.
Secura mens, quasi iuge convivium.
Prov. 15. 15.

Meat, and the presence of the Guests; occasion Joy; so 'tis a great subject of Joy to a Christian, who carefully acquires himself of his Duty, to have a good testimony of his Conscience, and to be in the Possession of God's Grace, of which he feels so great marks within himself. † For if *our Heart*, says Saint John, *do's not reproach us, we have a confidence in God.* And Saint Paul tells us, * *That which is our Glory and Comfort, is the testimony of a good Conscience.* Saint Chrysostom also assures us, that a good Conscience dissipates all darkness of Heart, and drives it away, as the Sun do's the Clouds; and that Sadness which falls upon a good Conscience, is as easily extinguish'd, as a spark of Fire, that falls into a Lake. Saint Austin compares it to Honey, which is not only sweet in it self, but renders the most bitter things sweet; and says, that it sweetens all the pains and bitternesses of this Life. Wherefore the Prophet speaking of God's Commandments, says, † *They are more to be desir'd than Gold and Precious Stones, and more sweet than Honey or the Honey-Comb.*

Ecclesiastical Histories report, that when the Persecution was rais'd, under *Marcus Aurelius*, against the Christians; they did one thing that never was before practis'd, which was, that all the Christians they took, whether they renounc'd JESUS CHRIST; or whether they persever'd in their Faith, were put indifferently into the same Prison, and afterwards Condemn'd, now no more as Christians, but as Thieves and Robbers. Yet this did not hinder, but that they perceiv'd a great difference between the one and the other, when they led 'em to suffer. For they perceiv'd a joyful Countenance, and as it were such rays of Divinity in the Faces of the Saints, so that it seem'd as if their Chains became an ornament to them, and the stench of the Prisons had serv'd to render 'em more pleasing to the Eyes both of God and Men: Whereas the other went along with a sad countenance, having such frightful and gasty looks, as gave a horror to all that beheld 'em. Which shews, that these were more cruelly tormented by the reproaches of their criminal Conscience, than by their sufferings in Prison; and by the sight of their Torments; and that the others on the contrary, felt all their pains sweeten'd by their testimony of their Conscience, and by the hope of that glory, they were ready to enjoy. Virtuous Persons frequently experience the same thing in themselves, even in

* Sic or nostrum non reprehendit nos, fiduciam habemus ad Deum. Joan. 3. 21.

* Gloria; nostra hæc est, testimonium conscientie nostræ.

1 Cor. 1. 12. Chrys. hom. 25. ad pop. Antioch.

* Desiderabilia super aurum, & lapidem pretiosum multum, & dulciora super mel & favum. Psal. 118. 11.

Hist. Eccl. p. 1. 4 c. 3. & apud Euseb. l. 5. c. 2.

the time of their greatest afflictions; for when they perceive themselves forsaken by all the World, and depriv'd of all kind of comfort; they cast their Eyes upon themselves, and seeing the good state of their Conscience, this sight gives 'em an intire comfort; because they know very well that 'tis no matter after how bad a manner all other things go, so they keep but a good Conscience.

But the Joy of which I speak, is not only the effect of a good Conscience, but 'tis also a sign of it; as Saint Bonaventure teaches us by these words, † *Spiritual Joy is an evident mark of Grace*. The Holy Ghost teaches us also the same truth, in several places of Scripture, * *Light is risen upon the Just*, says David, and Joy to those that are Right of Heart: † *But the Wicked walk in Darknes*, they find nothing but Misery and Confusion in their way, and they have not known the way of Peace. One reason also, why Saint Francis desir'd always to see chearfulness in the Countenances of his Religious, was because he look'd upon this Joy, * *As one of the Fruits of the Holy Ghost*, and as a mark of God's habitation in their Souls. He sayd moreover, that this made such an impression upon him, that as often as he found himself carry'd away with Sadness, and Dejection, he needed only to cast his Eyes upon one of his Brethren; and he found himself presently deliver'd from this Temptation; because seeing 'em, he seem'd to behold so many Angels; 'tis in effect to behold Angels upon Earth, to see the Servants of God, who are in his Grace; and 'tis in this sense, that these words of Scripture may be understood, † *I beheld thee as an Angel of God, thou art as agreeable in my Eyes as an Angel of the Lord*.

† Maximum inhabitantis gratie signum est spiritualis lætitia.

Bonav. in spec. discip. p. 1. c. 3.

* Lux orta est justo, & rectis corde lætitia.

Psalm. 96. 11.

† Impij autem in tenebris ambulant.

Psalm. 81. 5.

Contritio & satisfactio in viis eorum, & viam pacis non cognoverunt.

Psalm. 13. 3.

* Fructus autem spiritus est gaudium.

Gal. 5. 22.

† Vidi te quasi Angelum Dei. Ezech. 15. 16. Bonus es tu in oculis meis sicut Angelus Dei.

1 Reg. 29. 9.

C H A P. VII.

That there is a Laudable and Holy Sadness.

BUT must we then always be in Joy? As some may object, must we never be Afflicted? Is there no kind of Sadness which is profitable and advantageous to the Soul? Yes, says Saint *Basil*, without doubt there is; because *JESUS CHRIST* himself declares it to us by these words. † *Blessed are those that Mourn, for they shall be Comforted.* *Cassian* as well as this Saint, and also Saint *Leo* Pope, establish'd two sorts of Sadness, the one purely Human, and according to the Spirit of the World; the other Spiritual, and according to the Spirit of God. Sadness according to the World, is to afflict on's self for bad success, or some such like misfortune as happens to us, from which the Servants of God ought intirely to be exempted. The true Servants of God, says, Saint *Appollonius* to his Disciples, to whom the Kingdom of Heaven is promis'd, ought never to be sad; for if those of the World, rejoyce in the Possession of vain and transitory Goods, what a sense of Joy, ought the hope which we have of possessing God Eternally in Heaven, and of partaking with him of his Glory, to excite in our Souls? 'Tis for Jews, for Gentils and Sinners, continually to Weep and Afflict themselves; but for the Just, who have a lively Faith, and a firm Hope of everlasting Goods, they ought to follow the Royal Prophets advice. * *Rejoyce in the Lord, and Exult yee Just, and Glorifie him all yee of a right Heart.* The Apostle Saint *Paul* also teaches us, that we are not very much to Afflict our selves for the Death of our Parents and Friends: † *I would not have yee my Brethren,* says he, *be ignorant of what yee ought to know concerning those who Sleep in Death, lest yee Afflict your selves for their Death, as they do who have no Hope.* He do's not absolutely forbid us to Afflict our selves for the Death of our Friends and Parents, for 'tis not an ill thing to be touch'd thereat,

Basil. in regul. brevior. 192. c. 194.

† *Beati qui lugent, quoniam consolabuntur.*
Matth. 5. 5.

Ruf. in vit. S. Apoll. c. 7.

* *Letamini in Domino, & exultate justi: & gloriamini omnes recti corde.*
Psalm. 31. 14.

† *Frates, nolimus vos ignorare de dormientibus, ut non contristemini, sicut & ceteri qui spem non habent.*
1 Thess. 4. 13.

'tis

'tis a Just and Natural feeling, which is a sign of the affection we have for 'em; JESUS CHRIST himself was touch'd at the Death of *Lazarus*; and therefore the Jew's cry'd out when they saw him Weep, *Behold how he Lov'd him*. That which the Apostle here forbids, is the afflicting our selves as Infidels do, who have no knowledge of the Resurrection. We shou'd have our Sadness moderated by the hope we have, to see them soon again in Heaven, whom we have lost upon Earth; and if we cannot as Men hinder the accidents of this Life, from making some impression upon us, yet we shou'd endeavour, that they make at least but a weak and transient one: † *Let those who Weep, be like those that Weep not, and those that Rejoyce, like those that do not Rejoyce.*

Ecce quomodo
amabat enim.
Joan. 11. 36.

† Qui flet,
tamen non
fletus: & qui
gaudent, tan-
quam non
gaudentes.
1 Cor. 7. 30.

As to what concerns Spiritual Sadness according to God, 'tis good and profitable, and the Servants of God may oftentimes feel it; whereof Saint *Basil* and *Cassian* say, their may be four causes. First it may proceed from a sight of our Sins, according to the words of the Apostle. * *I Rejoyce at present, says he, not for the Sorrow which yee have felt. But for that Sorrow, which has mov'd yee to Repentance, for yee are Afflicted according to God, and such a Sadness as this, produces Penance, and a firm Repentance, which is profitable to Salvation.* That Sadness therefore, that causes us to Weep for our Sins, and which proceeds from a regret for having offended God, is Holy; and according to God. Saint *Chrysostom* makes a remark. hereupon, worthy of himself. Of all the losses, says he, which can happen to a Man, 'tis only those occasion'd by Sin, which can be repair'd by sorrow and regret, and therefore in all other things except Sin, sorrow is unprofitable; because it rather augments, than diminishes our losses. But the losses caus'd by Sin are intirely repair'd by sorrow for it, and therefore 'tis for Sin only, that we ought to afflict our selves.

* Gaudéo non
quia contri-
tati estis, sed
quia contri-
tati estis ad
penitentiam:
Contritatio e-
nim estis se-
cundum De-
um: quæ enim
secundum De-
um tristitia est,
penitentiam
in salutum sta-
bitem opera-
tur.
1 Cor. 7. 9.
Chrys. in fine
tom. 5.

Secondly. This Sadness may arise from a Consideration of the many Sins, Daily committed in the World; and then 'tis also very Holy; because it proceeds from an ardent desire of God's Glory, and the Salvation of Souls. 'Twas such a sorrow as this, with which the Heart of *David* was penerated, when he cry'd out to God, † *My Heart fail'd me, when I thought of Sinners, that have left thy Law.* * *Zeal has dry'd me up; because thy Enemies have forgot*

† Desectio re-
nuit me pro
peccatoribus
derelinquenti-
bus legem
tuam.
Psal. 118. 53.
* Tabesce-
re me fecit zelus
meus, quia

forgot.

obliti sunt
verba tua ini-
mici mei.
Ibid. 139.
† Vidi prae-
varicantes, &
tabescebam,
quia eloquia
tua non cu-
raverunt.
Ibid. 158.

forgot thy Commandments. † I beheld the Wicked, and I
Pind away, to behold that they so little regarded thy Words.
The Prophet Jeremy was also fill'd with the same senti-
ments, and this sort of Sadness becomes very well the
Servants of God, but more particularly us: Since the end
of our Institution, is to render God's Name Glorifi'd throu-
out the whole World; and therefore our greatest sorrow
ought to be not to see it so, but rather the con-
trary.

Thirdly, this Sadness may proceed from a greater de-
sire of Perfection, which happens, when this desire is very
ardent, for then we afflict our selves, perceiving we make
so little progress in Virtue. Which Sentiment is according
to God's Spirit; because JESUS CHRIST, assures us, that

* *Blessed are those that Hunger and Thirst after Justice; for
they shall be fill'd.*

* Beati qui e-
suriunt & si-
tiunt iustiti-
am, quoniam
ipsi saturabun-
tur.
Matth. 5. 6.

Super Ru-
mina Babylo-
nis illic sedi-
mus, & fle-
vimus, cum
recordaremur
tui Sion.
Psal. 136. 1.
† Heu mihi,
quia incolatus
meus prolong-
atus est!
Psal. 119. 5.
• Ad te cla-
mamus exules
filii Evæ.
Ad te suspi-
ramus gemen-
tes & fletus
in hac lacry-
marum valle.

Cass. ubi sup.

Lastly, the consideration of these Eternal Goods, we
are depriv'd off in this Life, and the impatience we are
in, of soon enjoying 'em in the next, is another legitimate
cause and subject of this Sadness; with which the true Ser-
vants of God are fill'd. 'Twas the thought of the Beauty
and Wonders of *Sion*, that afflicted the Children of *Israel*,
during their Banishment into *Babylon*: 'Twas also upon this
account, that the Royal Prophet cry'd out, † *Alas why
is my Exile so much prolong'd?* These words also address'd
to our Blessed Lady by the Church, * *We cry out, we Sigh,
Weep, and Lament, in this Valley of Tears*, are words,
that make a sweet and pleasing Harmony in the Ears of
God.

Cassian gives us certain signs, to discern this Sadness
which is according to God, from that which is not. He
says, that the first is Obedient, Affable, Humble, Sweet,
and Patient; and lastly, since it proceeds from the Love
of God, it preserves in us the Fruits of the Holy Ghost,
of which Saint Paul speaks to the *Galatians*, that is to
say, *Charity, Joy, Peace, Patience, Benignity, Faith, Modesty
and Continency*. But the other Sorrow is Rude, Impatient
and full of Disquiet and Bitterness, it hinders us from
what is good, and causes in us discouragement and des-
pair. Moreover this, says he, is mix'd with no Consola-
tion at all, or with any sweetness: But the other, is in a
kind of manner Joyful. It carries it's Comfort along with
it, and it gives courage and strength to perform what is
Good.

Ad Gal. 3. 22.

† Et quodam-
modo læta.
Cass. ubi sup.

Good. Wherefore it may easily be known, by running over these four sorts of Sadnesses, of which I have lately spoken. For first how great a sorrow soever they feel themselves penetrated withal, when they truly Weep for their Sins, yet the Weeping for 'em, as we shoud do, carries a sweetness and comfort along with it; and when this happens, do we not find by experience, that it leaves a satisfaction behind it? One of the things also whereby we know how far this Spiritual Life of God's Servants, is preferable before the sensual Life of Worldlings; is, that the Tears which the Servants of God shed for their Sins, leave so very great and true Joy behind 'em, that all the Pleasures of the World leave not the like, to those that most of all enjoy them: Saint *Austin* makes this Reflection, and says, if those who begin to serve God, find so much sweetness in the first thing they perform, which is, in Weeping for their Sins, what satisfaction will they not experience, when God shall show'r down his Comforts upon 'em in time of Prayer, and heap upon 'em those Spiritual delights with which he favors his Elect; and when according to these words of the *Apocalyp*s, † *He shall dry up all Tears from their Eyes, when there shall be no more Death, nor Lamentations, nor Cries, and when Sadness shall be no more?* 'Tis in like manner easie to Judge, that those who Lament the Sins of their Neighbour, find also a great deal of Interior sweetness: For 'tis proper for Children well Born, to be Jealous of the Glory and Honor of their Father; and the Zeal of God's Glory, can never be without sweetness. But now as to the Sadness, which proceeds from an ardent desire of advancing in Virtue, or from a holy impatience of returning to our Celestial Country, how can it be, but the thoughts of this nature, must be very pleasing to a true Christian? For what is more beautiful, or what is sweeter, says Saint *Austin*, amidst the darkness, and bitterness of this Life, than to have our thoughts taken up with Celestial Objects; and to be always in imagination in the Eternal Mansions of true Joy?

We may also easily comprehend, by what I have sayd, that the Joy requir'd in the Servants of God, is not vain and frivolous, 'tis not such a Joy as makes us break out in loud Laughters, or fall into strange Expressions; or inconsiderately to discover and lay open our selves, in our Conversation with all People we meet. For this woud not be

† Absterget
Deus omnem
lacrimum ab
oculis eorum
& mors ultra
non erit, ne-
que luctus, ne-
que clamor,
neque dolor
erit ultra.
Apoc. 21. 4.

*August. Med.
cap. 20.*

be a Joy that were convenient for God's Servants, but wou'd be a dissipation of Mind, immodesty and irregularity. The Joy which we require, is such a one, as is Prudent, that comes from within, but is not perceiv'd in our Countenances without; for as Sadness of Mind, makes an impression upon the Body, according to the expression of Scripture, † *A Sad Mind dries up the Bones*, so the Interior Joy redounds to the Exterior, according to this other passage of Scripture, * *A Joyful Heart renders a Cheerful Countenance*. We Read also of divers Saints, that had such a Joy and Serenity in their looks, that it gave testimony of the peace and satisfaction they inwardly enjoy'd in their Heart. And this is properly that Joy, which, 'tis to be wish'd, we shou'd have.

† Spiritus tristis exsiccat ossa.
Prou. 17. 22.
* Cor gaudens exhilarat faciem.
Prou. 15. 13.



T H E

THE SEVENTH TREATISE OF

The Advantages and Infinite Treasures we possess in JESUS CHRIST: After what manner we are to Meditate upon the Mysteries of his Passion; and of the Fruit we ought to draw from thence.

CH A P. I.

Of the Advantages and Infinite Treasures which we Possess in Jesus Christ.



WHEN the fulness of time was come, God sent his Son, born of a Woman, and under the Law, that he might Redeem those who were subject to the Law, and that we might receive the Adoption of Sons. All that time, which preceded the Birth of our Saviour, was void of Grace. But the time that succeeded, it was fill'd there-

with; and therefore it might truly be call'd the Law of Grace; be-
Tom. II. I i i cause

† At ubi venit plenitudo temporis, misit Deus filium suum, factum ex muliere, factum sub lege, ut eos, qui sub lege erant, redimeret, ut adoptionem filiorum reciperemus.
Gal. 4. 4.

Nunc princeps
hujus mundi
ejicietur foras.
Joan. 12. 31.

† Inimicitias
ponam inter
te & mulie-
rem, & semen
tuum & semen
illius: ipsa
conteret ca-
put tuum.
Genf. 3. 15.

* Emitte ag-
rum Domine
Dominatorem
terrae.
Isaia. 26. 1.

† Rorate cæli
desuper, &
nubes pluant
justum, Aperi-
atur terra, &
germinet Sal-
vatorem.

Isaia 45. 8.
* Quis mihi
det te fratrem
mecum fugien-
tem ubera ma-
tris meæ, ut
inveniam te
foris, & desol-
iculus te, &
jam me nemo
despicit?

Cent. 8. 1.
† Ipse erit ex-
pectatio Gen-
tium.
Gen. 49. 10.

cause 'twas given us at the same time, that the unexhaustible Fountain of all Graces was bestow'd upon us. When God sent us his only Son, 'twas to the end that he might deliver us from the Slavery of Sin, and also from the Tyranny of the Devil, according to these words, *Now the Prince of this World shall be cast out*: 'Twas that he might reconcile us to his Father, and that we might become his Children by Adoption; and lastly 'twas, that he might open to us the Gate of Heaven, which had been shut against us, from the time of that unhappy Transgression, whereby our first Parents lost, both for themselves and us, the state of Original Justice, in which we were Created. After this loss, which render'd them, and us, who Descended from 'em, subject to an infinity of Miseries, there remain'd only one comfort, which was, that as soon as Adam had Sinn'd, God curs'd the Serpent that had been the chief cause of this Evil, and at the same time promis'd to send his only Son after a certain time, to deliver us from all those Evils that we were subject to by Sin: † *I will cause, says our Lord to the Serpent, an irreconcilable hatred between thee and the Woman, between thy Seed and her, and she shall Crush thy Head*. This promise having exceedingly comforted 'em, they did Penance, and taught their Children also, the happy state, they had for some time enjoy'd; and how they had lost it, by their own faults; and that there would come a Redeemer, who would save 'em by his Power. But 'twas not only to them, nor whom this promise was made. God also confirm'd the same to the Holy Patriarchs, and particularly to *Abraham, Jacob and David*; to whom he promis'd, * *That the Messias should be Born of their Race*. This was an universal belief, in the Jewish Religion, and the Prophets, who foretold the wonders of his coming, ceas'd not to beg of God with sighs and tears to hasten it, † *Send forth O Lord, says Isay, the Lamb the Governour of the Earth, send forth Dew from above, and let the Clouds Rain down the Just: Let the Earth be open'd and produce the Saviour*: The Spouse in the Canticles expresses also the like impatience, * *Who will give me thee, says she, into my Armes as my Brother, Sucking the Breasts of my Mother, that I may find thee without, that I may Kiss thee, and that no body may any more despise me*: Lastly, † *He was the Expectation of all Nations*; that sigh'd after him, as Slaves do after their deliverer; 'twas in Virtue of this Redemption

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Redemption which he was to work, that our Sins were Pardoned: And as we firmly believe that he is come, so the Jews infallibly believ'd he shou'd come; and therefore they call'd him, *him that was to come*; and 'twas for this reason they sayd to Saint John, † *Are you he who ought to come, or are we to expect another?*

† Tu es, qui venturus es, an alium expectamus? *Matth. 11. 3.*

But when the time was accomplish'd, in which God from all Eternity had resolv'd to bestow so great a Grace as this upon Men; he sent his only Son; and he so long deferr'd sending him, that Men having more time to know and experience their Misery, might desire with greater fervor to be freed from it, and might have a greater esteem of their Redeemer, when he shou'd please to send him. For it often happens, that God to imprint in us a greater sense of our weakness, and of the need we have of his assistance, and to hinder us from attributing any thing to our selves, suspends those consolations, and deferr's those remedies, he is resolv'd to give us. When therefore this happy time was come, seeing that 'twas God alone, that cou'd raise Man from this fall, seeing also, that there was for the Offence Man had committed, a satisfaction to be made: That this satisfaction was to be accomany'd with pains and sufferings; and that God of his own Nature was Impassible: The Infinite Wisdom, found an Infinite means, to reconcile all these difficulties; by the Incarnation of the Son of God: Who making himself Man, and thereby uniting the Divine and Human Nature in one, and the self same Person; wrought the Salvation of Mankind. This was without doubt, a most admirable work of the Wisdom and Bounty of God; and nothing can more manifest his Power and Greatness. Wherefore the Royal Prophet speaking to God of the accomplishment thereof: *Excite your Power*, says he, *and come to Save us*. He solicites God to come and work our Redemption, and for the effecting it, he begg's of him to discover his Power, since it was to accomplish so great a Work; that a greater cou'd never be perform'd in time. The Creation of the World is a great Work, says Saint *Austin*, and discovers very well the Omnipotency of God, but the Redemption of Mankind is quite another thing, and manifests it after another manner. The Scripture also when it speaks of the Creation, it calls it the Works of his Fingers, † *I will behold the Heavens*, says David, *the Works of thy Fingers; the Moon and Stars*

Excita potentiam tuam, & veni, ut salvos facias nos. Psal. 79. 3.

† Quoniam videbo celos tuos, opera digitorum tuorum, lunam & stellas quas tu fundasti. *Psal. 8. 4.*

*Fecit potentiam
in brachio
suo.
Luc. 1. 31.*

† Deus, qui
humanæ sub-
stantiæ digni-
tatem mirabi-
liter condidisti
& mirabilius
reformasti.
*In Offic. Missæ.
S. Leo Papa
ex Aug. serm.
4. de temp.*

O felix culpa,
quæ talem ac-
tantum me-
ruit habere
Redemptio-
nem! O certè
necessarium
Adæ pecca-
tum, quod
Christi morte
deletum est!
*In Offic. Missæ
Sabb. 5.*

* Non sicut
delictum, ita
& donum.
Rom. 5. 15.

† Vehementer
quidem nobis,
dilectissimi,
vir unus &
mulier una
nocuere; sed
gratias Deo,
per unum ni-
hilominus vi-
rum, & mulie-
rem unam
omnia restau-
rantur, nec sine magno scenote gratiarum.

Neque enim sicut delictum, ita & donum. sed excedit dam-
ni estimationem beneficii magnitudo. *Bern. serm. 7. de beata Virg. De Verb. Apocal. in illud:*

which thou hast Establish'd. But when he speaks of the Redemption, he calls it the effect of God's Arm; for he says, that the Arm of God has given marks of it's Power: Whereby he lets us see, that there is as much difference between the one and the other, as there is between the Finger and the whole Arm. But the Redemption, is not only a greater mark of the Power and Greatness of God, than the Creation; but 'tis also a particular mark of the Greatness and Dignity of Man, and of the esteem that God has of him; and 'tis for this reason, that the Church addresseth her self unto him in these words. † O God who hast form'd after a wonderful manner, the excellency of Human Nature, and hast repair'd it after a manner still more wonderful. God without doubt did a great deal for Man, when he Created him; but did far more when he Redeem'd him; which caus'd Saint Leo to say, that God had rais'd Man very much, by Creating him after his own Image and Likeness; but he had elevated him far higher, by debasing himself so, as to take upon him not only the Figure, and Appearance of Man, but even his very Nature also.

Lastly, the Advantages we draw from the Incarnation of the Son of God, are so great, that upon this account we ought even to esteem Adams fault a happiness. O Happy Fault! Cry's out the Church in an excess of Zeal, and out of a lively sense of the Graces it receives from it's Spouse, that has merited so great a Redeemer! Happy necessity of the Sin of Adam, that was blotied out by the Death of Jesus CHRIST? In effect JESUS CHRIST has giv'n us more than Adam took from us. We have gain'd more by the Redemption, than we have lost by Sin, * And God's Grace was not measur'd by Mans Sin. Saint Bernard, reciting these words wherein the Apostle takes notice that JESUS CHRIST brought more good to Men than Adam had occasion'd Evil: † 'Tis true my Brethren, says he, that a Man and a Woman have brought very great prejudice to us, but thanks be to God, all is repair'd by a Man and a Woman, and repair'd with Advantage, for the Grace is not Measur'd by the Crime: but the greatness of the benefit we receive, far surpasses that of our loss.

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We cannot sufficiently express the Advantages and Treasures we possess in JESUS CHRIST; to do this, we ought to be indow'd as Saint Paul was: † *With the Grace of Denouncing to all Nations, the Inestimable Riches of JESUS CHRIST.* Do's not our Saviour himself tell us, how hard it is to conceive it? * *If thou didst know,* says he to the Samaritan, *what is the gift of God, and who it is that says to thee give me to Drink?* If we knew the gift that God bestows upon us, in giving us his only Son; if we knew the gift which contains all other gifts, and by which he has given us all things; if we could but comprehend it's excellence; if God would be pleas'd to discover to us such a Precious Treasure; how Rich and how happy should we be? Saint *Austin*, who had receiv'd this favor, sayd, in the transport of his Zeal and Thanksgiving: He O Lord who is ungrateful for the Benefit of Creation deserves Hell: But there ought to be a new Hell Created for him, who is ungrateful for the Benefit of Redemption. 'Tis Reported of Father *Avila*, that he had always this favor present in his Mind, and when those who had receiv'd any particular favor from God, recounted it to him with admiration of the Divine goodness. 'Tis not this, says he, which ought to be admir'd, but 'tis † *That God has so Lov'd the World, as to give his only begotten Son.* They are the words which Saint *John* made use of, to express the greatness of the Love of God towards Men, by the greatness of the gift he bestows upon 'em: And certainly the Infinite Price of the one, marks very well the Infinite Excess of the other; for how boundless was the Love of God, since he gives his only Son to Ransom us by his Death? * *O wonderful Excess of Goodness,* says the Church to the Eternal Father, *O Inestimable effect of Charity, thou hast deliver'd up thy Son, for the Redemption of a Slave!* Whichever could imagine the like? What Slave is there that ever durst propose to his Prince that he would give his only Son for his Ransom? And yet notwithstanding, that which you never durst have ask'd; that which you could never have believ'd; nay, that which never could have enter'd into your imagination, is what God has done for you.

But he is not only content, by this means to Redeem us out of the Slavery we were in, but he do's yet far more; for he raises us to the dignity of the Children of God;

† Mihi omnium sanctorum minimum data est gratia hæc: In gentibus Evangelizare inuestigabiles divitias Christi.

Ephef. 3. 8. * Si sciras donum Dei, & quis est qui dicit tibi: Da mihi bibere.

Joan. 4. 10.

Aug. in Mann. cap. 15.

† Sic Deus dilexit mundum, ut unigenitum Filium suum daret, Joan. 3. 16.

* O mira ceteros tuæ pietatis dignatio! O inestimabilis dilectio charitatis! Ut servum redimeres, Filium tradidisti. In Offic. Missæ Sabbat. d.

† Videte qualem charitatem dedit nobis Pater, ut filii Dei nominemur, & simus.
1 John. 3. 1.

* Propter quam causam non confunditur Fratres eos vocare, dicens: Annuntiabo nomen tuum fratribus meis.
Heb. 2. 11. 12.
† Data est mihi carnis testis in caelo & in terra.
Matth. 28. 18.

Ite ad Joseph.
Gen. 41. 55.

* Venite ad me, & ego dabo vobis omnia bona Aegypti.
Gen. 45. 18.

† Pater, quos dedisti mihi, volo ut ubi sum ego, & illi sint mecum.
Joan. 17. 24.

* Filiioli, haec scribo vobis, ut non peccetis, sed & si quis peccaverit, advocatum habemus apud Patrem Jesum Christum.
1 Joan. 2. 1.

† Jesus introivit in caelum, ut appareat runc vultui Dei pro nobis.
Hebr. 9. 24.

God; he takes upon him our Natures; to make us partakers of his; he makes himself Man, to make us become the Children of God. † See, says Saint John, *what excess of bounty the Father has had for us, that we shou'd both be call'd, and be in effect the Children of God?* For in effect we are so, and 'tis not in vain that we call God our Father, and JESUS CHRIST our Brother. * JESUS CHRIST himself, says Saint Paul, *is not ashamed to call us his Brethren, when he says, I will declare your Name to my Brethren.* It rather seems that he takes a glory in doing so; because he gives us so often this title. Wherefore he who has God for Father, and JESUS CHRIST also for his Brother, † *To whom all Power is given both in Heaven and Earth.* What remains more for him to desire? What Joy ought not the Children of Jacob to have had, when Joseph freed 'em from the fear they were in of his resentment and displeasure; especially when they saw him Command over all Egypt; that all things were done by him; and that Pharaoh left the total management thereof unto him, still bidding his Subjects, *Go to Joseph?* He also wou'd have 'em all to come and live with him, offering to furnish 'em with all conveniencies for the transportation of what they had: So that he says to them, * *Come to me and I will give yee all that Egypt can afford:* But JESUS CHRIST, who is our Brother too, and who loves us far more than Joseph did his Brethren, treats us not only after the same, but after a kinder manner, he will have us be with him. † *Father, says he, those which thou hast given me, I will that they shou'd be with me where I am;* and he gives us all the help and assistance we can stand in need of, to the end we may remain always with him, and never more be separated from him.

Wherefore if the Offences you have committed against him makes you apprehend his Vengeance, be not in pain, the Penance which you have already done for 'em, has made him already to forget 'em, and not only to forget 'em, but to become your Mediatour and Intercessour to his Father, to obtain the Pardon of 'em. This is what Saint John assures us in these words, * *Children I write these things, to the end yee Sin not, but if any one Sineth we have an Advocate with the Father, JESUS CHRIST the Just.* Saint Paul, tells us, † *That he is Ascended to Heaven, to appear before the Face of God for us.* Saint Bernard says,

says, he there shew's his Father those Wounds, he receiv'd for us by his Order, and Conjures him by the Merit of those Wounds, not to suffer Man to Perish, he having pay'd for him so dear. And in the same manner, as the Holy Virgin, when she intercedes for us to her Son, shew's him her Breasts that gave him Suck; so the Son shew's to his Father the Wounds, he receiv'd for Love of us; and 'twas for this Reason, as the Saints affirm, that he wou'd have his Holy Body still to conserve those Marks after his Glorious Resurrection.

The Holy Scripture tell's us, that after the Death of Jacob, his Children fearing that Joseph being no longer remain'd by the respect he bore a Father; might then revenge those injuries, which they had formerly done him; wherefore they sent him this Message, to wit, that the chief thing their Father had desir'd, for his Children at the hour of his Death, was, † *That he their Brother wou'd Pardon 'em, and forget all their Offences: And we also beg of thee, added they, that thou wouldest forgive this Iniquity to the Servant of God thy Father.* And 'tis here to be observ'd; that 'twas not the Father that had committed this Offence; but 'twas his Paternal Love that caus'd him to take upon himself the Fault of his Children: And thus JESUS CHRIST by an excess of Love for us, has made our Sins his own, and has taken all our fautes upon himself. * *The Lord, says the Prophet Isay, has cast all our Iniquities upon him; and he bears 'em all.* Wherefore since 'tis so, let us address our selves after the same manner to the Eternal Father; and say, O Father of all Mercy, Pardon, your Son JESUS CHRIST my Sins, who at the hour of his Death recommended nothing so earnestly as this, and then begg'd of you, saying: † *Father forgive 'em, for they know not what they do.* Who then has not reason to hope for Pardon, by the Intercession of JESUS CHRIST * *The Mediatour of the Covenant, and by the Shedding of his Blood, which speaks better for us than that of Abel?* That of Abel cry'd for Vengeance, but that of JESUS CHRIST demands Mercy, for those, for whom it was shed, and even for those that shed it. When the Devil therefore shall represent to you, the multitude of your Sins, to fright and surprize you by the sight of 'em; and make you lose courage; cast then your Eyes upon JESUS CHRIST imagine that he takes you by the Hand, and leads you to his Father, that he speaks and

† Nos quoque oramus, ut servo Dei patris tuo dimittas iniquitatem hanc. Gen. 50. 15. *Uulgata con. legit: Ut servus Dei Patris tui.*

* Posuit Dominus in eo iniquitatem omnium nostrorum. *Isai. 53. 6.* Et iniquitates eorum ipse portabit. *Ibid. 11.*

† Pater dimitte illis quia nesciunt: quid faciunt. *Luc. 23. 34.*

* Testamenti novi mediatorum Jesum & sanguinis aspersionem melius loquentem quam Abel. *Hebr. 12. 24.*

and answers for you; and that he covers the shame of your Sins and Infidelities, with the greatness of his Merits, and by the Service he renders his Father. After this manner you'll soon take Heart again; your discouragement will be chang'd into Confidence, and your Sadness into Joy, by means of him, † *Who has been given us by God, to be our Wisdom, Justice, Sanctification and Redemption.*

† Qui factus est nobis sapientia à Deo, & iustitia, & sanctificatio, & redemptio. I Cor. 1. 3.

* Omnia igitur habemus in Christo, & omnia Christus est in nobis. Si vulnus curare desideras, medicus est. Si febris affligit, fons est. Si graveris iniquitate, iustitia est. Si cœlum desideras, via est. Si tenebras fugis, lux est. Si cibum quaeris, alimentum est.

Ambrosii. lib. 3. de Virg.

† Si in te insurrexit lupus, petram cape, & fugit; petra autem tua Christus est: Si ad Christum confugas, fugiet lupus, nec terret te poterit. Hanc petram quaesivit Petrus cum titubaret in fluctibus, & invenit quod quaesivit, quoniam dexteram amplexus est Christi.

Ambrosii. lib. 6. Exameron. c. 4.

Hieronymus in illud: De cœtero, fratres, confortamini in Domino, & in potentia virtutis ejus induite vos armaturam Dei, ut possitis stare adversus insidias diaboli. Ephes. 6. 10.

† Gladius utraque parte acutus. Apoc. 1. 16.

* "We have all things in JESUS CHRIST, says Saint *Ambrose*, and JESUS CHRIST is all things to us, "if you would heal your Wounds, he is a Physician; if the "heat of your Fever burn's you, he's a Fountain of Living "Water; if the weight of your Iniquities oppress you, he "is Justice; if you want Help, he is Power and Strength; "if you apprehend Death, he is Life; and if you would go "to Heaven, he is the Way; if you would avoid Darkness, "he is Light; and if you desire to Eat, he is Heavenly "Food. Lastly, whatsoever you stand in need of, and whatsoever you can desire, you'll find in him, † "If the Infernal Wolf, says the same Saint in another place, sets "upon you, take up a Stone, and he'll fly from you, "and this Stone is JESUS CHRIST; to whom if you "have recourse, the Wolf will fly away, and will not be "able to fright you any longer. Saint *Peter* sought this "Stone, when he sunk into the Water; and found what "he search'd after, as soon as he had taken JESUS CHRIST "by the Hand, who deliver'd him from the Waves.

Ambrosii.

Saint *Hierom* explicating these words of the Apostle, * *Moreover Brethren take courage in our Lord, and in the Power of his Virtue; put on the Armour of God, that ye may be able to resist the Snares of the Devil*, says, that by what follows from this passage, and from what the Holy Scripture mentions all a long of JESUS CHRIST, we see clearly that the Armour which the Apostle recommends to us to put on, is JESUS CHRIST himself; so that when he says put on the Armour of God, 'tis as if he should say, put on JESUS CHRIST: And the same Saint afterwards proves, that JESUS CHRIST is our Coat of Mail, our Helmet, our Buckler, † *Our two edged Sword*, and so of the rest. So that the Arms we are to put

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put on to Triumph over all Temptations, and all the Assaults of the Devil, is the Virtue of JESUS CHRIST; the which is all things to us, and in which we possess all things. The Holy Scripture also attributes to him an infinity of Names and Titles; as that of King, Master, Pastor, Priest, Physician, Friend, Father, Brother, Bread, Light, Fountain, and a thousand others: Besides as *All the Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge of the Father*, are hid in him, so also all our Treasures, and all our Riches are likewise found in him, because all our Happiness is founded upon him, and all our good Actions have no other Merit, than what is given 'em by his Precious Blood: This was that which was signifi'd by those words to Saint John, when seeing an infinite Multitude that were before the Throne of God, cloth'd in white Robes, and holding Palm's in their Hands, 'twas sayd, † *behold, those who have wash'd, and whiten'd their Robes in the Blood of the Lamb*. For all that is good in us, is in effect the stream of the Riches of JESUS CHRIST, which we receive by his Means and by his Merits. 'Tis by him that we are deliver'd from the most dangerous Temptations; 'tis by him we acquire Virtue; 'tis by him we possess all things, 'tis by him we become able to obtain all things, and 'tis to him only we ought to refer the Glory of all things. So that 'tis for this Reason that in all the Prayers which the Church makes to God, she always ends 'em with these words: * *By our Lord JESUS CHRIST: In Imitation even of this Prayer of the Psalmist.* † *O God who art our Protector regard and turn thine Eyes upon the Face of thy CHRIST*, as if he wou'd have sayd, Lord grant our request for the Love of thy Son JESUS CHRIST; Pardon our Sins for Love of him; because 'twas for our Sins he dy'd on the Cross. Cast thine Eyes upon the Wounds he needs wou'd receive for us, and from us, and let this sight draw thy Mercy upon us. If the consideration of the Services of Abraham, Jacob and David, had so often the Power, not only to stop God's Anger which was ready to break forth, but also to move him to replenish his People with favors and benefits, as he himself takes notice of in these words, * *because of my Servant Jacob, and of Israel my Elect, and because of David my Servant*: What ought we not to believe, he will do for the Love of his Son, † *In whom he is well and highly Pleas'd*. Saint Paul also teaches us, * *That God has gratifi'd us for*

Tom. II.

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In quo sunt omnes thesauri sapientie & scientie absconditi. Coloss. 2. 3.

† Hi sunt qui laverunt stolas suas, & dealbaverunt eas in sanguine Agni. Apoc. 7. 14.

* Per Dominum nostrum Jesum Christum, &c.
† Protector noster aspice Deus, & respice in faciem Christi tui. Psal. 83. 10.

* Propter servum meum Jacob, & Israel electum meum. 1. Reg. 45. 4.
Et propter David servum meum. 4. Reg. 19. 34.
In quo michi bene complacui. Math. 17. 5.
* Gratificavit nos in dilecto filio suo. Ephes. 1. 6.

* Quodcum-
que petieritis
patrem in no-
mine meo, fiet
vobis.
Joan. 14. 13.

et Ecce enim
evangelizo
vobis gaudium
magnum,
quod erit om-
ni populo,
quia natus est
vobis hodie
salvator, qui
est Christus
Dominus.
Luc. 2. 10.

* Quam pul-
chrum est pe-
des annuntian-
tis bonum:
Is. 52. 7.
† Pedes evan-
gelizantium
bona.
Rom. 10. 15.

† Vado vobis
parare locum.
Et expedit vo-
bis, ut ego ven-
eam. Joan. 14.
2. & 16. 7.

* Manus illius
tornatiles, au-
rez, plenae
hyacinthis.
Ezai. 5. 14.

† Habentes
ergo Ponti-
ficem mag-
num, qui
penetra-
vit caelos,
Iesum filium
Dei: aletis
cum fiducia
ad Thro-
num gratiae ejus,
ut misericordiam consequamur. & gratiam inveniamus in auxilio opportuno.
Hebr. 4. 14. 16.

the sake of his beloved Son. And JESUS CHRIST him-
self tell's us, * *Whosoever yee shall ask in my Name of
my Father, he will grant yee, to the end the Father may be
glorifi'd in the Son.*

When the Angel told the Shepherds and the whole World
in their Persons, † *Behold that I declare great Joy unto
yee, which shall be to all People; because to yee this Day
is Born a Saviour; who is JESUS CHRIST, the Lord:*
This Joy which was declar'd to them, was not one only
Joy, but it was all kind of Joys and Advantages together.
Origen ask'd the reason why I say having sayd in the sin-
gular number, * *Who declares the Advantage, Saint Paul
reporting the same passage, says in the plural, † They who
declare the Advantages?* And he Answers, 'tis because JESUS
CHRIST is not only one Advantage, but all manner of
Advantages together. He is at the same time our Salva-
tion, our Life, our Resurrection; the Light of the World,
the Truth, the Way, and Gate to Heaven; he is Wisdom,
Power, and the Fountain and Treasure of all goods; he is
Born and he is Dead, to the end that we shou'd Live; he
is rais'd to Life, that we may be so too; he is mount-
ed to Heaven, † *There to prepare a place for us, as he
himself says; and 'twas expedient for us, that he shou'd go;*
because 'twas from thence he was to send the Holy Ghost
to us, and that he shou'd sit at the right Hand of his
Father, to pour down continually from thence his Graces upon
us. Saint Cyprian says, that one of the reasons, why the
marks of his Wounds remain'd open, was to manifest to us,
that they were so many Channels and Inexhaustible Fountains
from whence the Treasure of his Liberality and Mercy, shou'd
without intermission shower down upon Men. * *His Hands are
set round with Hyacinths, and full of Gold and Precious
Stones; and they being pierc'd, the Riches wherewith they
are fill'd, fall without ceasing throu' the holes of those Sa-
cred Wounds.* Let us therefore conclude this discourse with
the words of the Apostle, and say: † *Since then we
have for our high Priest JESUS the Son of God, who has
penetrated the Heavens, let us go with confidence to the Throne
of his Grace, that we may obtain Mercy, and find Favor
in the time of need.*

'Tis

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'Tis reported of Saint *Bernard*, that in a great Sicknels, he was, as it were, Rapt in Spirit and seem'd to be led before God's Tribunal; where the Devil accus'd him, and sustain'd, that he Merited not the Possession of Eternal Glory. I Confess says the Saint that I am indeed unworthy of it, and of my self have no right at all unto it; but **JESUS CHRIST** my Saviour has right to it, for two reasons; first because he is the the only Son of the Eternal Father, and Heir of the Celestial Kingdom; secondly, because he has purchas'd it by his Blood, Obeying his Father unto Death. The first of these two Titles were sufficient for him; and the other he has made over to me; and 'tis by Virtue of this grant and gift to me, that I pretend to Heaven, and hope to obtain it. The Hellish Accuser remain'd Confounded at this Answer, and presently this seeming Tribunal or Judgment Seat Vanish'd; and the Saint came to himself: Wherefore 'tis in this we ought to fix our Confidence; and 'tis upon this right, that **JESUS CHRIST** has purchas'd for us by his Death, on which we ought to found our Hopes and Pretensions. *Jacob* gain'd the Blessing of his Father, Cloth'd with the Habit of his Elder Brother; and in like manner, let us Cloth our selves with those of **JESUS CHRIST** our Eldest Brother; let us cover our selves with the Skin of this Lamb without Spot, let us take the Advantage of his Merits and Passion; and by this means we shall obtain the Blessing of the Eternal Father.

In Vita S. Bern.

Tom. II. Kkk 2 CHAP.

C H A P. II.

*How profitable and how pleasing to God,
'tis to Meditate upon the Passion of
our Saviour.*

* Nihil tam salutiferum nobis est quam quotidie cogitare quanta pro nobis perulit Deus & homo.

Aug. serm. 52. ad fratres in Exilio.

† Quid enim tam efficax ad curanda conscientie vulnera, necnon ad purgandam mentis aciem, quam Christi vulnus (sedula meditatio)?

Bern. serm. 62. sup. Cantica.

* In omnibus non inveni tam efficax remedium, quam vulnera Christi.

Aug. in Manu. c. 22.
† Qui se intendit, & devote in sanctissima vita & passione Domini exercet, & omnia utilia, & necessaria sibi abundanter ibi inveniunt: nec opus est, ut extra Jesum aliquid quaerat.
Bened. coll. 7.

* **T**HERE's nothing, says Saint *Austin*, conduces more to Salvation, than always to think what God and Man has suffer'd for us. And Saint *Bernard* says, † That nothing is more efficacious, for the curing the Wounds of our Conscience, and purifying our Souls, than the continual Meditations of the Sufferings of JESUS CHRIST. 'Tis also, as the Saints affirm, a great help against all sorts of Temptations, and particularly against those of Impurity, to have recourse to the Meditation of the Passion of JESUS CHRIST, and to hide our selves in his Wounds. Lastly, 'tis an universal remedy against all sorts of Evils, to think of JESUS CHRIST Crucify'd. And Saint *Austin* assures us of this, by his own Experience, when he says, * I found not in all occasions a more efficacious remedy, than the Wounds of CHRIST. Saint *Bonaventure* also tell's us, † That he who devoutly apply's himself to Meditate upon the Life and Death of JESUS CHRIST, finds there very abundantly all things he stands in need of, and needs to seek for nothing out of JESUS CHRIST. So that we see this practise was very familiar to the Saints, and 'twas by this means they arriv'd to so high a Degree of Sanctity and Perfection.

Tho' this Exercise shou'd produce nothing else, but make us think of God, and cause us to call to mind the Benefits we have receiv'd from him, yet it wou'd be sufficient, and always of great Merit in his sight. 'Tis one of the properties of Love, to cause a pleasure in the thought of the Person belov'd; and when we know that the Person often thinks of the Services we have done him, and that he is pleas'd to entertain himself therein; these marks of tenderness

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ness afford greater Joy, than the most magnificent gifts in the World cou'd do. 'Tis after this manner that a Person of Quality, having a Son Travelling amongst Strangers in a far Country, being told that he speaks of nothing but of the Favors and Benefits he has receiv'd from her, and of the obligations he has to her, is a thousand times more touch'd and pleas'd, than if he had made her a Present of all the Rarities which the Country he is in did afford. God do's the same; because in this, as in other things, he observes the Law of Love; and remains in the same condition those are in, who truly and tenderly Love; and therefore he is very well pleas'd we shou'd think of him, and of those Favors he has bestow'd upon us, and of the wonders he has wrought for us; nay we ought to entertain our selves so much the more in this exercise, because we cannot practise it for any long time, but the consideration of so great Benefits, will excite us to Love and Serve him with all our force and endeavours.

Blossus reports, that one Day God reveal'd to Saint Gertrude, that as often as any one did with Devotion, look upon an Image of Jesus Crucify'd, so often he shou'd draw upon himself the Eyes of the Divine Mercy. Let us profit by this Advertisement, and since he has not disdain'd to Suffer for us, let us not think much at least to think of what he has Suffer'd. 'Tis recounted of Saint Francis, that as he one Day pass'd full of Tears and Sighs by our Lady of *Portiuncula*, he was met by a Servant of God, who knowing him, and seeing him full of so great marks of Affliction, and believing that some great misfortune had happen'd unto him, he ask'd him what it was, I Weep and Sigh, says the Saint, that my Saviour has Suffer'd so much, and that Men who were cause of his Sufferings, think so little of the greatness of the Obligation they have to him.

Bless. c. 2. Monit. Spirit.

Chron. S. Fran. p. 6. l. 1. c. 86.

CHAP.

C H A P. III.

*After what manner we ought to Meditate upon
the Passion of JESUS CHRIST; and of
the motions of Compassion it ought to
excite in us?*

THE Method which we ought to observe in the Meditations of the Sufferings of JESUS CHRIST, is the same which the Masters of Spirit wou'd have us observe in Prayer. For they wou'd not have us employ all the time of Prayer, in running over the Points of Meditation, but that we shou'd particularly apply our selves to the inflaming our Wills by motions of Affection, which being first produc'd in the Heart, have afterwards their effect in all our Actions: And 'tis in this, say they, to which we ought particularly to apply our selves in Prayer. As he who digg's in the Earth, whither it be to find Water, or to find a Treasure, leaves off digging, as soon as he finds that he sought after; so in like manner, when by profound Meditation, we have found the Treasure of Charity, and the Love of God, that Fountain of Living Water we sought after, 'tis not necessary any longer to busy our selves in digging, but we must think of enriching our selves with those Treasures of Grace, we have found; and of refreshing our selves by great draughts, out of this Fountain of Eternal Life: Entertaining our selves with those affectionate motions, wherewith we shall find our selves touch'd: This is the end of Prayer; this is the Fruit we ought to draw from it; and 'tis this that all the Meditations, and all the Reflections of our Understanding ought to aim at. I have already spoken of this method in another place; and as that which we ought to observe in the Meditation of the Passion of JESUS CHRIST, is altogether the same, so 'tis not necessary here to set down those sentiments of Affection

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we ought to draw from this Meditation, and upon which we ought to insist; howsoever I shall briefly set down, and touch such Points as are most proper for us, to excite our selves thereunto.

There are many sorts of Thoughts or Affections, which the consideration of the Sufferings of the Son of God may produce in us; and in which we may entertain our selves with great Fruit: But they are ordinarily reduc'd to seven. The first, of which is Compassion, which is, a lively feeling of anothers Pains, whereby we partake with 'em after such a manner, as seems to sweeten and comfort 'em; whereas a false Joy, is wont to sharpen and augment 'em. 'Tis true that we are not able by this means to cause any Ease, or Comfort to the Sufferings of JESUS CHRIST; because they are already pass'd, yet nevertheless he seems to be pleas'd that we are touch'd thereby, and that we, as I may say, make his Sufferings our own. And therefore the Apostle tells us. * *If we are Children of God, we are also Heirs, even Heirs of God and Co-heirs with JESUS CHRIST, so that if we Suffer with him, we shall with him also be glorify'd.*

* Statem filij, & heredes; heredes quidem Dei, coheredes autem Christi: Si tamen compatimur, ut & conglorificemur.
Rom. 8. 17.

To excite our selves then to this Compassion, 'twill be good to consider the excessive pains of JESUS CHRIST; because according to the Opinion of all Divines, they were greater than any that ever have been, or can be Suffer'd in this Life; and 'tis what the Prophet Jeremy expresses in these words. † *O yee who pass by; Attend, and See, whether there be any Grief or Pain like mine? First of all, no place of his Body was free from Pain; * For from the Sole of his Foot, to the Crown of his Head, says the Prophet Isay, there was no sound place left in him. His Feet and Hands were Nail'd, his Head Crown'd with Thorns, his Face beaten Black and Blew with Buffets, his Body torn with Whips. All his Bones disjoyned, by his Extention upon the Cross, all which give an Idea of the most cruel Punishments that ever was inflicted.*

† O vos omnes qui transitis per viam; attendite & videte si est dolor sicut dolor meus!
Thren. 1. 12.
* A planta pedis usque ad verticem non est in eo sanitas.
Isai. 1. 6.

But he Suffer'd not only in his Body, but in his Soul also, and after a manner far more painful: For notwithstanding Human Nature, was United to him in the Divine Person, yet it hinder'd him not from feeling the Indignity of his Sufferings, after so lively a manner, as if this Union had not been at all. Moreover, to render this Pain the greater, he was depriv'd of all Consolation; which was the reason

* Deus meus,
Deus meus, ut
quid dereli-
quisti me?
Matth. 27. 46.

† Factus sum
sicut homo, si-
ne adjutorio,
inter mortuos
liber.
Psal. 87. 5.

reason that he cry'd out upon the Cross, * *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* The Holy Martyrs were eas'd in their Torments by comforts from Heaven, which made 'em suffer all things, not only with Courage, but also with Joy. But JESUS CHRIST, to the end he might suffer the more for Love of us, wou'd, as to his Sacred Humanity, be depriv'd of all sorts of Comforts, both of Heaven and Earth, and not only be forsaken by his Disciples and Friends, but even by his Eternal Father: † *I am become,* says he by the Mouth of the Psalmist, *like a Man without help or Succour,* and yet this Man was the only one who *was free amongst the Dead.* That is to say, the only one, who was free from Sin, and consequently ought to have been free from all Pain.

To be able to conceive how great the excess of his Pains were, 'tis sufficient to say, that the very Thought or Idea, which he form'd to himself of 'em in the Garden, excited a sweat of Blood all over his Sacred Body, in so great an abundance, that the Earth round about him was water'd therewith. Great therefore must those Sufferings be, of which the only Imagination produc'd so extraordinary and Dolorous an effect? They were so Violent and Excessive, says the Saints, that it had been impossible for Human Nature to resist 'em without a Miracle. 'Twas necessary then he shou'd make use of his Divinity, to prevent dying even in the very first Conflict. For the effect which the Divinity then wrought, was not to hinder the feeling of these Pains, but to prevent lest the Violence of 'em, shou'd cause his Death; 'twas to prolong his Life, that he might Suffer so much the longer. Let us herein admire the Goodness and Infinite Mercy, of our Saviour: He acted Miraculously upon the Martyrs, to hinder 'em from feeling their Pains; and he acts Miraculously upon himself, that he may Suffer the more for Love of us; but how Violent soever the Pains were which were common both to his Body and Soul, those that immediately afflicted his Soul, were incomparably more Excessive. For from the moment of his Conception to that of his Death, he had always present in his Mind, all the Sins that had ever been committed from the beginning of the World, and shou'd be committed to the end of it. And as on the one side, the Love he had for his Eternal Father, caus'd him highly to resent the Injuries done to him, so on the other, the tender Affection

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he had for Souls, made him ardently desire their Salvation; an infinite number of which, notwithstanding the Sacrifice of his Life which he offer'd for 'em, wou'd be yet lost as not profiting thereby; so the displeasure he suffer'd for their Perdition, and the Zeal he had for his Fathers Glory, was like a two Edg'd Sword, that pierc'd continually his afflicted Heart, and caus'd such pains, as were above imagination. All this then, and all the sufferings and affronts, of which the only thought, was capable of giving him a Sweat of Blood, cast him into an Agony in the Garden; lastly, all that he had ever suffer'd in his whole Life; he had, as I sayd before, still present before his Eyes, from the instant of his Conception, to that of his Death; as he teaches us by the words of the Psalmist, *My pain was always before mine Eyes*. Wherefore this being so, may we not Judge, that all the Days of his Life were to him the Day of his Passion? Besides, the expectation of an Evil is oftentimes more grievous than the Evil it self; and therefore may we not say, that his whole Life was an Abyſſe of pains, into which his Holy Soul was continually plung'd, without having the least respite?

When we come to consider all these things in particular, when we think that he who suffer'd 'em is the Son of God; that he suffers 'em for us, out of a pure excess of Love; we must have a Heart harder than Marble, not to be touch'd therewith: The Earth trembles, says Saint Bernard, the Rocks are cleft; the Graves are open'd, the Vail of the Temple is rent in pieces, the Sun and the Moon are darken'd; and lastly Nature gives all possible marks of Compassion, and shall we alone have none for him, who only suffer'd for us? Let us permit our Hearts to be touch'd, let us permit 'em to be penetrated with grief; and let us not be harder than Stones, nor more miserable, than Creatures which have no sense. * *My Son Absalom*; sayd David, *O Absalom my Son, who will grant me my desire of Dying for thee?* Absalom my Son, my Son Absalom! Now if Natural tenderness cou'd inspire such a feeling as this, for one who Dy'd as a Traytor, that wou'd have taken off the Crown from his Fathers Head; with how far greater reason ought we to have the like for the Son of God; who Dy'd only for to deliver us from the Slavery of the Devil, and to make us partakers of the Kingdom of his Eternal Father:

Et dolor meus
in conspectu
meo semper.
Psal. 37. 18.

Bern. serm. fa-
via quarta S.
Hebr.

* Filij mi Ab-
salom, Absalom
fili mi, quis
mibi tribuat,
ut moriat
pro te? Ab-
lom fili mi,
fili mi Ab-
lom?
2 Reg. 18. 33.

C H A P. IV.

That Sorrow and Contrition for our Sins, is one of the Fruits we ought to draw from the Meditation of the Sufferings of our Saviour?

THE second sentiment and feeling which we ought to exercise our selves in, and endeavour to excite in us by the Meditation of the sufferings of JESUS CHRIST, is sorrow and Contrition for our Offences; and seemingly there's not any Fruit, more easily to gather from it than this; because there's nothing, that is better able to discover to us the enormity of Sin, than this. The quality of the remedy that was necessary to be apply'd to us, ought to give us a knowledge of the quality of the Disease. *Ac-knowledge O Man, says Saint Bernard, how grievous your Wounds were, for the Cure of which 'twas necessary* JESUS CHRIST *shou'd be Wounded.* Neither the Eternity of Pains due to Sin, nor any other thing whatsoever, can give us so clear a sight of the grievousness of Sin, as to think that 'twas necessary that God shou'd make himself Man, and thereby make a satisfaction for us, to the Divine Justice, which cou'd not be fully pleas'd any other way: Because the Offences being in some sort Infinite, as being committed against God who is Infinite, and Man not being capable, to make a due reparation, by reason of the Infinite distance between God and him, 'twas altogether necessary that he who shou'd make satisfaction, shou'd be of an Infinite Dignity; and equal to him who receiv'd the injury. Divines are wont to clear this point by an Example. A Clown, say they, gives a King a Box on the Ear, or a Blow with a Cudgel. 'Tis certain, that what revenge soever the King shou'd take, the satisfaction cou'd no ways answer the injury; by reason of the great difference and distance,

Agnosce, &
homo, quàm
gravia sunt
vulnera pro
quibus necesse
est Dominum
Christum vul-
nerari.
*Bern. serm. 3.
de Nativ.*

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distance, between the King and the Clown: For what proportion is there between an affront done to a King, and the punishment, tho' it were Death it self, inflicted on a Clown? What must there be requir'd then, to make the King full satisfaction? Nothing less certainly than that he who has done the injury, shou'd be rais'd to a Dignity equal to the other, and so to submit himself to a proportionable satisfaction, and then the Offence wou'd be intirely repair'd.

The same thing happens in our case. Man who is but Dust and Ashes, had offended the Immortal King of Glory, if God therefore shou'd cause him to be put to Death, the injury wou'd not be repair'd: For this requires that Man shou'd become God, equal to him who is offended, and so repair the injury by his sufferings. What remedy then since there is no other God, than he who is offended? 'Tis therefore in this that the Mercy of God was Infinite, who found out an admirable Medium and Temperment, how to pardon Man without wronging his Justice. For he being injur'd, and there being no other God that cou'd make satisfaction for this Offence, he of his own accord made himself Man, to the end that Man who had offended God, shou'd suffer and die, and yet at the same time 'twas God himself that suffer'd; on purpose, that as the Offence was in some sort Infinite, so the sufferings and satisfaction shou'd also become Infinite by his Person. Behold here what was the necessity of the sufferings of JESUS CHRIST, and that which also clearly shews, the greatness and grievousness of Sin. Wherefore Saint *John Damascen*, says very well, that if God for the punishment of Sin, had Eternally Damn'd all the Men that ever were, or ever shou'd be; his Justice wou'd not have been so satisfi'd, as it was by the Incarnation, and Death of the Son of God. And this is no Hyperbole or Exaggeration: 'Tis the very Truth; because all the torments of Hell are not an equal Payment, to the Death of JESUS CHRIST; because as God, he has sufficiently satisfi'd by his Death the Justice of God; whereas an Eternity of Pain can never intirely satisfie, for one only Mortal Sin.

*Joan. Damasc.
lib. 1. cap. 5.*

Wherefore this being so, I affirm at present, that one of the greatest Fruits we can draw from the Meditation of the sufferings of JESUS CHRIST, is to deplore and detest our Sins, which has cost him so dear. They were

† Ego sum qui
peccavi, ego
iniquè egi:
vertatur, ob-
secro, manus
tua contra me.
2 Reg. 24. 17.
* Tollite me,
& mittite me
in mare: Scio
enim quoniam
propter me
tempestas hæc
grandis venit.
Jona. 1. 12.
Bern. serm. 3. de
Nativ. Dom.

my Sins O Lord, that caus'd the Crown of Thorns so cruelly to pierce your Head, and the cruel Whipping, also which tore your Sacred Body all over, they were my Sins which put you into the miserable condition you were in. † 'Tis I who have Sinn'd, 'tis I who have done Evil, I beseech thee let thy Hand be turn'd against me. * Take me and cast me into the Sea; for I know this Tempest is rais'd upon my account. 'Tis I O Lord who deserv'd this Crofs, 'tis I who Merited these Injuries and Affronts, and even all those Calumnies and Reproaches which you have suffer'd for me.

Saint Bernard feign's an Example to our purpose, after this manner; I was says he, in a publick place, diverting my self, and at the same time Sentence of Death was Pronounc'd against me in the Kings Clofset, without my knowing any thing of it. The only Son of the Prince, hearing thereof, presently took his Crown from his Head, cast off his Royal Robes, comes out bare-foot, Cloath'd in Sackcloth; with his Head cover'd with Ashes, Weeping and Sighing; because they had condemn'd to Death one of his Servants. Beholding him on a sudden pass by in this condition, I remain'd surpris'd, and ask'd the cause thereof; they answer'd me, that he went to Die to save my Life. What then ought I to do, pursues the Saint; and what Man is there so insensible and so brutal, as to continue his sport, and not quit all to accompany at least the Son of the Prince, and mingle his Tears with his? 'Tis after this manner and for the like considerations that we ought to endeavour in our Prayer to Weep for, and Regret our Sins, which have caus'd the Death of the Son of God. That also, which Saint Ignatius, in the Exercises of the Passion, wou'd have us begg of God, is to have Sorrow, Indignation and Confusion to behold the Sovereign Master of all things, to have suffer'd so much for our Sins. Wherefore what he marks for the subject of our Petition, in the Prelude of each Exercise, is precisely the Fruit which he wou'd have us draw from it.

S. Ign. l. Exerc.
Spir.

This Exercise is extremely recommended to us by the Saints, therefore 'tis very good not to neglect it; the Practice being very profitable, not only for those that enter into the way of God; But for those also who are already advanc'd in it. First, 'tis very proper to keep us in Humility; the sight of our Sins accompany'd with a Regret for

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for having committed 'em, being one of the most powerful Motives that we can have, to live continually in a great Confusion and Contempt of our selves. He who reflects that he has deserv'd Hell, for having offended his Lord and Creator; what Affronts, what Contempts, what Injuries do's he not suffer with a good Will, to expiate those many offences committed by him against the Infinite Majesty of God? Secondly, this Exercise gives us a great assurance of the Pardon of our Sins, and behold here how it do's so. One of the things which ought most of all to assure us of the Pardon of our Sins, is to have a great regret and sorrow for 'em; so that if we continually look upon 'em with sorrow and confusion, God will forget 'em, and regard 'em no more. For this reason, *David* being touch'd with sorrow for his, sayd to God, to the end he might forget 'em, and turn his Eyes from 'em: † *I know my Iniquity O Lord, and my Sin is always before mine Eyes*, 'tis a good remark that Saint *Hierom* makes upon the words of the same Prophet; * *Turn thy Face from my Sins, and blot out all my Iniquities*. † If, says the Holy Doctor, you put always your Sin before your Eyes, God will not put 'em before his. In effect there's nothing that at the hour of Death can give us a greater confidence and joy, than this; and therefore, 'tis very good to prepare our selves before-hand after this manner. Moreover this Exercise, is not only a remedy for our past Sins, but is also a preservative to hinder us again from falling back into them, and from committing of others: For he who continually entertaines himself in a very lively sorrow for having offended God, is far from offending him anew. 'Tis also a very good remedy to comfort and assure those that are always in pain, to know whether they have consented or no to a Temptation, and to such also as are troubl'd with Scruples. For when People often make Acts of Contrition with detestation of Sin, and firmly resolve rather to Die a thousand times, than to commit a Mortal one. They may assure themselves, they have not consented, to those Temptations they are in doubt off; it being very hard to imagine that without their knowledge, a consent, to a thing of which they have so much horror, cou'd escape 'em. Lastly, this Exercise is an Exercise of the Love of God; because true Contrition proceeding from the Love of him, is nothing else but a very sensible sorrow for having

† Quoniam iniquitatem meam ego cognosco, & peccatum meum contra me est semper. Id est, coram me.

Psal. 50. 5.
* Averte faciem tuam a peccatis meis, & omnes iniquitates meas dele. Ps. 50. 11.

* Quia si tu ponis illud ante te, Deus illud non ponet ante te. Hieron. in. Ps. super. cit.

having offended so Good and Amiable a Master, and one so worthy to be serv'd; and the more we Love God, the greater our sorrow will also be, for having offended the Divine Majesty.

*Clement lib. 1.
recognitionum.*

Saint *Clement* in a Book; of which he is esteem'd the Author, says, that as often as Saint *Peter* thought of his having renounc'd *JESUS CHRIST*, he Wept so bitterly, that his Tears even burn'd his Face and made Furrows in his Cheeks as they pass. He says also that the remembrance of this caus'd him to rise every Night at the first Crow of the Cock, to put himself in Prayer; and that he slept not all the Night after, performing this custom as long as he Liv'd. We must endeavour to imitate the sorrow of this great Saint; and doubtless one of the most profitable Exercises, both in and without Prayer, is to make frequent Acts of Contrition, by detesting Sin, and firmly purposing rather to Die a thousand times, than to commit one Mortal Sin. Begging also earnestly of God, rather to take us out of the World, than permit us ever to offend him. Permit not O Lord that any thing may ever be able to separate me from thee, for why shou'd I Live but to serve thee? I desire Life only for this end. Therefore take me O God to thy self before so great a misfortune shou'd happen to me as to offend thee.

C H A P.

CHAP. V.

Of the Sentiment of the Love of God.

THE third sentiment of feeling to which we ought to excite our selves, by a consideration of the sufferings of JESUS CHRIST, is the Love of God. Nothing moves us more to Love; than to see our selves Belov'd, nothing ties nor binds us so fast as this do's; and this being so, 'tis here that the Soul, considering at leisure the extrem Love, which JESUS CHRIST manifested in his Passion, that he had for her, ought thereby to inflame it self with Love and Gratitude towards him, who has so tenderly Lov'd her. † *'Twas in this*, says Saint John, *that the Charity of God towards us most of all appear'd, to have sent his only Son into the World, to the end we might Live by him.* Saint Luke speaking of what happen'd in the Transfiguration of our Saviour: When *Elias* and *Moses* appear'd on each side of him, call's his Passion an Excess of Love. * *They entertain'd themselves with him*, says he, *and spoke of that Excess he was to make manifest at Jerusalem.* And without doubt 'tis with great reason that he calls the Death of the Son of God an Excess of Love. First, because he Dy'd for his Enemies: † *There is not a greater mark of Love*, says the Saviour of the World, *than to give ones Life for ones Friends*; but the Divine Love of our Saviour went yet further, even so far as to give his, for his Enemies; † *'Tis in this*, says Saint Paul, *that God made appear his Charity towards us; that JESUS CHRIST Dy'd for us even when we were Sinners.* Secondly, this Death is justly call'd an Excess of Love; because in rigour one drop alone, of those many drops of Blood our Saviour shed, in his Circumcision; one of those drops of Sweat, he so copiously shed in the Garden; and lastly even the least thing he perform'd for our Redemption, was sufficient to Redeem the whole World, nay for a thousand of Worlds,

† In hoc apparuit charitas Dei in nobis, quoniam filium suum unigenitum misit Deus in mundum, vivamus per eum.
Joan. 4. 9.

* Dicebant excessum ejus, quem complectus erat in Jerusalem.
Luc. 9. 31.

† Majorem hac dilectionem nemo habet, ut animam suam ponat quis pro amicis suis.
Joan. 15. 13.

* Commendat autem Deus charitatem suam in nobis, quoniam cum adhuc peccatores essemus, Christus pro nobis mortuus est.
Rom. 4. 9.

as the Saints assure us; because he being God, he could consequently do nothing which was not of an Infinite Price and Merit. Notwithstanding his Infinite Goodness was not contented only to suffer, he would liberally bestow even the last drop of his Blood upon us. The Apostle speaking of this Love calls it too great a Love; † *Because*, says he, *of that too great Love with which he has Lov'd us*: And in effect this Love infinitely exceeds all that can either be sayd or even thought off. The Prophet *Zachary*, the Father of Saint *John Baptist*, speaking of the Grace that God was ready to bestow upon Mankind; in the Person of *JESUS CHRIST*, is not contented to stile it a Grace that proceeds from the Mercy of God; * *But*, says it comes, *from the Bowels of his Mercy, in which he was pleas'd to visit us from above.*

Who therefore can refrain from Loving him who has so much Lov'd us? † *Wherefore let us Love God*, says Saint *John*, *because God has first Lov'd us*: Let us do to him as he has done to us, let us answer his Goodness and Tenderness, let us endeavour to testify our Love towards him, as he has testified his towards us. He has giv'n us very efficacious proofs of his, and at the same time very hard and painful ones also, which are the best marks of a true Love; and 'tis this that made Saint *Ambrose* cry out. * *I owe O Lord, far more to your Passion by which you have Redeem'd me, than to your Omnipotency by which you have Created me.* For how great soever the Benefit of our Creation was, it cost you nothing, you needed to do nothing but speak; † *You Spoke and all was made, you Commanded and all was Created.* But 'twas not the same in Mans Redemption; that cost you a thousand Reproaches, a thousand Torments; and lastly, that cost you even the last drop of your Blood. Let us answer therefore these and those other great effects, and as Saint *John* says, * *My dear Children, let us Love God not in Words only, and by our Tongues, but in our Works and in Truth.* 'Twas in his desire of being condemn'd for Love of us, that the Son of God shew'd how he Lov'd us: Let us also shew that we Love him, by seeking to be condemn'd for Love of him; and in-rejoycing when any occasion offers it self to us. He has shewn us his Love by offering himself intirely for us as a Sacrifice to his Eternal Father, let us shew ours by offering our selves intirely to him; in wholly resigning

† Propter nimiam charitatem suam quâ dilexit nos. *Ephef.* 2. 4.

* Per viscera misericordiæ, in quibus visitavit nos oriens ex alto. *Luc.* 1. 78.

† Nos ergo diligamus Deum, quoniam Deus prior dilexit nos. *1^a Joan.* 4. 19.

* Plus igitur, Domine Jesu, injuriis tuis debeo, quod redemptus sum, quam operibus, quod creatus sum. *Ambrosii lib. 2. sup. Luc.*
† Ipse dixit, & facta sunt: ipse mandavit, & creata sunt. *Psalm.* 148. 5.

* Filii mei, non diligamus verbo, neque lingua, sed opere, & veritate. *1^a Joan.* 3. 18.

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resigning our selves to him, in placing our Hearts intirely in his Hands, to the end he may dispose of us in all things according to his Divine Will. 'Tis in this that true Love is discover'd, and not in saying with our Mouths, O Lord I Love thee. And 'tis in this sense, that the Holy Fathers Interpret these words of the Apostle, † *'Tis Patience that renders a Work Perfect.* For he who imbraces Pains, Humiliations, and Mortifications with Joy for the love of another; gives true and effective marks of his love; because he fail's not even in the hardest times to shew it, these being the times, in which our affection to them we truly love, is best exprest.

† Patientia
autem opus
perfectum ha-
bet.
Jac. 1. 4.

Behold here therefore one of the chief Fruits, we ought to endeavour to draw from the Meditation of the Passion of JESUS CHRIST; for which effect, we must often exercise our selves in Prayer, to form those Acts of love, which I have lately mark'd. But above all, let us endeavour to offer our selves to God with our whole Hearts: To the end that he may dispose of us in all things when, and how he pleases. Moreover coming to the particulars of those things, which are painful; and of those hard occasions, which may happen to us. Let nothing pass, where-upon we do not form both Acts and Resolutions, of intirely abandoning our selves to his Divine Will; for this is a very profitable exercise, and it leads to high Perfection, and manifests a Heart that is deeply penetrated with the Love of God.

Tom. II.

M m m

CHAP.

C H A P. VI.

Of the Sentiment or Feeling of Gratitude towards God?

THE fourth sentiment or feeling, in which we ought to Exercise our selves, in Meditating upon the Mysteries of the Passion, consists in Gratitude and Thanksgiving to God. * *Can our Mind think of any thing, says Saint Austin, our Mouth speak of any thing, or our Pen write any thing better than Thanks be to God? Nothing can be shorter express'd, more joyfully heard, more sublimely conceiv'd, or more profitably perform'd than is done in these words.* God himself has always taken so much pleasure in the acknowledgment, and thanksgiving that Men have made to him, that as soon as he did any extraordinary favor to his Elect People, he wou'd have 'em presently Sing to him a Song of thanksgiving, † *Offer to God a Sacrifice of Praise*: And the Holy Scripture is full of Canticles which the Patriarchs and Children of *Israel*, Sung after they had receiv'd some signal benefit. Saint *Hierom* says, that it was a Tradition among the *Hebrews*, that *The Sickness of which King Ezechias had like to have Dy'd.* Was sent him as a punishment; because after he had been Miraculously deliver'd from the *Assyrians*, by the Hand of the Angel of our Lord, who kill'd a hundred and fourscore thousand in one Night, he had return'd no thanks to God for it, by any Song of Praise. And Saint *Austin* speaking of the ten Lepers, which were cur'd by *JESUS CHRIST*, takes notice that the Saviour of the World prais'd the Gratitude of him, who came back to thank him for his Cure, and blam'd the Ingratitude of the rest. * *Were there not ten Cleans'd, says he, what is become of the nine others: There is not found any one besides this Stranger who is come back to render Glory to God.* Let us not be ungrateful as these were, for the benefits we have receiv'd from God's Hand. And much less for the greatest of these benefi-

* Quid melius,
& animo ge-
ramus, & ore
proferamus, &
calamo expri-
mamus, quam
Deo gratias?
Hoc nec dici
brevius, nec
audiri lætius,
nec intelligi
grandius, nec
agi fructuosius
potest.
Aug. epist. 77.

† Immola
Deo sacrifici-
um laudis.
Psal. 49. 14.

*Hieron. l. 11.
sup. Isai. c. 39.
in illud:
Egrotavit
Ezechias ad
mortem.
4 Reg. 20. 1. &
Isai. 38. 1.*

*Aug. serm. 10.
de verbis Apost.*

* Nonne de-
cem mundati
sunt? & no-
vem ubi sunt?
Non est in-
ventus qui re-
direct, & daret
gloriam Deo,
nisi hic alie-
nigena.
Luc. 17. 17, 18.

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benefits, in becoming Man and Dying for us upon the Cross. * *Do not forget*, says the Wise Man, *the favors which he has done thee, who has answer'd for thee and has also even given his Soul for thee.* JESUS CHRIST has both answer'd, and paid for us; it cost him his Life; wherefore 'tis just, that we shou'd have an extream Gratitude for so great a benefit, and that nothing shou'd be able to make us ever forget it.

* Gratiam si-
de iustoris
ne oblivis-
cis: dedit e-
nim pro te ani-
mam suam.
Eccli. 19. 20.

Saint Thomas speaking of Gratitude, says, that it has three ways of working: The First, consists in having all that esteem, we ought to have in the bottom of our Heart, for the benefit that we have receiv'd; and to be thankful to him, from whom we have receiv'd it. The Second, consists in being thankful in Words: And the Third, in rendering, to our Benefactors, as far as we are able, the like of what we have receiv'd from 'em. Let us Exercise our selves upon all the Mysteries of the Passion, performing these three Acts of Gratitude: First let us apply our selves to produce great sentiments of esteem for the many benefits, which each My-
stery contains; examining in particular all the favors we have thereby receiv'd, or shall ever receive from thence: Let us excite our selves by this consideration to resent af-
ter a more lively manner, the obligation offer'd us to serve God Eternally with all our Strength. Let us afterwards en-
deavour to Praise and Glorifie him with our Mouth accord-
ing to the words of Saint Paul: † *Let us always by him offer to God a Sacrifice of Praise, that is, the Fruit of our Lips, Confessing his Holy Name.* And let us with that the whole Universe wou'd assist us in the giving him thanks. Lastly, let us endeavour by our Actions to correspond and answer so many benefits; and for this end; let us intirely abandon our selves to him, as we have sayd in the foregoing Chapter, and let us offer to him all that we have and are.

S. Thom. 2. 2.
q. 107. art. 8.

† Per ipsum
ergo offera-
mus hostiam
laudis semper
Deo, il est,
fructum labio-
rum confitea-
tum nomini
ejus.
Hebr. 13. 15.

Saint Bernard says, that in every Mystery we Meditate on, we ought to imagine that JESUS CHRIST says the same words to us, that he sayd to his Apostles after he had Wash'd their Feet; Do you know what I have done for you? Do you know what is contain'd in this Mystery? Do you know what is the Grace of your Crea-
tion, what is that of your Redemption, and what also is that of your Vocation? Alas how far are we from the knowledge of what God has done for us? For if I

* Scitis quid
fecerim vobis?
Joan. 13. 11.

rightly conceiv'd O my God that you became Man, that you Dy'd upon a Cross for Love of me; there wou'd need no other consideration but this, to make me give you my whole Heart: And to be wholly absorpt in your Love; and this wou'd be such a Gratitude as a true Christian ought to have.

*I. ib. 2. de com-
muni. cord.*

* Qui dilexit
me, & tradidit
semetipsum
propter me.
Gal. 2. 20.

Saint *Chrysostom* upon this subject, takes notice of one thing which may be of very great profit to us. He says, that a good Servant ought to have as great an esteem of those favors his Master bestows upon him, and to have as great a resentment of 'em, as if they were done to him alone, and as if he only were charg'd with the obligation of returning thanks for 'em. This the Apostle did when he sayd, * *He that Lov'd me, and deliver'd himself up for me*: Nor was it without reason that he sayd so, continues the holy Doctor; since every one ought to say the same; because each one draws as great advantage from the Death of JESUS CHRIST, as if he had Dy'd for him alone. In like manner the light of the Sun, inlightens me as much as if it gave light to me alone; and the advantages I draw from thence, is, so far from becoming less by being communicated to others, that on the contrary 'tis increas'd; because by giving light to them, it helps 'em, when occasion serves to assist and succour me. So in like manner the Incarnation and Death of the Son of God, is as profitable to me, as if he had made himself Man, and Dy'd only for my sake. The advantage also that others receive as well as my self, diminishes nothing of what I thereby receiv'd, but on the contrary augments the favor; for 'tis the cause of their animating and assisting me, to Merit the Glory to which I aspire. Moreover the Love of God, is as great towards each one of us in particular, as if he Lov'd nothing else; and as for the good Will and Love of JESUS CHRIST, he was no less dispos'd to suffer for one Man alone if he had wanted it, than for all Men together; and therefore Saint *Chrysostom's* advice is admirable: † *Let every one of us in particular, says he, give the same thanks to CHRIST as if he had come to Die for him alone, because he wou'd not have refus'd to Die even for one single person, since his Love is no less for each Man in particular, than it is for the whole World in general.* Moreover 'tis also true, that God thought particularly on me; that he had me before his Eyes,

† Unus quis-
que nostrum
gratias agat
Christo, ut si
ob ipsum so-
lum moriturus
venisset; cum
vel propter u-
num homi-
nem mori non
recusasset;
nam singulos
homines non
minus diligit,
quam orbem
universum.
*Chrys. in ep. ad
Gal. 2.*

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Eyes, when he made himself Man, and Dy'd upon the Cross; * *That he Lov'd me with a perpetual Charity.* As he himself assures me by the Mouth of *Jeremy*; and lastly, that he freely deliver'd himself up to Death, for to Redeem my Life. So that every one ought to look upon the benefits of God, as if God had done nothing, but for him alone; as also to consider the Love from whence they proceed, as if God had Lov'd him only, and so to say with Saint *Paul*, *He who has Lov'd me, and has deliver'd himself to Death for me*: When we consider all this after this manner, 'twill be impossible, not to feel our selves excited to great Acts of Love and Thanksgiving towards this Divine Saviour, *who has always Lov'd us with a perpetual Charity.*

* In charitate
perpetua dile-
xi te.
Jerem. 31. 3.

The Saints moreover add, that the reason why God exacts from us the rendering him thanks for his benefits; is not because he stands in need of our Gratitude, but only because we shou'd render our selves more worthy to receive new Graces and Favors. † *Ingratitude*, says Saint *Bernard*, is a burning Wind that dry's up the Source of God's Mercy, and stops the Channel of his Graces. And as God, deprives those Men of his benefits, who are so ungrateful as to forget 'em; so he heaps 'em upon those, who acknowledge 'em, and render due thanks for 'em. The Sea which is the Source of of all Waters, gives back to the Rivers all it has receiv'd from 'em: And God who is the Fountain of all those Gifts and Graces which we possess, gives back to us these same Graces with Interest, when with a faithful Gratitude, we return to him, what we receiv'd from him.

*Chrys. hom. 25.
in Genes.
Prosp. de ingrat.
cap. 29.*

† Ingratitudo
est ventus u-
rens, fontem
pietatis exsic-
cans, rorem
misericordiae,
gratiae fluentia
non recipiens.
*Bern. in Cant.
Jerem. 11. n. 7.
Jerem. 1. in c.
Jesus. & contra
71e. pess. ingrat.*

CHAP.

C H A P. VII.

*Of the Sentiments or Feelings of Hope and
Admiration.*

AD MIRATION is the fifth sentiment or feeling, in which we may Exercise our selves, by Meditating on the Mysteries of the Passion: Which we may excite in our selves by admiring, for example, that, God who is Impassible and Immortal, suffers and dies; that he suffers and dies even for those, who put him to Death, and were so unworthy of all his favors; and that he suffers more than any one ever suffer'd. We may also employ our selves in admiring, the Excess of his Love and Goodness for Men; the Riches of his Infinite Wisdom; and the Depths of his Counsels, in choosing so fit means for the Salvation of Mankind; and one at the same time so agreeable to his Justice and Mercy. And without doubt, 'tis a kind of very Holy Prayer, to entertain our selves in the consideration of so great wonders, as manifest themselves in the accomplishment of the World's Redemption; to Examin 'em well, and fill our selves with astonishment, in beholding God, mov'd to so great an Excess of Goodness and Love, towards his unworthy and ungrateful Creatures. 'Tis also a kind of most sublime Contemplation; to be absorpt in the admiration of God's Works. But this admiration is increas'd according to the measure of our knowledge of 'em; and our sinking, as it were, deeper into them; and besides it contains in it self a great Love of God, and a greater gratitude for his benefits; therefore as it is a sentiment and feeling from whence we may draw great Fruits; so we must Exercise our selves in producing frequent Acts thereof. The Hebrew Text, puts the words *Sela* at the end of the Verses of many of the Psalms, which is to mind us, that we must pause or stop, to give our selves leisure to penetrate and admire the sense; which teaches

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reaches us also, that when we Meditate upon these Mysteries, we must Examin 'em with leisure, and give our selves time to admire the wonders they contain.

The Sixth sentiment or feeling, which we may Excite in our selves by our Meditation on the Passion, is a lively Hope and Confidence in God, grounded upon what he has done for us, without our Merit, and even when we had render'd our selves unworthy of his favors. For when we come to make a profound reflection on this, and on the ardent desires that JESUS CHRIST had, for our Salvation, the thirst whereof even augmented his sufferings upon the Cross, we shall easily be mov'd to hope from the Goodness and Mercy of God, that he will freely bestow on us all that is necessary for our Salvation. * *He who has not spar'd his own only Son, but Deliver'd him up for us, has he not also*, says the Apostle, *with him given us all things?* And in another place, the same Apostle tells us, † *If when we were Enemies of God, we were reconcil'd to him by the Death of his Son, much more being reconcil'd, shall we be Sav'd by his Life.* This way of reasoning is worth our taking notice off, and in it we may find great cause of comfort: For in effect, if God look'd upon us with the Eyes of Mercy, when we were his Enemies, and when our Sins ought to have provok'd him to hatred; and if he wou'd then give so dear a price to reconcile us to himself: After what manner will he not now look upon us, when the reconciliation is made, and when we can hereafter cost him nothing? He who has Lov'd us when we were disfigur'd and defil'd with Sin, how can he do otherwise now than Love us, since he has wash'd us with his Precious Blood? And if when we fled from him and resisted his Inspirations, he left not off searching after us, and inviting us to him; and if he ceas'd not doing it, till he had brought us into his House. How can he now forget and forsake us after the bringing us hither?

'Twill be a great help also for the exciting us to a holy Confidence in him, to stop in the consideration of the Infinite Mercy of God, such as the Church conceives, when it addressees it self to him in these words, * *Lord to whom it is proper always to have Mercy and to Pardon.* 'Tis true, that God is Just as well as Merciful, and that his Justice is as great as his Mercy; because in God all his

* Qui etiam proprio filio suo non pepercit, sed pro nobis omnibus tradidit illum: quomodo non etiam cum illo nobis omnia nonavit?

Rom. 8. 32. † Si cum inimici essemus, reconciliati sumus Deo per mortem filij ejus: multo magis reconciliati, salvum erimus in vita ipsius. Rom. 5. 10.

* Deus, cui proprium est misereri semper & parcere.

his Attributes are equally Infinite; but the marks of his Mercy are far greater; and more frequent than those of his Justice. * *The Lord is Sweet*, says David, *to all the World, and his Mercy surpasses all his other Works*, it seems as if his Mercy more properly belong'd to him, than any other of his Attributes; because, 'tis by way of Excellency, even call'd *The work of God*; and Saint Paul says, † *That God is Rich in Mercy*. 'Tis not but that he is Rich in all things else, but he uses this way of speaking, to express that in this, he makes his Riches more particularly to appear; as when one says, that a Man is Rich in Household-stuff, in Pictures, in Precious Stones and the like. The Church also acknowledges this Truth, when it says to God, * *That he makes his Omnipotency known chiefly in Pardoning and shewing Mercy*; and in effect he seems to place his Glory in this: As if a Prince, for Example sake, who is most accomplish'd in all things, shou'd take pleasure chiefly to make his Valour, Liberality, or some other Virtue more particularly to appear.

Saint Bernard says, that 'tis Natural to God to be Merciful; that favors and benefits Naturally flow from his Hands, and that he expects not our Merits to shew his Mercy towards us: But to Punish, seems a thing very strange and disagreeable to him; because we must provoke, and even constrain him by our Sins to do this. And as 'tis proper to the Bee to make Honey, and not to Sting, but when provok'd: So 'tis proper to God to bestow Graces, and not to Punish, till Men provoke, and in a manner constrain him thereunto by their Crimes; nor do's he then also ever fail of letting his Mercy appear, by the pain and sorrow he expresses in being oblig'd to Chastise us. He took not the resolution of sending the Flood, but when he perceiv'd that the wickedness of Man kept it self within no bounds, but Daily augmented, yet he wou'd expect to the very last, the punishing of 'em: At length touch'd with a profound grief of Heart, he says, † *I will Destroy, and Blot out Man, whom I have Created, from the Face of the Earth*: These words shew, that it was not without an extream regret, that he was mov'd to destroy Men. Do's not the Gospel also teach us, that when JESUS CHRIST denounc'd the ruin of Jerusalem, * *Beholding this City he Wept over it*? And do's not he himself say by the Prophet Isay, *Alas, I shall have at length, satisfaction over*

* Suavis Dominus universis, & miserationes ejus super omnia opera ejus. *Isal.* 144. 9.

† Deus autem, qui dives est in misericordia. *Ephes.* 2. 4.

* Deus, qui omnipotentiam tuam parcendo maxime, & misericordiendo manifestas.

Bern. serm. 5. de Nat. Dom.

† Tactus dolore cordis intrinsecus: Delebo, inquit, hominem quem creavi, & facies terræ. *Gen.* 6. 6. 7.

* Videns civitatem flevit super illam. *Luc.* 19. 41. Heu consolabor super hof-

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my Enemies, and shall be reveng'd of 'em? He speaks in this place, as a Judge full of Compassion, who not being able to defer the Condemnation of the Criminal unto Death, sign's his Order with Tears. But his tenderness for us stops not here, he shews his Infinite Mercy, and the desire he has of our Salvation, even in those threats he makes us. And 'tis even in this his Justice, that he expresses his Mercy, as Saint *Chrysostom* take notice upon these words of the Royal Prophet, † *If yee Convert not your selves he has bent his Bow, he has made it ready, and has prepar'd his Arrows that will cause Death, he has render'd 'em burning hot.* 'Tis a great Goodness of God, and a wonderful Clemency which he shews in threatening us after this manner with a Bow, and by desiring to frighten us with the fear of his Chastisement; to the end that we may endeavour to avoid it: He treats us as Fathers are wont to do those Children, for whom they have a particular tenderness and affection; shewing in their words very much Choler and Anger, to the end, that by frightening of 'em they may mend their faults, without necessity of coming to Chastisement: Moreover, as the holy Doctor takes notice; the Sword Wounds nigh at Hand; and to cause an effect; 'tis but only drawing it, and pushing on the thrust; but the Arrow strikes at a distance: To also Wound with a Bow, 'tis necessary to bend it, to draw the Arrows out of the Quiver, and to fit 'em to the String, all which requires both a great deal of time, and trouble. God therefore, continues this holy Father, threatens us with a Bow, to the end we may have time to escape his Correction, according to the words of the Prophet. * *Thou hast given a sign to those that fear thee, that they may fly before thy Bow, and that those whom thou Lovest may be Deliver'd.* When God design'd to destroy the World by the Floud, he gave notice thereof a hundred Years before hand; to give Men time to be- think themselves what to do, and how to prepare for their security. Lastly, he is all fill'd with Love for Men, and do's all he can, not to be oblig'd to Chastise 'em. The same Saint speaking of the Curse which God gave to the Serpent, that had seduc'd Eve: Admire, says he, the Infinite Mercy of God to Man; for as a Father who finds the Sword, with which some one had newly kill'd his Son, is not contented only to Revenge his Death upon the Murderer, but takes the Sword and breaks it into a thousand

hostibus meis,
& vindicabor
de inimicis
meis. 1f. 1. 24.

Chrys. in illud:
† Nisi con-
versi fueritis,
arcum suum
tetendit, & pa-
ravit illum. Et
in eo paravit
vasa mortis,
sagittas suas
ascentibus ef-
fecit.
1f. 7. 13. 14.

* Dedit me-
tuentibus te
significatio-
nem, ut fugi-
ant a facie ac-
cus, ut libe-
rentur dilecti
tui.
Psal. 59. 4. 5.

* Nunquid
voluntatis me-
æ est mors im-
pij, dicit Do-
minus Deus,
& non
ut converta-
tur à viis suis,
& vivat!
Ezech. 18. 23.

† Qui omnes
homines vult
salvos fieri, &
ad agnitionem
veritatis ve-
nire.
1 Tim. 2. 4.

thousand pieces, so God do's the like to the Serpent con-
demning him, as the Instrument of the Devils Malice,
to an everlasting Punishment. God wills not the Death of
a Sinner, and is very unwilling to destroy Men, otherwise
you wou'd long since have given him sufficient occasion to
destroy you; and how long ago wou'd you have been in
Hell, had you dy'd the first time you fell into Mortal Sin,
but his Infinite Goodness, wou'd neither permit your Death,
nor the Devil to carry you away. * *Why is the Death of
a Sinner my Will, and not rather, says our Lord, that he
shou'd turn from his Ways and Live?* He has Ransom'd you
at too dear a Rate, to be willing to lose you; you
have cost him his Blood and his Life, an Infinite Price,
which he desires shou'd not be unprofitable to you, and there-
fore, † *He wills*, on the contrary, as the Apostle says,
*that all Men shou'd be Sav'd, and come to the Knowledge
of Truth.* These sorts of Considerations, with so many others,
which the Scriptures and Fathers are able to furnish us with,
but especially those which we may draw from the Passion
and Merits of JESUS CHRIST, ought to help to produce
in us a confidence in the Mercy of God.

C H A P. VIII.

*Of the Imitation of JESUS CHRIST; which
is the chief fruit we ought to draw, from the
Meditation of his Life and Passion.*

THE Imitation of the Virtues of JESUS
CHRIST, is what in the last place, we ought
to propose to our selves, in the Meditations
of his Passion, and the Fruit we are to en-
deavour to draw from thence. The Son of
God, says the Saint, came chiefly into the World for two
things; First, to Redeem us by his Death and Sufferings;
and Secondly, to give us a perfect Model of all his Vir-
tues; and by his own Example, to move us to Practise
'em. 'Twas for this Reason that at the last Supper, after
he

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he had debas'd himself to such an Excess of Humility, as to cast himself upon his Knees before his Disciples, and to Wash their Feet, he presently sayd to them, *† I have gi'n yee an Example, to the end that yee do as I have done to yee.* But what he then sayd and propos'd to us, that we ought to do in Imitation of him, ought to extend it self to all other Actions; 'tis this which Saint Peter teaches us, when he says, * *JESUS CHRIST is Dead for us, leaving yee an Example to the end that yee may follow his Foot-steps.* And this was that which made Saint Austin say, that the *† Cross of CHRIST was not only the Bed upon which he Dy'd, but was the Pulpit also from which he taught us, that we ought to Imitate his Example.* For tho' his whole Life was a perfect Model of all Virtues, which he seem'd to teach us both by his Words and Actions, yet he wou'd gather 'em altogether in his Passion, and make 'em there appear in their high and sovereign luster, wherefore that which we ought to endeavour to draw from the Meditation on his Sufferings, is an ardent desire of Imitating his Virtues. For this end, we must apply our selves to Examine at leisure each Virtue by it self; and Exercise our selves in framing a very great desire in our Hearts, and in making a firm and constant resolution to Practise it; and also to conceive a holy aversion and horror for the opposite Vice. In considering then, for Example, the Humility of JESUS CHRIST, who being God voluntarily submitted himself to the Contempts and Injuries of Men, we ought to fill our selves with a Contempt of our selves, and to desire with all our Hearts never to receive from Men any mark of Honor, Esteem or Preference whatsoever; but on the contrary, to propose to our selves, to suffer with all submission all sorts of Affronts and Injuries, and even to look upon 'em with Joy; and as an occasion given us, to resemble in some manner JESUS CHRIST. After the same manner in considering the Patience of the Son of God, we ought to frame a Resolution to receive Joyfully all misfortunes that may happen to us, to desire that such occasions shou'd frequently present themselves, and even to beg 'em of God; to the end we may become thereby true followers of his Son. * *I desire not O Lord, says Saint Bonaventure, to Live without some Pain or Wound, because I see you all cover'd with Wounds.* Lastly, we must run over, after the same manner all sorts of Virtues, as Obedience,

† Exemplum enim dedi vobis, ut quemadmodum ego feci vobis, ita & vos faciatis. Joan. 13. 15.

* Christus passus est pro nobis, vobis relinquens exemplum, ut sequamini vestigia ejus. 1. Pet. 2. 21.

† Crux Christi non solum est lectum morientis, sed & cathedra docentis. Aug. Ser. 119. in Joan.

* Nolo, Domine, sine vulnere vivere, quia te video vulneratum. In Medit. de Pass. Christi. in ejus vita.

Charity, Meekness, Chastity, Poverty, Abstinence, and the rest; because in the Life and Sufferings of *JESUS CHRIST*, all Virtues shine forth; and then Exercise our selves in framing in our Hearts; a true desire of Imitating and Practising of 'em.

1 P. Tr. 5. p. 16.
2 P. Tr. 3. c. 27.

There remains still one thing here to be observ'd, which I have touch'd in another place, which is, that in each Virtue on which we Meditate, we must descend to the particulars of those occasions, that may offer themselves to us of exercising 'em; and in our Minds imbrace 'em with Joy for the Love of God. If, for Example, your Meditation be on Humility, you must represent to your self the different accidents that may happen to you, of being Contemn'd; first those of less moment, and afterwards such as you shall think will be most sensible to you; and hereupon frame your Acts of Humility and Submission, as if the sayd accidents or occasions were actually present. You must also practise the same thing in regard of Patience, Mortification, Indifference to all things, Conformity to the Will of God, and all other Virtues; for by this means, the Virtue upon which your Meditation is made, sinks by little and little more into your Mind, and there tak's deeper Root; and the contrary Vice loses it's force; and all things will become upon occasion easier to practise, when we are prepar'd after this manner; wherefore 'tis chiefly to gain this facility, to which all the desires and resolutions we make in our Meditation ought to tend.

Behold then here, a large and ample matter to further us in our Meditation on the Passion of the Son of God, and the Mysteries of his Life; and no one can reasonable complain; that he knows not how to make this Meditation, nor how to entertain himself therein; because I have set down so many sentiments or feelings, upon which he may continually repose, and with 'em entertain himself. I must here also add, to stir up and inflame our Minds and Hearts the more, that 'tis good in every Mystery on which we Meditate, and in every sentiment or feeling we wou'd draw from it, to consider the following particulars. First who it is that suffers; Secondly, what it is he suffers; Thirdly after what manner he suffers; that is to say, with what Patience, Humility, Sweetness, and Charity, he do's it. Fourthly, for whom; Fifthly from whom; and lastly with what prospect or design he suffers. These Six Points, which the Saints ordinarily

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ordinarily propose to us, may give us sufficient matter; to Meditate on; and to entertain our selves with, for a long time very profitably. But If we shou'd have nothing else, to Exercise our selves in, than the Imitation of the Son of God, we shou'd therein find matter enough for our whole Life; for these two reasons. First, because here we have all Virtues in view; and as there are none, which we stand not in need of, so we may now run 'em all over: Secondly, if we come to the nice consideration of each different occasion, that may offer it self, and that we resolve not to give over, till we have gotten the upper hand of 'em all, even to behold them not only with Submission but with Joy; I say, if we come to this, we shall in every Virtue that can possibly be imagin'd, having always sufficient matter to imploy our selves in: We may also add, that tho' these several sentiments of affection, of which I have spoken, are very considerable and very necessary, yet those which regard the Imitation of the Son of God, are far more profitable than any other; because they contain 'em all; and also, because 'tis an Act of the Love of God, which contains all other Acts of Virtue within it self. So that this Imitation is not to be understood, as only one of those sentiments or feelings of which I have spoken in this Treatise, 'Tis rather an Abridgment of all those Pious sentiments, in which the Perfection of a Christian Life do's consist. 'Tis for this reason therefore that in the Meditating on the Life and Passion of JESUS CHRIST, the Imitation of him ought to be our chief Entertainment, and the chief Fruit we are to endeavour to draw from thence; but to do this each one is very much to insist upon the Imitation of the Virtue, he finds himself most of all to stand in need of; staying upon it; diving more profoundly into it, and framing frequent Acts of it, till it has taken deep Root in his Heart; and till he finds the contrary Passion, to be very much weaken'd; so that after this we may pass to another Virtue, and from thence to a third; and without doubt 'tis far better and more profitable to observe the sayd Method, than to imbrace many things together in Prayer, and slightly to pass over 'em all.

C H A P.

C H A P. IX.

*In which is confirm'd by Examples, how pleasing
the Meditating on the Sufferings of IESUS
CHRIST, is unto God.*

*Silvest. in rosa
aurea serm. de
S. M. Magdal.*

SILVESTER reports, that Saint *Mary Magdelen*, after the Ascension of our Saviour, being retir'd into a Desert, in which she liv'd for thirty two Years. God from the very beginning wou'd teach her; in what she ought to employ her self, to become more pleasing in his sight. He therefore sent an Angel to plant a Cross at the entry of the Cave, into which she retir'd, that the Saint having always this Object before her Eyes, might always have present in her Mind, the Adorable Mysteries which were wrought upon the Cross: So that all the time she Liv'd in this Solitude, she continually employ'd her self in Meditating on the Death and Passion of her Saviour and Master. This is what she reveal'd one Day to a great Saint of God, of the Order of Saint *Dominick*, as we may see set down more at large in the same Author.

*Eudolph. de Saxonia
Carthusi-
ens in vita
Christi in p. am.
passen.*

Eudolphus of *Saxony* recounts of a holy Man, who liv'd in Solitude, and neither aspir'd after, nor apply'd himself to any thing, but what was most pleasing to God; that being one Day in Prayer, according to his ordinary custom, to beg of God to discover to him what was most pleasing to his sight, *JESUS CHRIST* appear'd to him cover'd all over with Wounds, and Loaden with a very heavy Cross; saying thus, *One of the most pleasing services, that my Servants can render me, is to help me to carry this Cross; and to do it, they need only to accompany me in Spirit, in all my Sufferings, and Lively to feel 'em in their Hearts.*

*Vinc. in specul.
Hist. & Antho.
3. part. Hist.
quos refert Su-
rini tom. 6.*

Saint *Vincent*, Saint *Anthony*, and *Surin*s report of Saint *Edmund* Archbishop of *Canterbury*, that at the time he Study'd his Grammar in the University of *Oxford*, as he was one Day walking in the Fields, with his mind fill'd with
Pious

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Pious Thoughts, a young Child appear'd, who making himself known to be JESUS CHRIST himself, commanded him amongst other things, to Meditate every Day upon some Mystery of his Life and Death; and assur'd him, that this would be a great help to him, to avoid the snares of the Devil; to acquire all sorts of Virtue; and to Die Holily. The young Edmund fill'd with Consolation and Fervor by this Miraculous Vision, from that time forward apply'd himself every Evening; to Meditate upon one of the Holy Mysteries of the Life and Passion of the Son of God; and found in this Meditation all those helps that had been promis'd him.

We Read in the History of the Order of Saint *Dominick*, that a Religious of the same Order, having had from his youth a particular Devotion to the Passion of the Son of God, afterwards Daily continu'd it in such a manner, that there pass'd not a Day without either Meditating upon one of the Mysteries, or Adoring his Sacred Wounds; pronouncing at each Adoration these words of the Church, * *We Adore thee O JESUS CHRIST, and Bless thee; because by thy Holy Cross, thou hast Redeem'd the World.* He fell five times down upon his Knees in making these Acts, and recited every time the Lords Prayer; begging of God that he would vouchsafe, to give him his Fear and Love; and God made it appear, by a very extraordinary Favor, how pleasing this Devotion was to him. For one Day whilst he was at Prayer, JESUS CHRIST appear'd to him, and invited him to tast and enjoy the Sweetness of his Sacred Wounds; and this holy Religious having with profound respect apply'd his Mouth to one of 'em, his Soul was presently fill'd with so great pleasure and satisfaction, that afterwards all that was not God, seem'd to him bitter and unsupportable.

*Hist. Ord. Pred.
2. J. l. c. 61.*

*Adoramus te
Christe, & be-
nedicimus ti-
bi, quia per
sanctam cru-
cem tuam re-
demisti mun-
dum.*

Lippomanus and *Surius* report of Saint *Palemo*, that one Day in Easter, Saint *Pacomius* his Disciple, having dress'd some Herbs with Oyl: The Holy Old Man, who was wont upon other Days to Eat 'em only with Salt, fell a Weeping, when he saw them so dress'd; representing to himself at the same time the Sufferings of JESUS CHRIST, alas, says he, my Master was Crucifi'd, and shall I treat my self delicately? So that his Disciple in vain represented to him, the Solemnity of the Day; for notwithstanding all he cou'd urge or say, he was never able to obtain of him so much as even to tast the Herbs he had prepar'd for him.

Dominus meus crucifixus est, & ego nunc oleum comedam.
Lipp. & Surius in vita S. Pachom.

We

Fr. Thom. Can.
episcopatus l. 1.
de cepib. c. ult.

We Read also of a Christian Slave, who having a particular Devotion to the Passion of JESUS CHRIST, the continual application he had in thinking always on it, render'd him sad, and oftentimes drew Tears from his Eyes. The Tyrant whom he serv'd, sometimes ask'd him the cause of this his sadness, and why he was not so chearful as others were? To which he still answer'd, that he could not be otherwise, because he carry'd the Passion of his Master Grav'd in his Heart: So that the sayd Tyrant, taking notice of this constant answer, would try whether what he sayd were true; and thereupon putting him to Death, took out, and open'd his Heart, in which they found an Image of a Crucifix extreamly well made, which wonder touch'd him so forcibly, that immediately he was Converted to the Faith.

The same thing, is in like manner reported of Saint Clare, who all her Life long, had a singular Devotion to the Passion of the Son of God; and after her Death, they found upon one side of her Heart, the Image of a Crucifix very finely wrought; with the Nails, Lance, Sponge, and Reed; and on the other, the Rods, Pillar, and Crown of Thorns; and all this is at this Day still to be seen at *Montefalcone* in *Italy*, where that great and extraordinary wonder is conserv'd and kept.



THE EIGHTH TREATISE OF

Sacred Communion, and the
Holy Sacrifice of Mass.

C H A P. I.

*Of the extream great Love which God has
shewn us, by Instituting the Blessed Sa-
crament of the Altar, and of the In-
estimable benefits contain'd therein.*



AMONGST all the wonders that God
has wrought, there are two more extra-
ordinary and more beyond the reach
of Human Imagination than all the rest,
the Prophet *Isay*, finds 'em so surprising,
that he calls 'em the Inventions of God,

† *Make known to the People*, says he,
his Inventions, and in effect, it seems

that both in the one and in the other, God has particu-
larly studied to find out, in what he might most of all
communicate and manifest himself to us. The first of these

Tom. II.

O o o

wonders,

† *Notas facite
populis adin-
ventiones
eius.*
Isai. 12. 4.

wonders, is that of the Incarnation, in which the Word of the Eternal Father unites it self to our Nature, by so strict an union, as to become one and the self same Person. And by such an union that the secret thereof is not to be comprehended by all Human reason, and is known only to God alone; an union, so firm and indissoluble that as Saint Denis says, * *What it has once join'd can never be separated*, nor can never disunite it self. Love, says the same Saint, is an unitive Virtue, that transforms the lover into the belov'd Object, and of two makes but one. But that which no love in the World ever made, the love of God has made for Man, it never happen'd in the World; that of the lover, and of the Object belov'd, love effectually made but one and the self same thing, 'twas a wonder which seems reserv'd for Heaven, where the Father and the Son are indeed truly but one, yet the love of God for Men was so great, that God united himself to Man, and united himself to him after such a manner, that God and Man are but one and the self same Person, so that Man is truly God, and God truly Man; so that all that is truly proper to God, may be truly and properly sayd of Man; and on the contrary all that is truly proper to Men, may be truly and properly sayd of God himself. Lastly, he whom Men beheld Speaking, Walking, Acting and Suffering, was truly God: He was truly Cloth'd with Human Nature, he perform'd all Human Actions, and he who perform'd 'em was God. † *Whoever heard of any such thing as this? And whoever saw any thing like unto it?* God to be wrap'd in Swadling Clouts? God to Weep. God to become Weary and Feeble, God to Suffer? * *How is this possible O Lord*, says the Royal Prophet; *that thou who hast made the highest Heavens thy refuge, where no Evil shall come to thee, and no Scourge shall be able to approach thy Tabernacle?* Yet notwithstanding the Whips, Nails, and Thorns thou'd have overtaken thee and Nail'd thee to a Cross. What is farther from God then this? † *'Tis an admirable work that proceeded from him*, says the Prophet *Isay*; 'tis a work that exceeds the thoughts of Man, and even those of the Angels themselves; and puts 'em into a perpetual admiration.

The other wonder that God has wrought, and which is also an Invention, of his Infinite Love, is the Institution of the Blessed Sacrament; of his Body and of his Blood:

In

* Quod semel
assumpsit,
numquam di-
misit.
Dion. Areop. de
divin. nom. c. 4.

† Quis audi-
vit unquam ta-
le, & quis vi-
dit huic simile?
Isai. 66. 9.

* Altissimum
posuisti refu-
gium tuum:
non accedet ad
te malum, &
flagellum non
appropinqua-
bit tabernacu-
lo tuo.
Psal. 90. 9. 10.

† Peregrinum
est opus ejus
ab eo.
Isai. 28. 17.

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In the first, he has hid his Divinity under the Vail of Flesh. In this, he has hid both his Divinity and Humanity, under the accidents of Bread and Wine; that we might be able to Eat him. In the first God receiv'd Man into his Bosom, by uniting the Human Nature to the Divine Word; in this, he wou'd have Man receive him into his Breast and Heart. Man is united to God by the first; God and Man unite themselves to you by the second; in the first the communication and union is made with one only individual Nature; which is the Sacred Humanity of Jesus CHRIST, Personally united to the Divine Word; but in the second, an union is made with all those who Receive his Body and his Blood, he becomes the same thing with 'em, not truly by an Hypostatical and Personal union, but at least by the most intimate and streight one that is possible, next to that, *† He who Eates my Flesh, and Drinks my Blood, remains in me and I in him.* What can be more admirable then this? * *The Lord who is Good and Merciful has made an abridgment of all his Wonders, he has given those that fear him to Eat.* In effect this is not only, the greatest of all the wonders he has wrought. As Saint Thomas says; but 'tis an abridgment of all those wonders which he has ever wrought.

We Read in the Holy Scripture that King *Assurnus*, to manifest the Riches and Glory of his Kingdom, made a Solemn Feast which lasted a hundred and fourscore Days. Jesus CHRIST, the King of Kings, wou'd also in a Feast worthy of his greatness, manifest the Riches of his Treasures, and the Majesty of his Glory; and for this effect, he gives himself to us; which is a wonder no less surprising than that of the Incarnation. The *Manna* which fell in the Desert, and was only a shadow of this Divine *Manna*, heretofore fill'd the Children of *Israel* with admiration; which caus'd 'em to cry out: *What is this?* And afterwards did they not shew the like astonishment when they sayd, *† How was it possible that he can give us his Flesh to Eat?* Moreover this Heavenly Feast, is not bounded within the term of a hundred and fourscore Days, as that of King *Assurnus* was; 'tis already more than sixteen hundred Years that it has lasted, and that we have Eaten it; and it will remain in the same manner to the end of the World. * *Come, cry's out the Royal Prophet, and behold the works of God, the Prodigious things he has wrought*

O O O 2

† Qui manducat meam carnem, & bibit meum sanguinem, in me manet, & ego in illo.

Joan. 6. 57.

* Memoriam fecit mirabilium suorum, misericors, & miserator Dominus: escam dedit timetibus se.

Psal. 110. 4.

Miraculorum ab ipso factorum maximam Thom. serm. fest. Corp. Christi.

Opusc. 57.

Ut ostenderet divitias glorie Regni sui.

Risler. t. 4.

Quid est hoc? Esod. 16. 15.

† Quomodo potest hic nobis carnem suam dare ad manducandum?

Joan. 6. 33.

* Venite, & videte opera Domini, quae posuit prodigia super terram, Isai. 41. 9.

upon

upon Earth. O how admirable is the Wisdom and Depth of his Councils! And how wonderful are the means he makes use off for the Salvation of Men! But as to the wonder of the Body and Blood of JESUS CHRIST, of which I am but to speak; I beseech God to give me his Grace that I may acquit my self as I ought, and that he wou'd supply by his help, the weakness of my Understanding.

The Belov'd Disciple speaking of the Institution of this Adorable Sacrament. JESUS CHRIST, says he, *having Lov'd his, who were in the World, Lov'd 'em unto the End.* He says that JESUS CHRIST *Lov'd 'em to the End.* not only to express, that he always Lov'd 'em, but to give us to understand, that in the end he still gave greater marks of his Love. In effect 'twas then that he more abundantly pour'd forth his Graces upon 'em, and left 'em most precious pledges of his Love; because in Instituting the Adorable Sacrament, he left himself in all his Majesty unto Men; he cou'd not do any thing that cou'd better let us see the excess of his Love for us: For 'tis the property of Love to desire always to enjoy the presence of the Object belov'd, and not to be able to suffer the absence thereof. Wherefore he tenderly loving Men, and being he was to return to his Father, he found out this means to quit the World after such a manner, that he did not quite leave it. And to go from it in such a manner, that he ceas'd not to remain in it. He descended upon Earth without quitting Heaven; he ascends to Heaven without quitting Earth, he quitted the Bosom of his Father, yet ceas'd not always to remain therein. He remains always with his Children, tho' he has left 'em. † *I came from my Father, says he, and am come into the World, I quit the World and return to my Father.* 'Tis also another property of Love, to desire to Live in the Memory of the Person that is lov'd; and 'tis for this reason, that those who love another and are oblig'd to a separation, make ordinarily some mutual present, that may give occasion of thinking of one another during absence. But JESUS CHRIST to the end, we might think of him, has given himself to us in the Blessed Sacrament of the Eucharist, who wou'd not leave us a less pledge, than himself, to oblige us to think of him, wherefore he had no sooner Instituted the Blessed Sacrament, but he commands us saying, * *Do this in Memory of me,* as if he had sayd, every

Cum dilexisset
facti, qui erant
in mundo, in
finem dilexit
eos.
JOHN. 13. 1.

† Exivi à Pa-
tre, & veni in
mundum: ite-
rum relinquo
mundum, &
vado ad Pa-
trem.
JOHN. 16. 28.

* Hoc facite
in meam com-
memoratio-
nem.
LUC. 22. 19. &
1. COR. 11. 24.

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every time you Celebrate this Mystery, remember the Love which I have had for you, remember what I have done and suffer'd for you.

† *There is no other Nation how powerful soever; sayd Moyses to the Children of Israel, that have their God's so near 'em, as our God is present unto us. And Salomon after he had ended the Temple, did he not testifie aloud the astonishment he was in, that God wou'd establish his abode therein? * Is it possible, says he, that God shou'd remain with Men upon Earth, for if the Heavens themselves are not sufficient to receive him, how much less able is this House which I have built to do so? With how far greater reason may we say the same thing, because 'tis not the Shadow or Figure of God, but 'tis God himself that makes his abode with us? † Behold, says he, that I am with you unto the End of the World: What sweetness what advantage is this for us, that our Redeemer and our God will vouchsafe to take up his habitation with us, to sweeten the tediousness of our Pilgrimage? If the Company of a Friend be so great a comfort in our Afflictions, what comfort ought not that of God to be unto us? What consolation ought it not to be to us, to see him enter our House, to see him pass along the Streets, and how he lets himself be carry'd from one place to another, and that he has a fixt abode in our Churches, where we may at all times visit him. Entertaining our selves with him, discover our Miseries, Afflictions and Temptations, beg his help in 'em, and what may we not expect from his all powerful Hand, with all confidence, since he vouchsafes to approach us after such a manner that he is to be ready to give us assistance in all our necessities?*

** I will establish my abode in the midst of you; I will walk amongst you, and I will be your God. What Heart wou'd not be touch'd and inflam'd with Love, to behold the Divine Majesty, treat thus familiarly with Men?*

But the goodness of God do's not rest here, only, he is not contented only to come into our Houses, to remain in our Churches; but he will also have us possess him, within our selves; he will remain within our Breast, he will make that his Temple and Tabernacle, O Ineffable Love! O Unheard of Liberality! That I shou'd receive into my Breast and Heart, the same JESUS CHRIST true God true Man, The same Saviour which the Holy Virgin carry'd nine Months in her Sacred Womb! And if Saint Elizabeth be-

holding,

† Neque est aut fuit aliquando tam grandis natio, quæ habeat Deos appropinquantes sibi, sicut adest nobis Deus noster.

Deuter. 4. 7. * Ergone putandum est quod vere Deus habitet super terram? Si enim, celorum te capere non possunt: quanto magis domus hæc, quam edificavi? 3 Reg. 8. 27. I ecce ego vobiscum sum omnibus diebus usque ad consummationem sæculi. Math. 28. 20.

* Ponam tabernaculum meum in medio vestri; ambulabo inter vos, & ero Deus vester. Ezechie. 36. 11. 12.

† Et unde hoc
nihil, ut veni-
at Mater Do-
mini mei ad
me? Luc. 1. 43.

* Delicæ me-
æ esse cum fi-
liis hominum.
Ezech. 16. 31.

† Crucigen-
tes submetipfis
filium Dei.
Heb. 6. 6.

* Non hor-
ruiſti virginis
uterum.
In hymno SS.
Ambroſij Aug.
Te Deum, &c.

holding your Holy Mother, which bore you in her Sacred Womb, entering into her House, cry'd as surpris'd with astonishment, and fill'd with the Holy Ghost, † *From whence comes this Grace and Favor unto me that the Mother of my Lord ſhou'd come unto me?* What ſhall I ſay O my God, beholding you enter not only into my House, but into my ſelf? With how far greater reason may I ſay, from whence comes this Grace unto me; who have been for ſo long a time the Devils habitation; to me who have ſo often offended you, and been ſo ungrateful and unfaithful for ſo many benefits? From whence proceeds this Grace and Favor, but from the exceſs of thy Mercy, and becauſe thou art Goodneſs it ſelf, * *That you ſhou'd make it your delight to be with the Sons of Men;* and becauſe your Love to them is Infinite.

But if ſo great a Favor as this were granted only to thoſe who have a Pure and Innocent Soul, it were, ſays the Holy Doctors, an ineſtimable benefit for Mankind: But the Lord is ſo good that he refuſes not, to Communicate himſelf even to the Wicked as well as to the Good, to his Enemies, as well as his Servants: Nay, that he vouchſafes for love of us, to be deliver'd again into the Hands of Executioners, and is pleas'd for the comfort of his Servants, even to enter into the Mouths of Impure Sinners: Nay, that he may the better Communicate himſelf to us daily, he is pleas'd to expoſe himſelf to be ſold anew, and again to be Crucifi'd by them, according to Saint Pauls words, who ſays, † *That they Crucify in themſelves the Son of God.* Behold whether you have not ſufficient ſubject to love and ſerve him? The holy Church ſeems aſtoniſh'd that he had no repugnance to enter into the Chafte Womb of the Virgin, ſaying, * *Thou haſt no horror, to enter into the Womb of the Virgin.* Compare the Purity of this Virgin without Spot, with thoſe Impurities with which the Heart of Man is fill'd; and you will ſee there is far greater reason to be aſtoniſh'd that he has not a horror to enter into the Impure Breſt of a Sinner.

CHAP. II.

Of the Adorable wonders, that Faith Teaches us, concerning the Blessed Sacrament of the Eucharist.

FAITH teaches us, that the words of Consecration, work very many wonders. The first is, that as soon as the Priest has finish'd the pronouncing over the Host the words of Consecration, the Body of JESUS CHRIST is immediately Present therein, even the self same Body that was born of the Sacred Virgin; the same that Dy'd upon the Cross, the same was rais'd again to Life, and lastly the same, who at present sits at the Right Hand of God the Father. That moreover, as soon as the Priest had pronounc'd over the Chalice, the words of Consecration, the Precious Blood of JESUS CHRIST is Present there also, that in a hundred thousand Masses for Example, that are throughout the extent of the whole Church sayd in the space of an hour, God works this wonder at the same moment, that the Priest ends the words of Consecration; that in all these Masses, the Body and Blood of our Saviour, is effectually present, and whither we Consecrate, in one place or another, he is always the same in all places.

The second wonder we are oblig'd to believe, is, that after the words of Consecration, there remains neither Bread nor Wine, tho' it appears otherwise to our Senses. When Jacob wou'd obtain of his Father *Isaac* the blessing he design'd for *Esau*, he cover'd his Hands with the Skin of a Kid, that he might the better resemble his Brother. * 'Tis indeed the Voice of Jacob, sayd the holy Old Man his Father, but they are the Hands of *Esau*. The same happens here, that which we touch with our Hands, that which is expos'd to our Senses to Judge of, appears Bread and Wine; But the Voice and word of Faith assures us the contrary,

* Vox quidem vox Jacob est, sed manus sunt Esau.
Gen. 27. 12.

† Praestet si-
des Supple-
mentum sen-
tium defectui.

Ambr. l. de
his qui inini-
antur miss. c. 9.

Quia non est
impossibile
apud Deum
omne verbum.
Luc. 1. 37.

Concil. Tride.
Sess. 13. de
Sanct. Euch.
Sacr. c. 4.

contrary, † Which ought to supply the defects of our Senses' As Manna which was the Shadow and Figure of this Adorable Sacrament, had the tast of all sorts of things, and yet was none of those things of which it had the tast, so this Heavenly Manna, of which we speak, has the tast of Bread and Wine, and yet is neither the one nor the other. Moreover in the matter of other Sacraments, there happens no change at all, the Water in Baptism remains still Water, and the Oyl in Confirmation, and Extrem Unction still remains Oyl. In this the matters is quite chang'd, and that which appears Bread and Wine, is not so; the substance of Bread, being chang'd into the Body of JESUS CHRIST; and the substance of Wine, being turn'd into his Blood. Wherefore Saint Ambrose says, he that could Create of nothing Heaven and Earth, cannot he with far greater reason make one thing of another, and change one thing into another? Moreover do we not daily see that the Bread we Eat, is in a short time chang'd into our own Flesh, by the help of our Natural Heat? Why may not then the all Powerful Virtue of God, make the like change in an instant? And to draw us out of one astonishment, by another; is it not far more wonderful that God made himself Man, without ceasing to be God; than that the Bread, ceasing to be Bread, is chang'd into Flesh? But the same Divine Power whereby the Son of God made himself Man, here makes the Bread and Wine to be chang'd into his Body and Blood: *For to God nothing is impossible?*

The third wonder, that happens in this change is, that 'tis not made as other Natural changes are, in which one thing is chang'd into another; for in those there always remains something of the thing, that is chang'd, as for example, when Earth is chang'd into Gold or Silver, or Water into Christal, the matter always remains the same, there is no change but of the form; the same happens also, when of a piece of Clay or Wax, we make sometimes a Lion, sometimes an Eagle; but here, after the Consecration, there remains nothing in the Host of the substance of Bread, nor in the Chalice of the substance of Wine; neither as to the form nor to the nature; but all the substance of the Bread is quite chang'd into the Body of JESUS CHRIST; and all the substance of Wine, into that of his Blood? Wherefore the holy Council of Trent, says

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says that the Church desirous to express this intire Conversion properly calls it by the Name of *Transubstantiation*; that is to say, the changing of one substance into another: For as that change of form, which happens in Natural Generation, may most properly be call'd *Transformation*; so here the intire change of the substance of Bread and Wine, which is converted into the substance of the Body and Blood of JESUS CHRIST, is very justly call'd *Transubstantiation*.

So that in the Eucharist there remains nothing of the substance of Bread nor of Wine; there remains only the colour, smell, tast, and other accidents of Bread and Wine, which are call'd the Sacramental Species, and this is also another wonder that appears in this august Sacrament, that the accidents remain in it without subject or substance; the property of accidents, as all Philosophy teaches us, being always inseparable ty'd to their substance. For is it not certain that whiteness, cannot subsist of it self without being joyn'd to some substance? And the same thing ought to be sayd of tast and smell. But here by an order, above the whole order of Nature, the accidents of Bread and Wine are Miraculously sustain'd, without being united to any thing; because that substance of Bread and Wine is no more there to sustain 'em, as we have already sayd; and the Body and Blood of JESUS CHRIST, which succeed in place of Bread and Wine, cannot be the subject of these accidents; so that God sustains 'em of themselves by a continual Miracle.

We are also oblig'd to believe that not only the Body of JESUS CHRIST, is under the species and accidents of Bread and Wine; but that JESUS CHRIST true God and true Man is intirely there, and after the same manner as he is in Heaven. So that the Blood of JESUS CHRIST, His Sacred Soul, and his Divinity are conjointly with his Body in the Host; under the Species of Bread; and his Body his Soul and his Divinity are also conjointly with his Blood in the Chalice under the Species of Wine. But as Divines observe very well, all these things are not in the Eucharist after the same manner: For some are there by Virtue of the words of Consecration, and others by way of *Concomitancy*. Those that are there by Virtue of the words of Consecration are those which are express'd by the same words; so that there is only the Body of JESUS CHRIST in the Host; and in the Chalice only

Tom. II.

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the Blood of JESUS CHRIST, because the words of Consecration properly produce only what they signifie, and they signifie nothing else but, *This is my Body, this is my Blood.* The things which are in the Eucharist by way of *Concomitancy* are those which are necessarily joyn'd or united to that which is express'd by the words of Consecration: For when divers things are necessarily joyn'd together. 'Tis necessary that where there is one, there shou'd also be the other. But as the Body of JESUS CHRIST is not at present separated from his Blood, but is united with it, as well as with his Soul, and his Divinity; all these things for this reason, are in the Host with his Body; and as his Blood is not at present separated from his Body but is united with it, with his Soul and Divinity; so all these things are also for the same reason, in the Chalice. Divines to make us the better understand this, say, that if in these three Days, that JESUS CHRIST remain'd in the Sepulcher, Saint Peter or any other of the Apostles had Consecrated, the Soul of JESUS CHRIST wou'd not have been in the Eucharist; because then it was not united with his Body; and that then there wou'd have been there only his Dead Body, such as it was in the Sepulcher. But united notwithstanding to the Divinity; from which it was never separated. In like manner, when JESUS CHRIST himself Consecrated at his last Supper, he was in the Eucharist true God and true Man, but notwithstanding Passible and Mortal as he was then; instead of being as he is now in the Eucharist, Living, Glorious, Resuscitated, Immortal, and lastly such as he is in Heaven.

But tho' it be true, that the Blood of JESUS CHRIST is in the Host, and his Body in the Chalice, yet 'twas fit there shou'd be made two distinct Consecrations, to represent more to the Life, the Passion of the Son of God, in which his Blood was separated from his Body, so as 'tis express'd by the words of the Consecration of the Chalice, *Which shall be shed for you and many others.* Moreover the Sacrament of the Eucharist, having been Instituted for the nourishment of our Souls, 'twas convenient that as Eating and Drinking concur to the perfect nourishment of our Bodies, so those two things also, shou'd concur to the Spiritual nourishment of our Souls. 'Tis true that the Church, for important reasons, permit only the Laity to Communicate under the Species of Bread, but because in receiving

Qui pro vobis
& pro multis
effundetur.

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receiving the Body of JESUS CHRIST in the Host, they receive also his Blood, his Soul and his Divinity; there's no doubt, that if they approach this Sacrament with the same disposition, with which the Priest Communicates under both kinds; they'll receive also the same abundance of Graces. Saint Hilary says, that as Manna, which was the Figure of the Eucharist, had this property that neither he, that gather'd more than another had any more, nor he who gather'd less, had less of it. So in the same manner here, neither he who Communicates under both Species receives more, nor he who Communicates only under the Species of Bread only, receives less, but both receive equally alike.

There is also another wonder in this adorable Sacrament, which is, that JESUS CHRIST is not wholly intire in the Host, and also in the Chalice, but even in each Particle of the Host, or in the least Species of Wine, how little soever it may be, he is as intire as in the whole Host, and as he is in Heaven. This is a truth which the Gospel teaches us. For JESUS CHRIST in the last Supper, did not Consecrate each piece of Bread a part, with which he Communicated his Apostles, but only Consecrated at once such a quantity of Bread, as was necessary to Communicate all of 'em after 'twas parted, and the Gospel also speaking of the Consecration of the Chalice, expressly takes notice, that JESUS CHRIST gave it to his Apostles saying to them, *Take and divide it amongst you.* But not only the Body of JESUS CHRIST is all intire in each Particle of the Host, and in each Particle of the Species of Wine, after the division of the Host or Species of Wine: But before this division he is also quite intire in the whole Host, and in each Particle thereof; and quite intire in the whole Species of Wine, and in each Particle of these Species. This may be made clear, by some Natural Comparisons: The Soul, for Example, is all intire in the whole Body, and is also intire in each part of it; the sound which the Voice makes, when any one speaks to you, is all intirely in your Ears, and also all intire in the Ears of them that hear it with you. Moreover if you take a Looking-glass: You'll see your self intirely represented in it, tho' the Glass be far less than you, and if you break the Looking-glass into many pieces, you'll see your self after the same manner in each of these pieces, as you before saw your self in the whole Looking-glass. The Saints and holy Doctors of the

only

Accipite, & dividite inter vos.
Luc. 22, 17.

Church make use of these Examples, and many others of the same Nature, to make us comprehend after some sort, these adorable Mysteries; for tho' there is none of these Examples which has a perfect and intire parity with what we shou'd explicate, yet they cease not to give us some light concerning it.

One thing, which is also very Miraculous in this Mystery, is, that when we break the Host or divide the Chalice, 'tis not CHRIST that is broken or divided, he remains always whole and intire in each part, how little soever it be; 'tis the Accidents of Bread and Wine that is divided; and in the same manner when one crushes or breaks the Host in his Mouth, 'tis not CHRIST that he crushes or breaks in this kind; but they are only the Accidents. † *The Accidents with which you appear to be Clothed to our Senses are broken, but you O Lord remain whole: It seems to our Senses that we press or crush you between our Teeth as Bread, and yet we never do so to you. You remain always whole and intire without any division without any corruption, under the least Particle that is.* 'Tis this that the Church teaches us, also by the words of the Hymn of the Blessed Sacrament. * *He that receives it, do's not bruse it, do's not break it, do's not divide it, he receives it whole and intire, he makes no division of the thing it self; he makes only a separation of the Signs and Accidents.*

† O humanorum illusio sensuum: Frangatur illa quæ humanis sensibus in te videntur accidentia, & tamen nec corrumpetur, nec frangeris. Te dentes videntur multicare velut materialem panem, & tamen nunquam multiscaris; perfectus & integer sub qualibet quantumque minima contingit particula divisus, integer accipitur. Nulla rei fit scissura, signi tantum sit fractura, quæ nec status, nec natura signati minuitur.

Hieron. c. 4. apud Eusebium.

* A sumente non concisus, non confractus, non divisus, integer accipitur. Signi tantum sit fractura, quæ nec status, nec natura signati minuitur.

All these things being such truths as are taught us by Faith, we must believe 'em with submission, without going about to embroil our selves with curious Doubts and Questions. And for this effect we must always stick close to this principle of Saint Austin, † *That God can do many things which surpass the reach of our Reason and Imagination.* For as the Saints say very well, the wonders of God wou'd not be great, if we were able, to conceive 'em; moreover the Merit of Faith consists in believing that which we can neither see, nor comprehend. Besides there is still in this Mystery of the adorable Sacrament, one thing which is not found in any other Mystery. For in other Mysteries, we fully believe that which we see not; and this is always very Meditatorious; because JESUS CHRIST himself says. * *Blessed are*

* Domus aliquid Deum posse, quod nos faciamur investigare non posse. Aug. tract. 12. sup. Joan.

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are they that have not seen and believ'd. But here we believe contrary to what we see. For according to what our Senses tell us; it seems to us, that what we see is Bread and Wine; and notwithstanding we must believe that there is neither Bread nor Wine in what we see. Our Faith in this is like that of Abraham, of which Saint Paul sayd, *It was contrary to Hope, he believ'd in Hope*; that God had given him Supernatural Hope overcame in him, the Natural diffidence he had reason to have. For he believ'd he shou'd have a Son; and hop'd contrary to what he cou'd reasonably expect by the course of Nature; his Wife and he being well in years. He cou'd not naturally expect to have any. And when he was ready to sacrifice his Son, in Obedience to God's Commands he ceas'd not yet to believe that God wou'd keep the promise he had made him; in multiplying his Posterity in the Person of this Son. It is after this manner that in this adorable Sacrament, what our Senses teach us, is what is intirely contrary to what we believe; and tis for this reason that our Faith herein is also the more Meritorious. *You shall eat Bread in the Morning*, says the Lord to his People in *Exod. 16. 13.* *In the Evening you shall be satisfied with Flesh*, by the Morning, this present Life is signify'd; and 'tis in this Life that God gives himself to us under the Species of Bread and Wine; but when the Evening shall come that is to say, when we shall be in Glory, then we shall see the Flesh of Jesus Christ; then we shall clearly know how and in what manner he is under the Sacramental Species; the Vail shall be withdrawn, and we shall see all things clearly as they are, and not under Clouds as we now do. I might in Confirmation of all I have sayd, recount here many very Authentical Miracles which Histories are full of; but I will content my self in relating only one, which is recounted in the History of the Order of Hieronymites, and happen'd to one of the Religious of that Order nam'd *Edter* of *Guennelas*, who was afterwards Prior of *Gandalupe*. This Man being for a long time assaulted and molested with many doubts against Faith, and above all concerning the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar, his Imagination always representing to him, that there cou'd be no Blood in the Host, it pleas'd God to deliver him from this Temptation, after a most Miraculous manner. Once upon a Saturday as he sayd Mass of our Blessed Lady, and after he had Consecrated, and had inclin'd

* Beati qui non viderunt, & crediderunt. *Joan. 19. 19.*

† Qui contra spem in spem credidit. *Rom. 4. 18.*

* Vespere comeditis carnes, & mane saturabimini panibus. *Exod. 16. 12.*

Liv. 2. c. 9. de l'Hist. de l'Ord. des Hier.

supplices eo
rogamus.

inclin'd himself to say that Prayer which begins with these words. *De humiliter besorobor*; he saw on a sudden a thick Cloud that descended from on high, and cover'd the Altar upon which he Celebrated after such a manner, that he cou'd neither see the Host nor the Chalice. Surpris'd with so strange an accident, and seas'd with a very great fear he began to beg of God with Tears, that he wou'd deliver him from the danger he was in; and that he wou'd let him know the cause of this prodigy. And presently the Cloud vanish'd by little and little; and he became quite astonish'd, because looking upon the Altar he saw no more, that Host which he had Consecrated, and found the Chalice uncover'd and empty: He remain'd for some time like a Dead Man, and afterwards being come a little to himself, he began again to beg of God with a great oppression of Heart, and a great abundance of Tears, that if what had happen'd to him proceeded from any fault of his, that he wou'd pardon him, and free him from the great perplexity and trouble he was in, whilst he was in this disquiet of Mind, he perceiv'd the Host in the Air: Upon a Patine full of light, and perceiv'd that after it had been there for some time it came and plac'd it self over the top of the Chalice, and drop'd into it so much Blood, as there had been in it before; after which came the Corporal, and of it self repos'd upon the Chalice, and the Host return'd to the same place upon the Altar, where he had put it. So many wonders one upon another, fill'd him with astonishment and admiration, and whilst he was in this condition, not knowing what to do. He heard a Voice that sayd to him: Make an end of the Sacrifice, and keep secret all that you have seen, and after this he was never disquieted or tormented with the like Temptations as he had been before. All this was found after his Death; Written with his own Hand, in a Paper, in which he had writ his general Confession, that he might obey the Command given him to keep the thing secret, for as to the Person who serv'd at the Altar he perceiv'd nothing of what we have spoken off; nor heard the Voice; he perceiv'd only that the Priest had shed many Tears, and that he had been a longer time in saying Mass then ordinarily he was wont to be.

CHAP. III.

In which the Preparation we ought to bring with us, when we approach this Divine Sacrament, is begun to be declar'd.

THE advantage which the Sacrament of the Altar has above all others, is, that JESUS CHRIST true God and true Man is really in it; whereby it becomes more excellent, then the rest of the Sacraments, and works greater effect of Grace in our Souls. For in the other Sacraments, we partake of the Grace that is communicated to us; but here we participate of the source or fountain of that Grace: In the others, we Drink only the Waters that flow from this fountain; but here we Drink out of the source or fountain it self; because in it we receive JESUS CHRIST himself, true God and true Man. This Sacrament is also call'd the Sacrament of the Eucharist, that is to say, the Sacrament of Grace; because the source or origin of all Graces is herein contain'd, and that we receive the Son of God herein, who is the Sovereign Grace; and who by his Incarnation and Death, has again re-establish'd Men in the Grace and Favor of his Father: 'Tis also call'd the Sacrament of Communion according to the words of Saint Luke in the Acts of the Apostles, † *They persever'd in the Communion of breaking of Bread*, because in receiving it, we who Communicate become partakers of the Sovereign good who is God, and of all other goods and Spiritual gifts; and that JESUS CHRIST after having given us his Body and Blood, Communicates at the same time to us, all the Treasures of his Grace, which he has obtain'd for us by his Incarnation and Death. This term of Communion suites very properly to it upon another account also; because it unites all the Faithful together, who participate of the same Table and of the same Bread, and thereby become one according to the words of the Apostle, * *We are one Bread and one*

* Unus panis, unum corpus, Body.

† Erant perseverantes in communicatione frangendi panis. Act. 2. 42.

multi sumus,
omnes qui de
uno pane par-
ticipamus.
1 Cor. 10. 17.

* Propterea
Dominus no-
ster Jesus
Christus cor-
pus & sangui-
nem suum in
ijs rebus com-
mendavit, quæ
ad unum al-
quid redigun-
tur ex multis.
Namque aliud
in unum ex
multis granis
consecratur, ali-
ud in unum ex
multis acinis
conluit.

Aug. Tract. 26.
in Joan.

† Crucifixi
corpus susci-
piamus; divini
carbonis parti-
cipet efficiamur,
ut ignis
desiderij in
cibus insti al-
sumpta ea, quæ
ex carbone o-
ritur, inflam-
matione, pec-
cata nostra
exurat, ac
pectora nostra
collustrat.

Joan. Damasc.
de fide Orthod.

l. 4. c. 14. de
sanct. & mystic.

Christ. myst.

* Deus noster
ignem consum-
mens est.

Deut. 4. 24. &
Hebr. 12. 29.

† Ecce præn-
dium meum
paravi: tauri
mei, & altitia
occisa sunt,
& omnia pa-
rata.

Matth. 22. 4.

* Parasti in
dulcedine tua
pauperi, Deus.

Psal. 67. 11.

† O sacrum
convivium, in
quo Christus
furnitur: reco-
litur memoria
passionis ejus:
mens impletur
gratiâ, & fu-
tura gloriæ
nobis pignus
datur.

In Offic. S. Sacr.

antiph. ad
Agn.

Body all of us participating of the same Bread: One of the reasons also why CHRIST Instituted this Sacrament under the Species of Bread and Wine, * Is, says Saint Austin, to shew us, that as Bread is made of many grains of Wheat, and the Wine of many Grapes; so many Faithful, who participate of the same Sacrament, become one Mystical Body. Saint John Damascen also compares it to the burning Cole with which the Seraphin purified the Lips of Isay. † Let us receive, says he, the Body of him who was Crucif'd, and become partakers of it, that the Fire of our inflam'd desire, being kindl'd in us, by the inflammation that arises from this Cole, our Sins, may thereby be consum'd and our Breasts enlighten'd. He add's also, that the Divinity being a consuming Fire, according to the words of Scripture, * Our God is a consuming Fire; this Heavenly Food which is united to him, consumes all our Imperfections, purifies us from whatsoever is unclean in us, and heaps Spiritual goods and blessings upon us. Lastly, this is the Banquet, the Gospel makes mention of. In which God Commands that the Guests invited shou'd be told: † Behold I have prepar'd my Banquet, my Beefs, and Feethings are kill'd, and all things are ready. In saying all is prepar'd, all is ready, he gives us sufficiently to understand, that we shall find therein all we can wish for; wherefore the Royal Prophet speaking to God of this Heavenly Manna, * Thou hast O Lord, says he, prepar'd for the Poor, in the Excess of thy Bounty and Sweetness: He says not what it is that God has prepar'd; because 'tis so ineffable a good that cannot be express'd by words, and is above all understanding. † O Sacred Banquet, cry's out the Church, in which CHRIST becomes our Food, in which the memory of his Passion is renew'd, in which the Mind is fill'd with Grace, and in which a Pledge of future Glory is bestow'd upon us. O Sacred Banquet! This Name alone of Banquet is a Name of Joy and Abundance. O Sacred Banquet where Man is nourish'd with his God! Sacred Banquet, which renews to our memory the Passion of our Saviour, and that excessive Love which oblig'd him to deliver himself up to Death for us, even to the Death of the Cross! Sacred Banquet, in which our Soul is fully satiated with God, and replenish'd with his Grace. Sacred Banquet in which is given us a Pledge of our future Glory; a Pledge so precious; that it differs nothing from the recompence which ought one Day to be given us in Heaven. All the difference

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difference that is, is, that here he has given us himself under the Vail of the Sacramental Species, and in Heaven we shall behold him, *Face to Face, such as he is.*

Facie ad faciem sicuti est.

But the excellency of so august a Sacrament, and of the Sovereign Majesty of him we receive in it, requires that we shou'd bring with us great preparations for the receiving of it. The Royal Prophet speaking of the Temple; which he desir'd to build to the Lord, * *'Tis a great Work,* says he, *since 'tis not to prepare an Abode for Man, but for God himself:* And after having gather'd together a great quantity of Gold and Silver Vessels and Precious Stones, all this seem'd very small and inconsiderable to him; for the building of a Temple, in which the Ark of alliance was to be plac'd, wherein Manna was kept, which was a Shadow and Figure only of this Divine Sacrament; what ought we not therefore to do to prepare the Temple, in which we desire to receive God himself in Person? Ought not our care and precaution herein, to surpass the care and precaution of David, as much as a Reality and a Body; surpasses a Figure and a Shadow? There is nothing without doubt, that we ow not to his Infinite Majesty, whom we receive in this august Sacrament. But, we ought moreover to consider, that 'tis of very great importance, to be well prepar'd to receive him; for such as our disposition and preparation shall be, that we carry along with us to it, such also shall be the Grace, which will be bestow'd upon us therein; in like manner as the same is the quantity of Water we draw out of a Fountain, as the capacity of the Vessel is, in which we draw it. The better to comprehend this, we must know that Divines take notice, that he who approaches this Sacrament, with more good Works, and more holy Dispositions, do's not only receive more Grace, in Virtue of his good Works, and holy Dispositions with which he approaches, which with the Council of Trent they call the Grace, of *Him that works;* or that is obtain'd by him that performs it, but that Sacramental Grace which the Sacrament gives of it self, besides this other, is, *Of the Work Perform'd,* and that purely proceeds from it, independant of the Person by whom it was perform'd, but is united to it by Divine Institution, and becomes greater, and more abundant, according to the proportion of that disposition, which of his own part he brings to it, is greater or more Holy. For God works in the Order of Grace, after the same manner as he do's in the

* Opus namque grande est: neque enim homini preparatur habitatio, sed Deo. 1 Paralip. 29.

Ex opere operante.

Ex opere operato.

Order of Nature, where we see causes work upon Subjects, according to the disposition they find in 'em. Fire, for example, takes in a moment upon dry Wood; but very slowly when 'tis not so; and acts very differently upon the one and the other, according to the different degrees of dryness it finds in 'em. The same happens in the Sacrament of the Altar; and consequently, by all sorts of reasons it extremely imports, to be well prepar'd for the approaching to it.

C H A P. IV.

That we must approach Holy Communion with a great purity of Soul, not only in regard of Mortal Sins, but even of the least Venial Imperfections.

I Shall treat hereafter chiefly of three things. The first of the Disposition requir'd to approach worthily to the Holy Eucharist. Secondly, of what we are to do after we have receiv'd it, and what thanksgiving we ought to make. Thirdly of the fruit we ought to draw from thence. First, as to what regards the Disposition or Preparation; I say that a greater Preparation is requir'd in this, than in all the other Sacraments; because the more excellent the Sacraments are, the more holy and exact ought to be the Disposition for the receiving 'em. For there are some of the Sacraments, that one may worthily receive without needing any other Disposition, than a true Repentance of our Sins. But the excellency and dignity of this Sacrament, of which I speak; because God himself is included therein, besides the Disposition I now mention'd, requires also that of Confession. When one has committed any Mortal Sin; so that Contrition is not sufficient, to approach worthily, but it requires also a precedent Confession, as the Council of *Trent* has decided this Point; founding it self upon these words of the Apostle. † *Let each one prove himself, and so let him Eat of this Bread and Drink of this Chalice.*

*Council. Triden.
Sess. 16. c. 7.
† Probat autem
homo, & sic
de pane illo
edat, & de ca-
lice bibat.
2 Cor. 11. 28.*

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Chalice. For the sense which the Council gives to these words, is, that this proof ought to be made by means of an Examen, and of the Tribunal of Confession; so that the Preparation of Confession, when one has committed any Mortal Sin, is of obligation to all Christians, under pain of Mortal Sin; which at the same time, suffices to dispose us for the receiving the Grace of the Sacrament.

But however, true it is, that Venial Sins, and generally all that are not Mortal, do not cause us to lose it, and that he who approaches this Sacrament in this State, fails not to receive *An augmentation of Grace*, as Divines call it; yet 'tis certain, that he loses that abundance of Grace and Spiritual gifts, which those receive, who approach it with more Purity and Devotion. For tho' Venial Sins do not extinguish Charity in us; yet they cause a great languishing in our fervor and Devotion, which are the most proper Dispositions to receive worthily the Body of JESUS CHRIST; so that if we desire to participate of that abundance of Grace, which those enjoy who receive it with extream purity, we must not only be free from all spots of Mortal Sin, but also intirely from the least specks of Venial Imperfections. JESUS CHRIST has himself giv'n us an example of this disposition, by washing the Feet of his Apostles before he Communicated 'em, teaching us hereby, says Saint Bernard, that approaching this Divine Sacrament, we ought not only to be wash'd and purifi'd from all Mortal, but also from the least Venial Sins, which are represented by the Dust which sticks to our Feet.

Saint Denis go's yet farther, and says, that JESUS CHRIST, by this example, requires that we shou'd be wash'd not only from Venial Sins, but also from the least Imperfections. This Sacrament, *Requiring an extream Purity of Mind.* And he recounts upon this Subject the ceremony, which the Priest uses at Mass, in washing his Hands before he offers this Adorable Sacrifice: For 'tis to be noted, says he, that he do's not wash his whole Hands, but only the tips of his Fingers, to teach us, that we ought to cleanse our selves, even from the least bad thoughts and imperfections, when we approach the Sacrament of the Altar. If Nabuchodonasor requir'd that they shou'd make choice of beautiful Youths, * *Who had not the least Defect*, which were to be nourish'd, with the same Meat that was serv'd at his own Table; how far greater purity is requir'd in us, when

Augmentum gratiæ.

Joan. 13. 5.

Bev'n. serm. de Cena Dom.

Extremam exigunt munditiam. D. Dion. c. 3. de Cel. Hierar. & S. Thom. 3. p. 2. 83. art. 5. ad 1.

* In quibus nulla esset macula. Dan. 1. 4.

we approach this Divine Table. Lastly, 'tis this Bread of Angels, which we here Eat, and therefore we ought to Eat it with an Angelical Purity.

*Peter, Cluny. l. 1.
de mirac. c. 2.*

Peter of Cluny reports, that a German Priest, who had always led a very exemplar Life, happen'd to fall into a Sin of Impurity, and having thereby gain'd a very ill habit, he ceas'd not however to continue all that time to say Mass, still adding crime to crime, as it happens to some, who having for a long time liv'd well, come to make a shameful fall, and not daring out of Pride, to Confess themselves of it, out of Pride also continue still there ordinary Communion, for fear of losing that good opinion, People had before of 'em. God notwithstanding had compassion of this miserable Man, chastising him after such a manner, as made him open his Eyes: And this happen'd in time of his Communion; for whilst he held the Body of JESUS CHRIST between his Fingers. The Host vanish'd on a sudden, as the Blood did also which was in the Chalice, as he was carrying it to his Mouth; so that he remain'd that Day without Communion, very much astonish'd at what had past. The like also happen'd to him two other times, when he endeavour'd to say Mass, to try whether God wou'd give him the same marks of Indignation as he had given him at the first; and hereby perceiving how enormous his Sins were, and how much the Anger of God was Incens'd against him; all Bath'd in Tears, he went, and cast himself at his Bishops Feet, recounting to him what had happen'd, to whom he Confess'd his Sins, with great marks of Sorrow, and having receiv'd a Penance for 'em, which oblig'd him to many sharp Disciplines and other Austerities; he faithfully accomplish'd 'em all, and in the mean while, abstain'd from saying Mass. Till the Bishop, judging that he had sufficiently satisfi'd the Divine Justice for his Sins, gave him permission to Celebrate. And the first time he began again to say Mass; there moreover happen'd another very Miraculous thing to him. Which was, that after he had sayd the greatest part of it; with many Sighs and Tears, and when he was upon the point to Communicate, on a sudden the three Hosts which before had disappear'd, by reason of his unworthiness, came back upon the Patine; and the same quantity of Blood, which had also disappear'd, came back into the Chalice; whereby God wou'd let him know by so Miraculous a sign as this, that his Sins were intirely pardon'd; he receiv'd this mark
of

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of the Infinite Mercy of God, with a very great sense of Gratitude; and full of a holy Joy, he consummated all the Hosts; and ever after, liv'd in very great Purity of Life. *Peter of Cluny* says, that the Bishop of *Cleremont* recounted this Story to him in the presence of very many Persons. *Cesarin* also in his Dialogues reports another very like unto this. *Cesar. l. 2.
Dial. c. 5.*

C H A P. V.

Of another sort of Disposition, and more particular preparation, for the approaching this Divine Sacrament.

THE Saints and Masters of Spirit tell us, that to obtain a greater abundance of Fruit, and more admirable effects of this Divine Sacrament, we must also endeavour more particularly to prepare our selves to it, by an actual Devotion; wherefore I shall here explicate what this Devotion is, and how we may excite our selves to obtain it: We must in the first place, say they, approach this Divine Sacrament with a great Humility and Respect, secondly, with a great deal of Love and Confidence; and thirdly with a great deal of Fervor; with a hunger after this Celestial Bread, and a desire to partake of it. All sorts of affectionate motions, by means of which we may excite this actual Devotion, either before, or after Communion, are reduc'd to these three sorts. But since several Books are fill'd with divers holy Devotions and Considerations, amplifi'd upon this matter, I shall content my self to touch hereupon some of the more ordinary, which often also are the most profitable; that after I have set down the method, every one may of himself work hereupon, and be able to gather fruit from his own Stock; which often make greater impression, and produce more profit then others; which Saint *Ignatius* takes notice of, in his Annotations upon the Spiritual Exercise.

First,

First, we must approach this Adorable Sacrament, with a most profound Respect and Humility: And the better to excite this sentiment or feeling in our Hearts, we may at first represent to our selves, the supream greatness and infinite Majesty of God, who is really in the Eucharist. We may consider that it is he, who has Created Heaven and Earth, by one sole Act of his Will, and conserv's 'em also, as well as he can destroy them by the same Divine Will; and last of all to think, that the Angels tremble with respect before him, and at the least sign he makes, the very Pillars of Heaven shake, and tremble with fear. After this we must turn our Eyes upon our selves, to behold our Misery and Baseness, and sometimes entertain our selves with the thoughts and sentiments of the *Publican* in the Gospel, who durst not approach the Altar, nor so much as lift up his Eyes to Heaven; but retiring into a corner of the Temple, knock'd his Breast, saying, * *Lord, be Merciful to me a Sinner*; sometimes we must help our selves with the words of the *Prodigal Child*. † *Lord I have Sinn'd against Heaven and against thee; I deserve no longer, to be call'd thy Son, make me only like one of thy Servants*. At other times we may frequently repeat in our Heart and Mouth, the words of Saint *Elizabeth*, to the Blessed Virgin, and say, * *How comes it to pass, that I should receive so great a Favor?* 'Twill be very good also to reflect upon those words the Church makes use of, at the time of Holy Communion, which are taken out of the Gospel; † *Lord I am not Worthy that thou shouldst enter under my Roof, say but the Word and my Soul shall be heal'd*. I am not Worthy O Lord to receive you, but I approach you, to the end that you may render me worthy. O Lord I am Sick and Weak and I come to you, to be Heal'd and Strengthen'd by you; because you have sayd, * *That those who are Well, stand not in need of a Physician, but only those that are Sick*. And 'twas for these only for whom you came.

Eusebius, who was Disciple of Saint *Hierom*, and present at his Death, reports that this great Saint being upon the point of receiving his Viaticum, and considering on the one side, the infinite Majesty and Goodness of God, and on the other, looking upon himself; sayd, Lord why do you debase your self at present so low as to come to find out a *Publican* and *Sinner*; and this not only to Eat with him, but even with a desire to be Eaten by him? 'Tis reported

Greg. l. Moral.
17. c. 17. in illud:
Columnæ cali
contremis-
cunt, & pa-
vent ad nu-
tum ejus. :
Job. 26. 12.

* *Deus, propitius esto mihi peccatori.*
Lue. 18. 13.
† *Pater peccavi in cælum & coram te: nam non sum dignus vocari filius tuus: fac me sicut unum de mercenariis tuis.*
Lue. 15. 13. & 19.
* *Et unde hoc mihi?*
Lue. 1. 43.

† *Domine, non sum dignus, ut intres sub tectum meum: sed tantum dic verbo, & sanabitur anima mea.*
Matth. 8. 8.
* *Non est opus valentibus medicus sed male habentibus. :*
Matth. 9. 12.

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reported in the second Book of Kings, that *David* having sayd to *Miphiboseh*, * *Thou shalt always Eat at my Table*, *Miphiboseh* answer'd him, *who am I your Servant, that you shou'd cast your Eye, upon me, who am but like a Dead Dog?* But if the Son of *Jonathas* made such an Answer as this, to a King who Invited him to his Table; what ought any of us to make, whom God himself Invites to his? But since we can never approach this Sacred Banquet with such a disposition as it deserves, let us supply it at least, by a profound Humility, and say with the Royal Prophet, † *Who is Man that thou art mindful of him? Or the Son of Man that thou do'st Visit him? Or else with Job. * Who is Man whom thou hast Elevated to so great a Dignity? 'Tis with reason, therefore that the Church admiring the Goodness of God, cry's out upon this occasion. † O inconceivable wonder a Vile Slave Eats his Lord and Master.*

In the second place; we must approach this Sacrament with a great deal of Love and Confidence; and to render this sentiment more lively and tender, we must consider the infinite Mercy and Bounty of God, which here appears more clear, than in any other thing whatsoever, as we have sayd in the beginning. For when we shall set this before our Eyes; how is it possible we shou'd not Love him who has so much Lov'd us? And how can we but have a great confidence in him, who has heap'd so many Benefits upon us? And what is it, he can refuse us, who has vouchsaf'd to give us himself? * *What Shepherd, says Saint Chrysostom upon this Adorable Mystery, has ever nourish'd his Flock with his own Blood? But why do I speak of Shepherds, how many Mothers are there, who, after their pains of Child-birth are past, give their Children to be nourish'd by other Women? But our Saviour has not permitted that we shou'd be given out to be nurs'd by others; he nurses and nourishes us himself, with his own Blood, and by all sorts of ways, unites us to himself.*

The third thing that God requires of us in this Adorable Sacrament, is, that we come to it with an ardent desire. † *This Bread, says Saint Austin, must be eaten with a great hunger of the inward Man.* And as the things we Eat with a good Appetite, do ordinarily most good to the Body; so this Celestial Bread, will work a better and more wonderful effect in our Souls, if it be Eaten with a great hunger, and with an extream Impatience of uniting our selves

† Tu comedes panem in mensa mea semper.

2 Reg. 9. 7. Quis sum ego servus tuus quoniam reipexisti super canem mortuum similem mei? Ibid. 9. 8.

† Quid est homo, quod memineris ejus? aut filius hominis quoniam visitas eum?

Psal. 8. 5. Quid est homo, quoniam magnificas eum?

Job. 7. 17.

† O res mirabilis! manducat Dominum pauper, servus, & humilis.

* Quis pastor oves proprio pascit cruce? Et quid dico Pastor? Matres multae sunt, quae post partus dolores filios alii tradunt nutricibus: hoc autem non ipse est pascus: sed ipse nos proprio sanguine pascit, & per omnia nos sibi coagmentat.

Christ. Homil. 85. in Matth. It Panis iste cibum quirit hominis interioris. Aug. conc. 3. in Ps. 103 & serm. 2 de verbis Apost.

Animam esurientem fatiavit bonis.
Psal. 106. 9.
 Esurientes implevit bonis.
Luc. 1. 53.

Matth. 9. 20.
Luc. 7. 48.

* Quia virtus de illo exibat, & sanabat omnes.
Luc. 6. 19.

selves to God, having an ardent desire of obtaining some particular Grace thereby. For the Prophet assures us, that *he will satisfy hungry Souls*: And do's not the Holy Virgin also assure us, that *he fill'd those that were hungry with good things*? The means to excite in us this hunger of the Celestial Bread, is on the one side, to regard the extream necessity we have of it; and on the other, to consider the admirable effects it produces; we do not Read that when our Saviour Convers'd with Men, that any one implor'd his assistance in Vain. The *Cananaan Woman* only touch'd the Hem of his Garment, and was cur'd? The Adulterers only cast her self at his Feet, and receiv'd pardon for her Sins: The Lepers, Possess'd Persons, Paraliticks, Blind, Lame, Deaf and Dumb, receiv'd Cure of all their Diseases, as soon as they had recourse to him; * *Because there proceeded Virtue from him, that cur'd 'em all*. He is the same now, he was then; and has the same Will and Power; so that if we approach this Divine Sacrament with an ardent desire of being cur'd, we shall therein find a remedy for all the Distempers of our Soul.

C H A P.

CHAP. VI.

Of some other Pious Considerations, that may help us to prepare our selves for Holy Communion.

AMONGST many other considerations, that may help us to prepare our selves profitably to receive the Body of the Son of God, one of the most proper, is, to call to mind his Passion, and to consider with what excess of Love, he deliver'd himself up to the torment of the Cross. For one of the chief reasons, why he Instituted this Sacrament of his Sacred Body and Blood, was that we might always bear in mind, a memory of his Passion; and 'tis for this reason, that he himself ordains, that as often as we participate of this Sacrament, * *It shou'd be in memory of him.* The Apostle teaches us the self same thing, † *As often,* says he, *as yee Eat this Bread, and Drink this Chalice, yee shall denounce the Lords Death.* Saint Bonaventure Counsels us to Meditate upon one of the Mysteries of the Passion, as often as we go to Communion; and says, he was wont to do so, and found thereby a very great Devotion and Tenderneſs in his Soul. Saint Chrysostom says, that as often as we Communicate, we shou'd imagine that we apply our Mouths to the Precious Wound of our Saviours Side; that we suck his Blood, and that we participate, of whatsoever he has gain'd for Mankind, by the Merits thereof. Saint Catharine of Sienna as often as she went to Communion, look'd upon her self, as still an Infant, and that she went to suck again her Mothers Breast. Some at that time represent to themselves our Saviour Crucifi'd, planting his Cross in their Hearts, as it was upon Mount Calvary; and casting themselves at the Foot thereof, they imbrace and gather up with their Lipps all those drops of Blood that fall from it. Others imagine, themselves to be

Tom. II.

R r r

ac

† Hec facite
in meam com-
memoratio-
nem.
Luc. 22. 19.
* Quoties-
cumque man-
ducabitis pa-
nem hunc, &
calicem bibe-
tis, mortem
Domini an-
nuntiabit.
1 Cor. 11. 26.
S. Bonav. de
preparat. ad
Miss. c. 6. et
in fascicul. c. 8.
Chrys. hom. 83.
in Matt.

at the last Supper, which our Saviour made with his Apostles, upon the Eve of his Passion, that they are present amongst 'em, and that they receive from his own Hands his Sacred Body and Blood. In effect, that which then happens, is not only a Representation of that Supper, but 'tis in effect the same Banquet; and the same God who then gave his Body and Blood to his Apostles, now gives it also to us, in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar, and with the same Love and Bounty he then gave it.

'Tis moreover a very Holy manner of preparing our selves, to consider the following Points; First, who it is that gives himself? The Creator of all things, the Master of Heaven and Earth, the Infinite Majesty of God himself. Secondly, to whom he gives it? To me who am but Dust and Ashes, and who have a thousand times offended him. Thirdly, wherefore do's he give it? To make me participate of the Merits of his Passion, and of the Infinite Treasure of his Grace. Lastly, for what Motive or End do's he give it? 'Tis not for his own Interest; because he is Lord and Master of all things, and stands in need of nothing; wherefore, 'tis out of his pure bounty and goodness towards me, and out of a desire he has, that my Soul shou'd be Sav'd, and remain always united to him by Grace. After we shall have exercis'd our selves upon these four Points, we must in the last place frame Acts of Faith, Hope and Charity: Behold here another means how we ought to prepare our selves.

But because we can never be able to prepare our selves so worthily as we ought to do, if he himself vouchsafes not to bestow his Grace upon us, we must therefore beg of him to bestow upon our Souls all that Humility, all that Respect, all that Love, and all that Purity he requires of us; and for this end in addressing our selves to him, we may help our selves by this familiar Example. Lord if a great King were to lodge with a poor Widow, he wou'd not expect that she shou'd prepare his lodging, but wou'd send his own Household-stuff and Officers to accomodate it for him: Do you the same O Lord, in regard of my Soul; and because you come to lodge in it, send your Angels before hand to prepare your lodging, and to purifie it from all that uncleanness 'tis full of, thereby to make it a fit and worthy habitation for your self. After this we may address our selves to the Holy Virgin, and those other Saints to whom

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whom we have a more particular Devotion, and humbly beg of 'em to obtain a grant and an accomplishment of what we demand.

To all these preparations we may still add another, both very easie and profitable, which ought to be of very great comfort to you, as well as to all the World. When you feel not in your self this fervent Devotion, and those ardent desires you wou'd have, and which 'tis reasonable you shou'd come withal, to receive so great a Master; exercise your self in withing to have this Devotion, and these desires; and hereby you'll supply what is wanting to you. For God who regards the Heart, will receive your good Will for the Deed, according to the words of the Prophet. † *The Lord has heard the desire of the Poor; thy Ears O Lord have heard the preparation of their Heart.* Blosius says, that our Saviour himself taught this kind of Devotion and Preparation, to *Saint Meethilda*, and one Day sayd to her, when thou art to receive my Body and Blood, desire for the greater glory of my Name, to have all the Fervor and Zeal, which the most Inflam'd Heart ever had for me: And then thou mayst with confidence approach, having this Preparation; for I will behold the Fervor thou desirest to have; and esteem it as if thou hadst it in effect. He reports the like thing of *Saint Gertrude*. One Day when she went to receive the Blessed Sacrament, and was extreemly afflicted; because she had not sufficiently prepar'd her self for it: She beseech'd the holy Virgin and all the Saints to offer to God for her, whatsoever they had ever done that was most Meritorious, thereby to prepare her the better to receive him: And then our Saviour Appearing to her, sayd. * *Now thou at present appearest in the Eyes of all the Court of Heaven, adorn'd after the same manner, as thou didst desire to be.* So that 'tis an excellent manner to prepare ones self to Communion, to desire to approach with all that Fervor, that ever the greatest Saints have done; and to beg of God, to cause that the Merits of his Son, may supply those dispositions we want for this effect. We may also make use of the same Method for our thanksgiving after Communion, which I shall hereafter speak of, in it's proper place, in the following Chapter.

'Tis with these sorts of considerations and reflections, that we ought to endeavour to excite in our selves that Actual Devotion, with which we shou'd approach this holy Table; for which end, we must sometimes make use of one, some-

† Desiderium pauperum exaudivit Dominus; præparationem cordis eorum exaudivit auris tua. Ps. 9. 41. Blos. c. 6. Men. Spir.

* Jam verò omnibus cæli civibus appares in eo ornatu, quem tibi petisti. Blos. ubi sup.

S. Ignat. J. Esc.
Spir. in addit.
1. Hebdom.

times of another, as we shall find best: But as we cannot prepare our selves after this manner, nor do our duty herein, without imploying some time in it, we therefore must give so much, as shall be reasonably requir'd for this end. Saint *Francis Borgia*, in a Treatise he made concerning preparation to Communion allot's three Days time, to prepare our selves for it, and puts three others for our giving of thanks, and sets down several holy considerations and exercises, in which we may imploy our selves during the time he allots. And without doubt, this wou'd be a very proper means to entertain our selves in Fervor and Devotion all the Week long; the three first Days, in hopes of receiving our Creator; and the three last, in joy and thanksgiving for so great a benefit. For even the only thought that we are to Communicate the next Day, or that we have Communicated the Day before, ought to be sufficient, to cause us to remain in a great interior recollection. But if it shou'd happen, that we cou'd not imploy all this time for the preparing our selves, 'tis fit at least some part of the Morning of that Day, upon which we are to Communicate, shou'd be imploy'd in Prayer and Meditation, upon some one of those Reflections I have before mention'd. 'Twill be good also upon the Eve, to go to sleep with the thought, that we are to Communicate the next Day; and if we happen to wake in the Night, we must think of the same thing; and in the Morning as soon as we have open'd our Eyes, we shou'd have our Mind fill'd with the same thought. For if our holy Founder, wou'd have us every Morning, as soon as we wake, presently to think upon the subject of our Prayer for that Day; with how far greater reason, ought we upon the Day we are to receive the Blessed Sacrament, as soon as we wake; to think only thereupon.

C H A P. VII.

Of what we are to do after Communion, and what our Thanksgiving after it ought to be.

AS 'tis good before we Eat, to perform some small Exercise, to stir up our Natural heat; so also 'tis good before we approach this Divine Table, to Exercise our selves in holy Meditation; to inkindle in us this Devotion and Fervor; which is the same to our Souls, as Natural heat is to our Bodies. 'Tis good also to give some time to Conversation after Meals; and 'twill also be very much to our purpose, as soon as we come from this Divine Banquet, to entertain our selves for some time with God. This being the most favorable and fittest time to treat, and to unite our selves with him; and therefore we ought to endeavour to make our profit of it, and not to lose the least moment thereof; † *Permit not your self to lose so good a Day as this, and let not the least part of so precious a Gift be lost.*

† Non defraud-
deris à die bo-
no, & particu-
la boni doni
non te prae-
tereat.
Eccles. 14. 14.

For this end we must employ this time in making some Pious Meditation, such as I have spoken off; that thou'd be made before Communion: But above all, we must employ our selves in Praising God, and in giving him thanks, for all the Benefits we have receiv'd from him; and particularly for that inestimable one of our Redemption; and for the favor he do's us, in giving himself to us, after this manner. But since we can never sufficiently, of our selves, return those thanks that are due to him, we must, to supply this defect, offer him all the Benedictions and Praises, that all the Angels together, have ever offer'd him from the beginning of the World; and that all the Blessed during their Lives, have also ever given him, or do now give him in Heaven; and all those also, which they shall give him for all Eternity. We must joyn our Intentions with theirs, * *And beg of him to Command, that our Voices may*

* Cum quibus
& nostras vo-
ces ut admitti
jubeas depre-
camur.

be

† Magnificate
Dominum
mecum, & ex-
altemus no-
men ejus in
idipsum.
Pfal. 33. 4.

* Diligam te,
Domine, for-
titudō mea.
Pfal. 17. 1.
† Quemad-
modum deside-
rat Cervus ad
fontes aqua-
rum, ita deside-
rat anima mea
ad te, Deus.
Pfal. 41. 1.

* In die enim
bona venimus.
1 Reg. 25. 8.
† Non dimit-
tam te, nisi
benedixeris
mihi.
Gen. 32. 26.
* Hodie salus
domui huic
facta est.
Luc. 19. 9.
† Dic anima
mea: Salus
tua ego sum.
Pfal. 34. 3.

be heard and admitted with theirs. Last of all, we must invite all Creatures to Praise him with us, and say with the Royal Prophet. † *Celebrate the Magnificence of our Lord with me, and let us glorifie his Name together:* But because God is Infinite above all sorts of Praises, and that all those, that all Creatures together, can ever be able to give him, do not come near to what are his due. We must moreover wish, that he wou'd Love and Praise himself as he deserves; because he only is able to do so.

Secondly, we must imploy this time in producing Acts of the Love of God; because 'tis chiefly then, that we may discharge and pour out our Hearts in holy Aspirations, which are nothing else but acts of Love, and ardent desires of uniting our selves to God. 'Tis then we must tell him with the Royal Prophet. * *O Lord who art my Strength, let me always Love thee: † My Soul continually pants after thee O my God, as the Hart, pers'u'd by Hunters, pants after the Fountains of Waters.*

We must in the Third place, spend this time in begging Favors of God; because 'tis the fittest time to obtain 'em, and to dispatch our affairs with him. The holy Scripture recounts, that *Queen Esther* having something to beg of King *Affuerus*, she wou'd not presently declare what it was, but only invited him to come and Eat with her, reserving till then, the explication of what the desir'd of him. He came to her, and she obtain'd of him what she desir'd. 'Tis thus in this holy Banquet, where the King of Kings is our guest, or to say better where we are his; in which we shall obtain whatsoever we shall ask of him; * *Because we are come upon a good Day.* And we may tell him what *Jacob* told the Angel with whom he had wrestl'd all the Night long. † *I will not let thee go, till thou hast Bless'd me.* When you enter'd O Lord into the House of *Zachau*, you sayd. * *Salvation is this Day giv'n to this House.* Say now the same to this House, into which you are now enter'd. † *Say to my Soul I am thy Salvation.*

'Tis then also we must beg pardon of God for our Sins, and at the same time; beg Strength of him to overcome our Passions, to resist the Devils Temptations, and to give us the Grace of gaining Humility, Obedience, Patience, Perseverance and those other Virtues, which most of all we stand in need off: But we must not only then ask for our selves, but Pray also for the Necessities of the Church, as well

well in general as in particular; and Pray also for the Pope, for the King, and for all those that Govern the Christian Commonwealth, either in Spirituals or in Temporals; and for all those particular Persons, to whom we have any obligation; as 'tis practis'd in the *Memento* of Mass, and as I shall hereafter speak off more at large.

CHAP. VIII.

Of another kind of Thanksgiving.

SOME make their thanksgiving after Communion, after this following manner. They represent our Saviour within themselves, and summon all their Powers and Senses to come and acknowledge him as their King, and to make their Homage and Submission to him. Just as one in the World, who receiving a great Person into his House, wou'd call all his Relations together to salute him, and pay him their respects. Afterwards at every Sense or power we present, we must perform three things. The first, is to give thanks to God for this Gift bestow'd upon us. The second, is, to accuse our selves for not having made so good use of it, as we ought to have done. And the third, is to beg Grace to make a better use of it for the future. This sort of thanksgiving may be very profitable; and is the first of those three Methods of Prayer, which Saint Ignatius sets down in the Book of Spiritual Exercises.

Others consider all their Powers and Senses; as so many Sick; and at the same time look upon our Saviour as a Physician, *That cures all sorts of Diseases*. And so bring one of 'em after another unto him, as they wou'd bring a Sick Person in the Infirmary to the Doctor, and say unto him. † Lord come and see what I aile. * Have pity upon me and of my Infirmary. † Heal my Soul, which is Sick, because I have Sinn'd against thee. But 'tis to be noted, that at this time, 'tis not necessary to imagine to our selves any particular place, nor to seek for any constitution of place without us; because

Qui sanat omnes infirmitates tuas.

Psal. 102. 3.

† Veni, Domine, & vide.

Joan. 11. 34.

* Misere mei Domine,

quoniam iniquus sum,

Psal. 6. 2.

† Sana animam meam,

quia peccavi tibi,

Psal. 42. 3.

cause our Saviour is then present within us, not only as to his Divinity, which is always every where present; but also as to his Sacred Humanity, who is really within our Bread, and remains there, so long as the Sacramental Species do last. That is to say, for as long a time as the Substance of Bread wou'd have remain'd, had it been there. For if the beholding some Image, gives us Recollection and Devotion, what ought not the beholding our Saviour himself to do, who in his own Person is present within us. Wherefore let every one at this time look within himself, and behold our Saviour there, as the holy Virgin consider'd him within her self, when she carry'd him in her Sacred Womb; let him entertain himself with his beloved, and say with the Spouse, † *I have found him whom my Soul Loves, I will hold him fast, and will not let him go.* Some Divines hold an Opinion, which cannot but move us, to imploy more time then ordinary in our thanksgiving. They say, that as long as the Sacramental Species, and the Presence of our Saviour remain within us, so long if we make such Acts as these, we receive the more Grace; not only by reason of the Merits of the Acts, but by reason of the Virtue of the Sacrament; according to what I have already sayd, speaking of preparation to Communion. Hereby we may see how ill they do, who permit so precious a time to be lost: In which they may gain so much; and who have no sooner receiv'd within themselves so great a guest, but they turn their backs upon him, and as I may say, go out of one Door at the same moment he enters at the other; or receive him after so cold a manner, as not to say any thing to him. Wherefore if in the World, 'twou'd be to commit a great Incivility, to receive a Person of Quality into our House, and to say nothing to him, nor make him any offer of Service? What is't, to use God after this manner?

Surius recounts that as often as Saint *Margaret*, Daughter to the Queen of *Hungary*, Communicated; she Fasted the Day before with Bread and Water, by reason of that Heavenly Banquet, shee was to partake off the next Day. And pass'd the whole Night in Prayer, and after the had Communicated, she pass'd the whole Day till Night in Prayer also, at which time she took something for her Nourishment.

† Inveni quem diligit anima mea: tenui eum, nec dimittam.
Cant. 3. 4.
Plures referunt *Suarez* tom. 3. in 3. part. disp. 63. sect. 7. & dicunt esse valde probab. exp. 3.

See chap. 3.

Carin. Ordin. S. Dom. in ejus vit. Ranz. in Hist. Hungar. & Bol. tom. 2. mens. Janu.

CHAP. IX.

Of the Fruit we ought to gather from holy Communion.

TIS not only to make us better understand the excellency of this Adorable Sacrament, and the excess of the Love of God who has Instituted it, that the Saints explicate unto us, it's admirable Virtues; but 'tis also that we shou'd propose 'em to our selves, as the Fruit we ought to draw from thence; it shall therefore be for this reason, that I will here set down some of 'em. This Adorable Sacrament has one Virtue, which is common to all the other Sacraments, which is, to give Grace to whomsoever receives it worthily; but it has also another, which is proper to it self alone, and which distinguishes it from all others; and this Virtue is call'd by Divines, *Spiritual Refection*; because it serves for Nourishment to the Soul, to which it restores and gives force, to resist all the attack's of the Devil, and to imbrace all kinds of Virtue: Many Saints also interpreting these words of our Saviour, † *My Flesh is Meat indeed and my Blood is Drink indeed*, say, that all which Corporal food Naturally works in us, this Heavenly food also Spiritually works, in our Souls. The Council of Florence, says, the same thing, and add's, that our Saviour wou'd Institute this Sacrament under the Species of food, to the end that the Species under which he Instituted it, might let us know the effects it produc'd, and the need we have of it for our Souls. Wherefore according to this Doctrine, after the same manner that Corporal Nourishment sustains the Life of the Body, repairs it's forces, and causes it to grow to such an Age, till it comes to it's full growth. So this Divine Sacrament in like manner, supports the Spiritual Life of the Soul, repairs it's loss of Strength, gives it new force against Temptations; and causes it to grow in Virtue, till it attains to an intire Perfection thereof. * *'Tis this Bread that*

† Caro mea
verè est cibus,
& sanguis me-
us verè est
potus.
Joan 6. 56.

* Et panis cor-
hominis con-
firmet.
Psal. 103. 15.

Tom. II.

S f f

confirm's

* Et ambulavit in fortitudine cibi illius, usque ad montem Dei Morab.
3 Reg. 19. 8.

confirms and fortifies the Heart of Man, with which being nourish'd we become like Elias, * To have sufficient Strength, to walk as far as Horeb the Mountain of God.

Corporal food has also another property, which is, that 'tis pleasing to our tast, and 'tis the more pleasing, the more exquisite it is, and the better dispos'd also our palat's are. 'Tis the same with this Celestial dainties, it do's not only sustain preserve and fortifie, but it has also an admirable tast, 'tis this that was signifi'd by one of the Prophetick Blessings, which Jacob, upon his Death Bed, gave his Children; in which he denounc'd what was to be fulfill'd in the Law of Grace. For when he came to bless his Son Asur, † The Bread of Asur, says he, shall be fat, and shall be the dainties of Kings. JESUS CHRIST is this Bread, and 'tis this Bread, says Saint Thomas, that is fill'd with all sweetness; 'tis a feast in which Spiritual sweetness is tasted in it's source. Because the Soul that receives JESUS CHRIST by means of this Sacrament, tast's Spiritual sweetness in JESUS CHRIST, who is it's source; and the sweetness is so great, that it sometimes Communicates it self to the Body, according to the words of David, * My Heart and my Flesh have exulted in the Living God. From thence happens what Saint Bonaventura makes mention of, that often he who feels himself extremely weak, approaching to this Table, do's there find so much comfort and sweetness, by means of this Heavenly food, that he comes from it in such a disposition, as if he had had before no weakness at all. Guimond Bishop of Aversan in the Kingdom of Naples, writes, that the Ancient Hermits found so much comfort and strength in receiving holy Communion, that some of 'em took no other Nourishment: And on the contrary, that Day they did not Communicate, they felt such a weakness and faintness, as if they had been ready to fall into a Mortal Sound. He says moreover, that there were some amongst 'em, to whom an Angel daily brought the holy Host to their Cell. And in the Chronicles of the Cistercian Order, there's mention made of a Religious Person, who never Communicated, but he felt such a sweetness after it, as if he had eaten a Honey-Comb; which sweetness remain'd in his Mouth for three Days after. But according to what I have just now sayd, of the admirable effects of this Heavenly Bread, the Fruit we ought to draw from thence is a Masculine Courage and Resolution, continually to advance

† After pinguis patris ejus, & præbuit delicias regibus.

Gen 49. 20. Admirandum & omni suavitate repletum convivium, per quod spiritualis dulcedo in suo fonte gustatur. S. Tb. Opusc. 57.

* Cor meum & caro mea exultaverunt in Deum vivum. Ps. 83. 3.

Guimond.
Aversan. tract.
de Corp. &
Sang. I.C. in
Euch. veritate.

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vance in the way of God; and an unshaken steddi-ness and force, in Mortifying our Passions, and in resisting the assaults of the Devil; for † Our Lord has prepar'd this Table against all those that torment us, And therefore Saint Chrysostom says, that * We ought to rise from this Table, like Lions, whose Eyes Sparkle with Fire, and become terrible to the Devil. Has not Jesus CHRIST, himself sufficiently assur'd us, of the force of this Divine Sacrament, when, immediately after he had Communicated his Disciples, he sayd to them, † Arise let us go from hence? Is it not the same, as if he shou'd have sayd, now yee have Communicated yee are become strong, rise and let us go to Suffer? Do we not also perceive that in the Primitive Church, when they oftener receiv'd this Adorable Sacrament, the Faithful had more strength not only to observe God's Law, but to resist the Rage and Fury of Tyrants, and courageously to Offer up their Lives for the Faith of Jesus CHRIST.

† Parasiti in conspectu meo
menfam adver-
sus eos qui
tribulant me.
Psal. 22. 5.
* Tanguam
leones ignem
spirantes ab
hac mensa re-
cedamus, facti
diabolo terri-
biles.
Chrys. hom. 61.
ad pop. & hom.
4. in Joan.
† Surgite, ca-
mus hinc.
Joan. 14. 31.

CHAP. X.

*That frequent Communion, is a great remedy
against all sorts of Temptations, and that
it helps after a most particular man-
ner to preserve Chastity.*

THE Saints tell us, that the often approaching to the Sacrament of the Altar, is a great remedy against all Temptations; because that besides the Strength it gives to the Soul, it renders us more prompt to do the Will of God; it weakens also our Passions and ill Habits; and diminishes the Fire of Concupiscence, which is the Root of all Evils. Saint Thomas says, that one of the reasons why it delivers us from Temptations, is, that Hell being overcome by the Death of our Saviour, and this Sacrament being a Representation thereof, the Devils do no sooner perceive his Body and Blood in us, but they presently fly from us, and give

S. Ignat. epist. ad Ephes. Ea Cyr. l. 3. in Joan. 37. Chrys. hom. 61. ad Pop. Amioc.

place to the Angels, who assist and accompany us. Saint *Ignatius*, the Martyr, and Saint *Cyril*, do for this reason Counsel us, to communicate often; thereby to put the Devils to flight. For if in the Old Law, says Saint *Chrysostom*, the Blood of the Lamb sprinkl'd upon the entry into Houses, had power to deliver those that Liv'd in 'em, from the power of the exterminating Angel, what power ought not this Sacrament to have, of which the other was only a Figure?

† Sedat enim, cum in nobis manet Christus, fœvitem membrorum nostrorum legem. Cyr. l. 4. in Joan.

But above all, the Saints assure us, that 'tis a Sovereign remedy against the Temptations of Impurity; † *Because it allays the motions of Concupiscence, deadens it's incentive to Sin, and extinguishes the heat of Sensuality*, just as Water do's extinguish Fire. This is the sense which Saint *Hierom*, Saint *Thomas*, and many other Saints give to this passage of *Zachary*, * *What is there so good, or what is there so Beau-*

* Quid enim bonum ejus est, & quid pulchrum ejus, nisi frumentum electorum, & vinum germinans virgines? Zach. 9. 17.

riful as the Bread of the Elect, and the Wine that makes Virgins? 'Tis the property of this Bread of Angels, say they, to make Virgins; and as Corporal food, when 'tis good, produces good Blood, and good Humors; so this Spiritual food produces in us Chast sentiments, and thoughts full of purity. This is the Meal, with which *Elizens* took away, all that bitterness which was in the Meat, they had serv'd up to the Children of the Prophets. Saint *Cyril* says, that this Heavenly food, not only Sanctifies the Soul but even the Body also; and 'tis for this reason, that the Church begs of God that the Sacrifice of Mass, † *May conduce to the health both of Body and Soul*, and finds it's Petition intirely granted. As the *Cananean* Woman did, who no sooner touch'd the Garment of our Saviour, but the Bloody Flux immediately stopp'd, with which she had been for so long a time before tormented; and as the Waters of *Jordan* immediately stopp'd as soon as the Ark enter'd into the River, so as soon as our Saviour enters into us, all our Temptations are presently appeas'd, and the Fire of Concupiscence extinguish'd. * *O happy Fruit, cry's out a holy Man, O Fruit bringing plenty, and producing Virginity!* There is not a better remedy for Chastity, says another Author; than a good and frequent use of Communion. *Nicephorus*, *Calixtus*, and *Gregory of Towers*, report, a wonderful thing that happen'd at *Constantinople*, which excellently well declares, that the Virtue of this Sacrament, extends it self to the Body as well as to the Soul. The custom of the Greek Church, being to Consecrate in such kind of Bread as we daily Eat,

† Fiat nobis in salutem mentis, & corporis. Luc. 8. 44.

Jos. 3. 16.

* O felix fructus ubertatis, ex quo virginitas germinatur! Viguer. Inß. Theod. c. 6. §. 1. Niceph. Calix. l. Hist. Eccl. 1. c. 25. Greg. Tur. l. de glor. Mart. c. 8.

Evag. Eccl. Hist. l. 4. c. 35.

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the remainder of this Bread, after the People had Communicated, was giv'n to those Children that were fasting, that they might be the more us'd to it; and *Nicephorus* himself testifies, that when he was a Child, they had several times giv'n it to him: But it once happen'd, that as they distributed these precious Relicks, to the Children that were in the Church. A Child of a Jew, that made Glasses, presented himself amongst the rest. This having kept him for some time in the Church, he return'd home later then ordinary, and his Father asking him the reason hereof, he sayd he had been in the Church of the Christians, and there had eaten some of the Bread which they gave to Children. This Man fell presently into such a Rage and Passion against his Son, that he immediately cast him into the Glass Furnace that was lighted, and shut the Dore thereof. His Mother who had been in the Town, finding her Son not yet return'd home, and perceiving the time long past, that he was wont to do so, immediately sought every where about for him, and after a great deal of pains to no purpose, she return'd home in a great Desolation and Affliction. At the end of three Days, not being able to comfort her self for the loss of her Child, and being near the Dore of the Glass Furnace, weeping and tearing her Hair, and calling upon her Son by his Name, she was astonish'd to hear him answer out of the Furnace, where he was; she presently runs to open the Dore, full of hope and fear, and beholds her Son coming from the midst of the Flames, without being the least touch'd by them. She ask'd him what had preserv'd him from the Fire? He answer'd, that a Lady clad in Purple, had oftentimes assisted him, extinguishing the Fire with Water she cast upon it, and bringing him something to Eat, as often as he wanted it; all this being told to the Emperor *Justinian*, he caus'd the Child and the Mother to be Baptiz'd, who both desir'd to become Christians, and caus'd the unhappy Father, who wou'd never be converted, to be hang'd upon a Tree as a Parricide. But that which this holy Host, wrought upon the Body of this Infant, preserving it in the midst of the Flames, it works also Spiritually upon the Souls of those, that worthily receive it. Keeping 'em whole and intire, amidst the Flames of Concupiscence, and amidst all sorts of Temptations.

C. H. A. P.

C H A P. XI.

Of another Fruit we ought to draw from Communion, which is, to unite our selves to JESUS CHRIST and to Transform our selves into him.

Concorporei,
ut ita dicam,
& confanguinei
Christi
facti estis.
Catec. Mystag. 4.

† Caro mea
verè est cibus,
& sanguis me-
us verè est po-
tus. Qui man-
ducet meam
carnem, &
bibit meum
sanguinem, in
me manet, &
ego in illo.
Joan. 6. 56.

* Cibus sum
grandium,
creſce, &
mauducabis
me, nec tu me
mutabis in te,
ſed tu mutabe-
ris in me.
Aug.

5. Thom. in 4.
ſent. diſp. 2. q.
4. art. 1.

ONE of the chief ends, for which God Instituted the holy Sacrament of the Eucharist, or perhaps even the very chief, was, as the Saints say, to unite himself to us, or to make us one and the self same thing with himself; for as by Virtue of the words of Consecration, that which was before Bread is chang'd into the proper Substance of JESUS CHRIST; so by Virtue of holy Communion, he who before he receiv'd it was Man, is Spiritually Transform'd into God himself. 'Tis this our Saviour had a mind to express in his words, related by Saint John: † *My Flesh is truly Meat, and my Blood is truly Drink, he that Eats my Flesh and Drinks my Blood remains in me and I in him.* And as by means of Natural heat, the food which we take, becomes the same Substance of him who takes it; so here, by means of Grace, he who Eats the Bread of Angels, becomes the same thing with this Celestial Bread, wherewith he is nourish'd: Because 'tis not the Body of JESUS CHRIST which is Transform'd into the Substance of him that receive it, but 'tis he that receives it, who is Transform'd into JESUS CHRIST. JESUS CHRIST, says Saint Austin, * *Is the food of those that are grown up; grow up therefore, and you shall Eat him, y^t you shall not change him into your self, as you do the food that you take, but you shall be chang'd into him.* 'Tis also, says Saint Thomas, proper to this Sacrament, to Transform Man into God, and to render him like to himself; for if Fire has the power to change all things into it self, to which 'tis united; and to Communicate their- unto it's form and perfection, after it has destroy'd what- soever

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soever is contrary to it's Nature; with how far greater reason, ought * *This all-consuming Fire of the Divinity*, to consume whatsoever Impurity it finds in our Souls, and render it like to himself?

* Deus noster
ignis consumens est.
Deut. 4. 24.

But setting a part at present, the real and true union of JESUS CHRIST, with him who receives him, and coming to what concerns the Fruit we ought to draw from holy Communion: I say, that this Fruit consists in uniting our selves Spiritually to JESUS CHRIST, and Transforming our selves into him after the same manner; that is to say, we must endeavour to render our selves like him, throughout the whole course of our Lives; to be Humble as he was, Patient, Obedient, Chast and Poor, like unto him: And 'tis, this which Saint Paul recommends to us, in other words, when he says, † *Cloth your selves with our Lord JESUS CHRIST, * Cloth your selves with the new Man*. In Consecration, the Substance of Bread is Converted into the Substance of the Body of JESUS CHRIST; and the Accidents always remains the same: In Communion 'tis quite contrary, the substance of Man remains the same; 'tis only the Accidents that are chang'd: He becomes Humble who was before Proud; he that was Incontinent becomes Chast, and he who was Peevish and Cholerick becomes Meek and Patient; and thus it is, that he is Spiritually Transform'd into JESUS CHRIST.

† Induimus
Dominum
Jesum Chri-
stum.
Rom. 13. 14.
* Induite no-
vum homi-
nem.
Eph. 4. 24.

Saint Cyprian interpreting these words of the Royal Prophet, * *My Chalice which Inebriates how excellent, is it?* And applying 'em to the Holy Eucharist, says, † *That as Drunkenness renders a Man quite different from what he was; so this Divine Sacrament renders us quite different from our selves, by making us quite forget the things of the World, and Elevating our Minds to a commerce and conversation with those of Heaven*. How different did the Disciples of *Emmanuel*, become from what they were before, after they had receiv'd this Celestial Bread, from the Hands of our Saviour himself? * *They knew him then, whom they knew not before*; and from unconstant, feeble, and timorous Persons, they became firm, faithful and courageous. 'Tis after this manner, that holy Communion, † *Ought to change you into another Man; into a perfect Man; that so they who Live, Live not to themselves, but Live to him who Dy'd for 'em and is risen again to Life*.

* Calix meus
inebrians,
quam præcla-
rus est?

† Psal. 22. 5.
† Ebrietas
Dominici ca-
licis, & san-
guinis sic bi-
bentes ineb-
riantur, ut so-
brios faciat,
ut mentes ad
spiritalem sa-
pientiam redi-
gat, ut à sa-
pore isto se-
culari, ad in-
tellectum Dei
unaliquique
respirat, &c.
Cyp. ep. 63.
ad Cecil.

* Cognove-
runt eum in
fractione pa-
nis. Luc. 24. 31.
Mutaberis in
vicum alium.
† Reg. 10. 6.
In vitam per-
fectam.
Eph. 4. 13.
† Psal. in Re-
gul. bre. n. 17.
† Ut & qui
vivunt, jam
non sibi vi-
vant, sed ei
qui pro ipsis
mortuus est,
& resurrexit.

A great 2 Cor. 5. 15.

*S. Angela de
Fulgino. c. 66.*

A great Saint, says, upon this Subject, what is very solid and Spiritual, he speaks of the marks, by which we may know whether we be Transform'd into God; and says, that one of these, is to desire to be contemn'd by all the World, to desire to be regarded by all the World, as worthy of all sorts of contempt; and to have a difficulty, that any one shou'd have any compassion for us, or that we shou'd live in the esteem or in the Heart of any one. And lastly are come to such a pass, as to desire that no one shou'd, upon any account, have an esteem of us, but take it for the greatest honor that can happen to us, to be contemn'd by all, that we may become more conformable to JESUS CHRIST; and count it, * *A folly to glory in any thing but in his Cross.* 'Tis thus that we ought to endeavour to be Transform'd into him, and this is the fruit we ought to draw from holy Communion.

† Mihi autem
abstulit gloriari,
nisi in cruce
Domini nostri
Jesu Christi.
Gal. 6. 14.

† Cum nos ab
ira corripui vi-
derimus, vel
ab alio vitio,
cogitemus
quibus bonis
facti sumus
digni, & sit ir-
rationabilium
nobis mortuum
correctio, ta-
lis cogitatio.
*Chrys. Hom. 1.
ad Pop. Antioch.*

Saint Chrysostom speaking of the obligation impos'd upon us, of receiving this August Sacrament; † *When we shall feel our selves*, says he, *mov'd to Choler or to any other Passion, let us think, how great a good, God has made us worthy to partake off, and this reflection will help us, to suppress all sorts of irregular motions within our selves.* 'Tis not just that the Tongue that has touch'd the Body of JESUS CHRIST, shou'd prophane it self with vain, idle, and frivolous Discourses, it ought to be Sanctified; 'tis not just, that the Heart which has receiv'd God himself, and is become as it were a *Cyborium* or *Tabernacle*, of the Precious Body of JESUS CHRIST, shou'd permit it self to be defill'd with vain desires; it ought to desire God alone, and think upon nothing else but him. When you have receiv'd a perfum'd Lozange into your Mouths, you feel the odour and sweetness of it all the Day after. This Heavenly Bread which you have Eaten, has an admirable perfume, it sends forth a most Divine odour, which you ought to conserve, and therefore you ought to breath nothing but Virtue and Sanctity.

*Sar. 2. tom. Ja-
nu. de S. Cune-
gonde Impera-
trice.*

A Holy Virgin was wont to say, that as often as she Communicated, she took a view of the avenues, or out-works of her Heart, with more care than ordinary; representing JESUS CHRIST to her self, in her Heart; as a Lord and Master, that repos'd in his own House. Wherefore, adds she, I then endeavour to conserve all Modesty possible in my discourse, in my looks and gestures,
and

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and in all my exterior, like to a careful Servant, who puts his Finger upon his Mouth, to give a sign that no noise be made, for fear of waking his Master.

C H A P. XII.

Of another Fruit that we ought to draw from holy Communion; which is, to resign our selves intirely into God's Hands. And of the manner whereby we ought to prepare our selves, for the obtaining it, and of the thanksgiving we ought afterwards to make.

ONE of the greatest Fruits, we ought to endeavour to draw from holy Communion, is intirely to resign our selves into God's Hands; as a little Earth, into the Hands of a Potter; that he may dispose of us as he pleases, when he pleases, and after what manner he pleases; without any reserve or exception. The Son of God intirely offer'd himself, as a Sacrifice for us to his Eternal Father; shed all his Blood for us upon the Cross; Daily bestows upon us his Soul, Body and Blood; together with his Divinity, in the Sacrament of the Altar. Is it not therefore very just, that we shou'd also make an intire Oblation of our selves to him? 'Tis properly to communicate, to communicate our selves to God, as he has communicated himself to us: † *He has communicated to us,* says Saint Anstin, *all he has, communicate also with him, all you have, and abandon your self intirely to him.*

† Deus se tibi
tu te Deo.
Aug. de Civ.
Dei.

According to this, the thanksgiving we ought to make after Communion, will be to say, * *What shall I give unto God for all the Benefits he has bestow'd upon me? What shall I give him for the many Graces I have receiv'd from him, and chiefly for this, which I come from receiving? Wou'd*

* Quid retribuam Domino
pro omnibus
quæ retribuit
mihi?
Psal. 115. 3.

Tom. II.

T t

you

* Præbe, fili mi, cor tuum mihi.
Prov. 23. 26.
De Imis. J. C. l. 4. c. 8.

† Dans Deo aliquid suum, sibi autem seipsum.
Aug. l. 1. de Civ. Dei. c. 7.

* Regnum celorum aliud non querit pretium. Quantum valet quantum es tu. Date, & habebis illud. Idem Serm. de omnibus S. S. in manuale. c. 16.

† Suscipe, Domine, universam meam libertatem: Accipe memoriam, intellectum, atque voluntatem omnem. quidquid habeo, vel possideo, mihi largitus es: Id tibi totum restituo, ac tuæ prorsus voluntati trado gubernandum. Amorem tui solum, cum gratia tua mihi dones, & diversum satis, nec aliud quidquam ultra poscam.
S. Ignat. l. Exerc. Spirit. in contempt. ad amorem spirituum in nobis exultandum p. 11. l.

you know what he would have you give him? He would have you give him your Heart; * *My Son*, says he then to you, *give me thy Heart*. For, as he says in an Ancient Author, "What do I desire of you, but that you should give your self intirely to me? I make no account of any thing you can give me besides your self; I desire not your Presents; that which I care for is your self, and as nothing is able to satisfie you without me; so nothing also that you can offer me, is able to please me without you. Saint *Austin* says, that that which made the Sacrifice of *Cain* displeasing to God, and caus'd it to be less acceptable to him than that of *Abel*, was; because *Cain* did not make such a division with God, as he should have done, † *And that giving something of his own to God, he still gave himself intirely to himself*. 'Tis this, says the Holy Father, that some still do, who offer something to God, without offering their Will and their Heart. * *The Kingdom of Heaven*, adds he, *requires no other price than your self, you alone may be the price thereof, give therefore your self, and you shall have it*.

'Tis then in this intire resignation of our selves into the Hands of God, in which we ought to Exercise our selves after holy Communion; and this ought not to be done only in a general manner, but we must descend to particulars, resigning and conforming our selves to his Will in all occasions; as well in Sickness, as in Health; in Death, as in Life; in Affliction and Sufferings, as well as in Joy and Consolation. We must also then specify those things, to which we shall feel the greatest repugnance; and offer em to God in our thanksgiving after Communion. Running over the most abject Offices and Employments, and the most troublesome occasions we can meet withal; till nothing represents it self, in which we find not an intire conformity of our Wills, to that of God. The Prayer which Saint *Ignatius* puts in the Spiritual Exercise is very proper for this subject, and therefore I shall here set it down. † *Receive O Lord my intire Liberty, receive my Memory, my Understanding and my whole Will. All that I have, all that I possess, thou hast giv'n me: I restore it again to thee, and leave it to the intire disposition of thy Will. Give me only thy Love and thy Grace; I shall be Rich enough, I will ask nothing else but this of thee*. We must also afterwards exercise our selves in producing some Acts of Virtue, and chiefly of those, of which each one knows himself most of all to stand

in

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in need off. For whatsoever it is we can desire, we shall find it in this Heavenly Manna. * Which has the excellency of all sorts of Tasts, it has the tast of all sorts of Virtues, and therefore we may Exercise our selves in producing their Acts, sometimes of one Virtue, sometimes of another; imagining and having always before our Eyes, such as we know our selves most of all to stand in need off. If you find, for example, that you have a particular want of Humility, seek there for Humility, and you'll without doubt find a great model thereof; since the Son of God is there cloth'd with the Accidents of Bread: Which being but simple Accidents, are more vile, than those Ragg's and Swaddling Clouts in which the Holy Virgin wrap'd him, when he came into the World. What can be conceiv'd more humble, than a God hid under the Species of Bread? So that we touch him, eat him, and receive him into our Mouth and Stomack. What a debasement is this for a God? And how great an elevation is this for Man? His Humility seems in some measure to shine more bright here, than in the Mystery of the Incarnation: Exercise your self therefore in producing Acts of this Virtue, till you find that you have intirely penetrated your Soul therewith; offer to God in thanksgiving both the contempt and esteem of the World; and imbrace with Joy for Love of him, all occasions of being contemn'd.

'Twill also be very well done, to descend to certain particulars of things, which tho' they may appear small to others, yet fail not oftentimes to give us an occasion of a great deal of pain and trouble; which we may in like manner offer to God in thanksgiving; Each one of us knows very well, what these Imperfections are, to which he is most of all subject, and which more particularly hinder his advancement in Perfection; endeavour to make a Sacrifice of one of these to God in each Communion, and offer up this also for your thanksgiving after Communion. You love, for Example, your ease and commodities; and you desire to want nothing; offer to God to Mortifie your self in this, to Day in one thing, and to Morrow in another. You love to exceed in speaking idle and unprofitable words, and therein to lose your time; Mortifie your self herein, and offer this to God in another Communion. You are so ty'd to your own Will, that your Brethren suffer a great deal from you; because you'll Mortifie your self in nothing; and sometimes you speak to them, after a dry and peevish manner; endea-

* Habentem
omnis saporis
suavitatem.
Sep. 16. 20.

your to overcome your self in this, and offer it to God in another Communion; lastly, as I have sayd speaking of Prayer, 'twou'd be very good herein, to propose to ones self to do something that very Day; 'twill be good also at each Communion, to resolve to mortifie and overcome on's self that Day about something in particular; and to offer this Mortification to God by way of thanksgiving. Make account that 'tis chiefly this, that God requires of you; for this favor he has done you. For he desires nothing else of you, but that you wou'd correct in your self, what you know to be displeasing to him: So that this is the best thanksgiving we can make after Communion, and the most agreeable service we can render unto him. But since thanksgiving, as I have sayd in another place, may be made after three manners; the first by an interior acknowledgment of the benefits we have receiv'd; the second, by thanks and praises to God; the third, and the most perfect, of which I now speak, by effects; do not therefore so imploy your whole time of your Meditation, that there's none left for any thing else: Meditations are good, but Resolutions, and the Effects thereof, are far better, and 'tis only to compass these, for which we ought to Meditate.

That which I say here of thanksgiving, I say also of preparation for Communion; for tho' the Meditation which we are wont then to make, upon the Sacred Mytery of the Eucharist, be a kind of profitable preparation; and tho' the respect we ought to have for this Adorable Mytery, requires that we shou'd always perform it with all possible application; yet the best and most perfect preparation, is that of a good Life; we must endeavour every Day to correct our selves; we must Daily perfect our selves more and more; that hereby we may approach this August Sacrament with greater purity. * *Live after such a manner*, says Saint Ambrose and Saint Austin, *that you may deserve to Communicate every Day*. Father Avila writing upon this subject to one of his Friends, says, that the best order and means we can take, whereby we shall be able to regulate and settle the whole conduct of our Lives, is, to endeavour to make a true preparation to Communion; and he cites to this purpose the Example of a Servant of God, who was wont to say. I do not do this, particularly to prepare my self for Communion; because I keep my self Daily prepar'd for it as much I am able. 'Tis without doubt far better to prepare our selves after this manner; than

* Sic vive, ut
quotidie me-
rearis accipere.
Amb. l. 3. de
Sacr. c. ult. &
Aug. de verb.
Dom. in Evang.
secund. Luc.
serm. 8. M.
Avil. tom. 2.
Epist. fol. 187.

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than to recollect our selves only for a quarter of an hour, before or after Communion, and afterwards to remain in as great tepidity of Heart, and in as great an immortification of Spirit as before.

This therefore is the best preparation before, and the best thanksgiving after Communion; and this also ought to be the chiefest Fruit, that we are to propose to our selves to draw from thence. For as in Prayer the Mortification of our Passions, the Recollection of our Senses, and the Guard of our Heart, ought to be no less the chief preparation for Prayer, than the Fruit we ought to draw from it, and that the one ought reciprocally to help to the other: So here in like manner, the Sanctity of our Lives, and an application always to do every thing, the best we can to please God, is the chief preparation for holy Communion, and the chief Fruit we ought to propose to our selves to gather from it: The one ought to help the other, and each Communion ought to be a preparation to another. Moreover as Perfection and the Fruit of Prayer, consist not in having sensible comforts, nor in being rais'd to high Contemplations. But to go from our Prayer more Humble, more Mortifi'd in our Senses, and less ty'd to our own Will: So the mark of a good Communion, and of the Fruit we are to gather from thence, is not to have made a great many holy Meditations, nor to have had great Consolations, but to become more mortifi'd in our Passions, and more submissive and resign'd in our Will to God.

Hence one thing follows, which ought to be of a comfort to all the World; which is, that 'tis in our power always to make a good Communion, and to gather great Fruit from it: For to abandon our selves intirely into the Hands of God, to mortifie our selves, and to correct those faults we know are displeasing to him, is always in our power, throu' the assistance of God's Infinite Mercy. Apply then your self to do this, and you'll gather great fruit from Communion. Endeavour to overcome your self, to become more Mortifi'd, and Daily to correct some fault or other. Cause the Idol of *Dagon* to fall before the Ark of Alliance; break in pieces the Idol of Pride, of Vanity, and of Self-love. What profit shou'd we not make in a short time, if every time we Communicated, we shou'd take care to mortifie our selves in something, and to correct in our selves, now one fault, now another?

Saint

* Consideravit semitas domus suae, & panem otiosa non comedit. Prov. 31. 27.

Saint Hierom applies to the Subject I speak off, that which the Wife Man says of the couragious Woman; * *She seriously consider'd every corner of her House, and wou'd not Eat her Bread in idleness.* This careful search according to his explication, is that Examin and preparation, which ought to precede Communion; and to Eat this Bread, without doing something, is to Communicate unprofitably. When one becomes better, says he, by the Communions he makes, he Eats not his Bread unprofitably; because this Heavenly Bread has produc'd such profit in him. But unhappy are you, who have so unprofitably Eaten your Bread for so many Years? Because you have overcome your self in nothing, you have mortifi'd your self in nothing, you have not so much as overcome, one of those faults you were wont to commit. 'Tis a sign therefore that you are Sick, since what you Eat do's you no good; wherefore take care the like happens not hereafter. Let every one enter into himself; let him view and consider the secret corners, and foulds of his Soul; let him see what Passion, what Fault, what Inclination is the greatest obstacle to his Salvation and Perfection, and then endeavour to overcome 'em; and to do it after so efficacious a manner, that he may say with the Apostle. † *I Live indeed, but 'tis not I who Live, but JESUS CHRIST who Lives in me.* * *That is to say,* says Saint Hierom, *he lives no more now as he liv'd before, in the Darknes of the Old Law. And as one who persecuted the Church: But JESUS CHRIST lives in him, that is to say, Wisdom, Strength, the Word of God, Peace, Joy, and all other Virtues, live in him, without which no body can say that 'tis JESUS CHRIST that lives in him.*

† vivo ego, jam non ego: vivit vero in me Christus. Gal. 2. 20.

* Id est, non vivit ille qui quondam vivebat in lege: quippe persequeretur Ecclesiam. Vivit autem in eo Christus, id est, sapientia, fortitudo, sermo, pax, gaudium, ceteraeque virtutes, quas qui non habet, non potest dicere: Vivit autem in me Christus. Hieron. sup. hac ult. verba.

CHAP.

C H A P. XIII.

From whence it comes to pass, that many Persons who often approach the Sacrament of the Eucharist; find not those wonderful effects which it ordinarily works.

SOME may perhaps object, that since this August Sacrament, works such wonderful effects, and bestows such great Favors and Graces, how comes it to pass, that many Priests who Daily Celebrate, and divers other Persons who very often Communicate, do not only, not experience those Spiritual sweetneses of which I have spoken; but even make no progress at all in Virtue, but remain always in the same state and condition? Some are wont to answer to this, what the Proverb says, * *Too much Familiarity, breeds Contempt.* Imagining that the reason why they approach not this Table with sufficient preparation and respect, is; because they approach it too often: But in this they deceive themselves; for that which they object, can have no place in Spiritual things, and in conversing with God. Nay, they even pretend, that it can have no place in regard of that familiarity which is had with Wise Men; because the greater it is, the more we discover their Merits, and consequently have a greater esteem of 'em. But I am of opinion that this Proverb has place even in regard of the Wisest Men; for as there is no one so Perfect who has not also some Defects, so it may very well fall out, that by a familiar conversation we come to discover 'em, and consequently also to lessen our esteem. But tho' this truth shou'd have place in the conversation that is had with Men, yet it can have none in the conversation we have with God; because God being Infinitely Perfect and Wise, the more we know him, the more we are touch'd with Respect, and Admiration of his Excellency. 'Tis this that happens to the Angels and Blessed Souls, who perfectly know him in Heaven, and

* Nimia familiaritas parit contemptum.

and who continually enjoy a sight of him. 'Tis this also, which those here below experience in themselves; who particularly give themselves to Spirituality and Prayer. This truth is very well prov'd, in the Story of the Samaritan Woman, and in the different ways she took in treating the Saviour of the World, in that Entertainment and Conversation she had with him. * *How comes it to pass, says she, that thou who art a Jew, shoud'st ask me to give thee to Drink, who am a Samaritan Woman.* She first calls him by the general Name of his Nation, and treats him as an ordinary Person; but a little while after she calls him Lord, saying, † *Lord give me of this Water;* afterwards in the same Conversation, she calls him Prophet; * *I see, says she, that thou art a Prophet:* And lastly she acknowledges him for CHRIST and for the Messias. The frequentation of the Sacraments causes the like effect, and one Communion is a preparation to another, and 'tis an error to imagine, that by going seldom to this Table we prepare our selves with more care and respect. Wherefore, Saint Austin and Saint Ambrose had great reason to say, † *That he who deserves not to receive Daily the Body of JESUS CHRIST, deserves not to receive it, even at the Years end.*

But now to answer the objection made in the beginning; I say in the first place, that the reason why the frequent use of Communion, produces not always all the Fruit it ought to work in us; proceeds very often from our own fault; 'tis oftentimes because we do not prepare our selves as we ought, and that we approach the Altar out of custom, and after a negligent manner; we Communicate because others do so; and because we are accusom'd to Communicate, we think not before hand what we are about to do, or make not sufficient reflection thereupon; and this is the reason why we gather so little Fruit from thence; wherefore when we find we do not profit, by the frequent Communions we make, we must Examine our selves, whither it comes not from the want of a due preparation to it, and if we find it to be so, we must apply a remedy thereunto. This Evil also sometimes proceeds, from our too willingly permitting our selves to commit Venial Sins: For there are two sorts of Venial Sins; the one which we fall into by inadvertency, (tho' notwithstanding they are always accompany'd with a negligence and want of care) and the other which we voluntarily commit, and with a deliberate purpose. Those into which the true Servants of God fall

* Quomodo tu Judæus cum sis, bibe-
re à me possis,
quæ sum mul-
lier Samarita-
na?
Joan. 4. 9.

† Domine, da
mihi hanc a-
quam.

Ibid. 7. 13.
* Video quia
Propheta es
tu, Ibid. 7. 19.

† Qui non me-
retur quotidie
accipere, non
meretur post
annum accipe-
re. Ambros. l. 5.
de Sacr. c. 4.
Aug. de verb.
Dom. serm. 33.
c. epist. 118. ad
Janu. Iud.
Blos. in spec.
Spir. c. 6.

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fall by inadvertency or want of reflection causes, no hinderance at all in 'em, to the Grace of the Sacrament; but such as tepid and negligent Persons in the service of God commit, with full deliberation, are a very great obstacle to it. The same also, may be sayd of the faults that a Religious Person voluntarily commits against his Rules: And the Conduct which God uses herein towards us, whether it be in Communion or in Prayer, is like that which a Father uses, when he sees any thing that is amiss in his Son; he presently looks upon him with a severe countenance, as it were to correct him for his fault, and to warn him to take care not to fall into the like another time, so that if we have a mind to partake of that abundance of Grace which those enjoy, who approach to this holy Table as they ought, we must abstain from committing the least voluntary fault; and let such Souls as fear God, take good notice of this: For 'tis the best means effectively to oblige God, to shower down his Gifts and Graces upon 'em.

In the second place, I say it may often happen, that we may not feel these admirable effects of holy Communion, without any faults of our own; and that we hereby receive the Fruit thereof in our Souls, tho' we do not at all perceive it, in any sensible manner. The same happens here which happens in Prayer, which many make the same complaint off; for tho' we feel not the sweetness and comforts which we desire, and which we have at other times felt, yet we must not doubt but we still gather great fruit from it. A Sick Person finds no tast in the food he receives, yet notwithstanding, it ceases not to nourish and sustain him, and to do him good. These sweetneses and sensible comforts, are Graces which God bestows when, and as he thinks fit; and when he deprives his Servants of 'em, 'tis to prove them, to humble them; and to draw from thence other benefits and advantages: The knowledge of which, only; belongs to himself. Add to this, that this Divine Sacrament; oftentimes works after so secret a manner, that 'tis scarce perceivable; because Grace ordinarily works by little and little, as Nature also do's, and very insensibly. We do not perceive a Plant grow, but we see very well that 'tis grown; therefore Saint Laurence Justinian says, that as Corporal food nourishes a Man, and makes him grow, tho' he perceives it not. So this Heavenly food sustains and fortifies the Soul by the increase of Grace, tho' we do not perceive it.

Tpm. II.

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Lastly

Lastly I answer, that we ought to count it for a benefit, not only to make a progress; but also not to fall, or not to go back in Virtue. The remedies which hinder Diseases are not less esteem'd, than those who increase health. And let us here take notice, since 'tis a great subject of comfort to those, who perceive not so sensibly, the fruit which this Divine Sacrament produces in 'em; that we see ordinarily that those who often approach this Sacrament, live in the fear of God, and pass whole Years, nay sometimes their whole Lives, without committing one Mortal Sin. But this is one of the effects of this Sacrament; it hinders us from falling into Mortal Sin; and preserves in us the Life of our Soul, as Corporal Food conserves the Life of the Body; wherefore the Council of *Trent* calls it, * *An Antidote by which we are deliver'd from our Daily Faults, and preserv'd from Mortal Sins.* So that, tho' in receiving it, we feel neither that Fervor of Devotion, nor those insupportable sweetnesses, of which I have spoken; and that afterwards instead of that ardour and promptitude, which some then feel to what is good, we find our selves in dryness and tepidity; yet notwithstanding we fail not to draw fruit from it. And if in Communicating frequently, we fall into some faults, we shou'd not fail to fall into far greater, if we abstain'd from Communion. Lastly, let us endeavour on our side, as far as it depends upon us, to approach this holy Table with that disposition and respect as I have sayd, and infallibly we shall receive extream profit by approaching it very often. We Read of *Widikend Duke of Saxony*, that being still a Pagan, and wageing War against *Charlemain*, he had a great curiosity to see what past in the Camp of the Christians; for which reason, he disguis'd himself in the Habit of a Pilgrim. This happen'd at *Easter*, when the whole Christian Army made their Devotions: Entering the Camp, he saw and admir'd the Ceremonies of the Sacrifice of Mass: But that which most of all surpriz'd him, was, that he saw in every Host, with which the Priest Communicated the People, an Infant of an admirable Beauty, all Shining with Light, which seem'd to enter into the Mouth of some with an extream Joy; and made a difficulty to enter into the Mouths of others. This Miraculous Vision, was the subject about which he caus'd himself first to be instructed, and was the reason why he afterwards imbrac'd the Christian Religion; which afterwards he also caus'd all his Subjects to do.

Another

* Antidotum quo liberamur a culpis quotidianis, & a peccatis mortalibus praefervamur. Concil. Trid. Sess. 13. de sanct. Euch. Sacr. c. 2.

Trimal. Bre- demb. lib. 1. collation. c. 2. ex Histor. Ecclesiast. Alberti Gramscij l. 1. c. 9.

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Another thing much like to this, is recounted of a great Servant of God, and this second Example may serve for a good exposition of the first. Which is, that this Man, as he one Day heard the Mass of a Secular Priest, perceiv'd that at the time of Consummation, instead of the Species of Bread, he saw a most Beautiful Infant upon the *Paten*, and perceiv'd that as the Priest went about to Communicate. The Infant turn'd it's Head, and struggling with it's Hands and Feet, did what it cou'd to hinder the Priest from receiving him; he had afterwards several times the same Vision: And the same Priest one Day discoursing with him, told him that as often as he receiv'd the Body of our Saviour, he found a great deal of difficulty therein, and knew not from whence it shou'd proceed; whereupon the Servant of God took occasion, to discover to him what he had seen; and counsell'd him to think upon his Conscience, and to amend his Life. The Priest being touch'd with this Advice; chang'd his Life, and a little while after the same Servant of God hearing again his Mass, perceiv'd the same Infant in his Hand, at the time of Consummation, and saw him enter into the Mouth of the Priest, with a great deal of Promptitude and Alacrity.

An example of Henry of Grenade upon the Eucharist, cited by the Doctor Sautore in his fourth Book of Sermons or Spir. Medew. c. 100.

C H A P. XIV.

Of the Holy Sacrifice of Mass.

I Have already spoken of the Sacrament of the Altar, and of it's effects, by considering it as a Sacrament; it remains at present to speak of it, by considering it as a Sacrifice; which the Council of Trent orders Preachers and Pastors of Souls, carefully to explicate to the People; that all the World may know, how great a Treasure God has left to his Church; and that each one may thereby be able to make greater profit. From the beginning of the World, at least from the beginning of Sin, and even from that of the Law of Nature, there were always Sacrifices therein; and 'twas always necessary

U u u 2 there

there shou'd be so, both to appease God, and also to give Honor to his Greatness and Infinite Majesty. Wherefore in the Ancient Law, God Instituted Priests and Sacrifices; but as this Law was Imperfect, so were the Sacrifices also; for neither the Priest-hood of *Aaron*, nor the Victims that were Offer'd by him, were capable of Sanctifying the People, nor of blotting out their Sins. * *For 'tis impossible*, says the Apostle, *that Sin shou'd be blotted out, with the Blood of Bulls or Goats*. Wherefore 'twas necessary there shou'd come another Priest of the Order of *Melchisedech*, and that he shou'd Offer another Sacrifice, that shou'd be capable, both of appeasing God, and of Sanctifying Men; and this Priest is *JESUS CHRIST*; who offers himself for them to his Father. Saint *Austin* says, that all the Sacrifices of the Old Law were only a shadow or figure of this: And as we can express one and the self same thing in different Terms, and in different Tongues, so this only and true Sacrament was figur'd by this multitude of Sacrifices in the Old Law. And God, says this holy Doctor, ordain'd 'em in so great a number, as well to make a great impression upon our Mind, by the number; as to take away by this variety, the disgust and tediousness, which the frequent repetition of the same thing is wont to occasion. He wou'd moreover, add's the Doctor, that they shou'd Offer Beasts without spot, to give us to understand, that as Victims ought not to have any spots, that were Offer'd to him, so it behov'd him, who came to Offer himself in Sacrifice for us, to be exempt from all kind of Sin. But if these kinds of Sacrifices were then agreeable to God, as without doubt they were, yet they became so; because by them was acknowledg'd, that there ought to come a Saviour, who shou'd himself become the true Sacrifice; for as soon as our Saviour was come, they became displeasing to God. as Saint *Paul* takes notice, by these his Words to the *Hebrews*, † *Wherefore entering into the World, he sayd, thou would'st not have Victim nor Offering, but thou hast fitted me with a Body. The Sacrifice of Propitiation for Sins, are no longer pleasing to thee; and then I sayd behold I come, according as 'tis Written of me, in the head or beginning of the Book, that I may do thy Will O my God. God gave a Body to his only Son, that he might do the Will of his Father, by Offering himself in Sacrifice upon the Cross for us; and immediately all the shadows and figures disappear'd, at the arrival of what they figur'd, and the*

* Impossibile enim est sanguine tauro-rum, & hircorum auferri peccata.
Heb. 10. 4.

Aug. l. 1. contra advers. leg. & Proph. c. 18. & 10. de Civ. Dei. c. 6.

† Ideo ingrediens mundum dicit: Hostiam, & oblationem noluisse: corpus autem aptasti mihi: holocaustum autem pro peccato non tibi placuerunt. Tunc dixi: Ecce venio: in capite libri scriptum est de me, ut faciam, Deus, voluntatem tuam.
Hebr. 10. 5.

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the Ancient Sacrifices, ceas'd to be any longer pleasing to God.

But 'tis the Sacrifice which we have in the Law of Grace; and which is daily offer'd at Mass that pleases him, 'tis the only Son of God who is himself our Sacrifice; * *He offer'd himself for us to God, to be an Oblation and a Victim of Sweet Odour.* And these are not only such holy thoughts, as Meditation furnishes withal; but are such real truths, as Faith reaches us. 'Tis true that Mass is a commemoration and representation of the Death of JESUS CHRIST, as is signify'd by these words of our Saviour. † *Do this in Remembrance of me*, but 'tis also true at the same time, that 'tis not only a commemoration and representation of the Sacrifice, in which he offer'd himself upon the Cross, to his Eternal Father for our Sins; but 'tis the same Sacrifice that was then offer'd, and of the same Value and Merit. Moreover, 'tis not only the same Sacrifice, but he who offers it, now at Mass, is the same who heretofore offer'd it upon the Cross. So that as in the Passion he was both Priest and Sacrifice; so he is the same still upon our Altars; he is the Sacrifice and Priest, who himself offers up himself to his Eternal Father; by the Ministry of Priests, he that says Mass do's nothing else but represent the Person of JESUS CHRIST. 'Tis in his Name, and as his Minister, that he offers this Sacrifice; and the words of Consecration are a proof of this Truth. For he says not, * *This is the Body of JESUS CHRIST.* But he says, *This is my Body*, as speaking in the Person of CHRIST, who is the high Priest that offers this Sacrifice. Wherefore the Royal Prophet and the Apostle Saint Paul, styles him, *Priest for ever according to the Order of Melchisedech.* But it wou'd be improper to call him *Priest for ever*, if he had offer'd Sacrifice but once: But he is very well call'd after this manner; because in effect he offers a perpetual Sacrifice to God; and which he will never cease to offer to the end of the World. † *Such a Priest as this*, says Saint Paul, *we ought to have, who was wholly Innocent, without Spot, separated from Sinners, elevated above the Heavens; who did not stand in need, as other Priests do, to offer Victims for his own Sins, and afterwards for the Sins of the People; but, who during his Life in the Flesh, having with cries and Tears offer'd Prayers and Supplications, to him who cou'd save him from Death; was heard for his own consideration.* We stood

* Traditio semet ipsum pro nobis oblationem, & hostiam Deo in odorem suavitatis.
Ephes. 5. 2.

† Hoc facite in meam commemorationem.
Luc. 22. 19.

* Hoc est corpus Christi.
Hoc est corpus meum.
Sacerdos in aeternum, secundum ordinem Melchisedech.
Psal. 109. 4.
Heb. 7. 17. 21.

† Talis enim dicebat ut nobis esset pontifex, sanctus, innocens, impollutus, segregatus a peccatoribus, & excellentior caelis factus, qui non habet necessitatem quotidie, quemadmodum sacerdotes, pueri pro suis delictis hostias offerre, deinde pro populis. Qui in diebus carnis, uxor, parentes, supplicat, oneque ad eum, qui possit illum saluum facere a morte, cum clamo- re valido & lacrymis offerens, exauditus est pro sua reverentia.
Heb. 7. 26.
et 5. 7.

in

in need of a Priest, that might be able to appease the Wrath of God, not by Blood of Victims, as ordain'd by the Old Law; but by his own Blood, and his own Death and Passion.

Let us here at present consider the wonderful Wisdom of those means, which God has taken for the Salvation of Men, and which he has also taken, to render this Sacrifice pleasing to God in all kinds. For there are four things, chiefly to be consider'd in a Sacrifice, as Saint *Austin* very well takes notice of. He to whom 'tis offer'd; he who offer's it, that which is offer'd; and for whom 'tis offer'd. The Infinite Wisdom of God, has here dispos'd things after such a manner, that he who offers this Sacrifice, to Reconcile us to God; is the same with him to whom 'tis offer'd; moreover 'tis he himself who is the Sacrifice; and lastly he is united after such a manner, to those for whom he offers it, that he is also the same with them. This Sacrifice also is of so great a price and value, that it has not only sufficiently satisfi'd the Eternal Father for our Sins and for those of the whole World, according to the words of Saint *John*, † *He is the Propitiation for our Sins; and not only for ours, but for those of the whole World.* But it would be sufficient to satisfy for the Sins of a Million of Worlds. 'Tis not only a sufficient satisfaction as the Divines and Saints say, but 'tis a superabundant compensation; 'tis a Payment that far exceeds the Debt; 'tis a reparation of Honor, which far more pleases the Eternal Father, than the offence displeas'd him. So that as *JESUS CHRIST*, is at the same time the Sacrifice, and the Person who offers it, the Sacrifice loses nothing of the Value and Merit, by being offer'd by the Hands of a Wicked Priest; and fails nevertheless to be always a like profitable, to those for whom 'tis offer'd. After the same manner as an Alms, which tho' you shou'd distribute by the Hands of a Wicked Man, yet wou'd not be the less good, nor less meritorious in your behalf. * *This Sacrifice*, says the Council of Trent, *is the same with that, which heretofore was offer'd upon the Cross; 'tis the same Host, and he who offer'd himself then, is the same who now Daily offers himself by the Hands of the Priest; 'tis only the manner of offering which is different, and this difference consists in this, that which was offer'd upon the Cross, was A Bloody Sacrifice.* For then *JESUS CHRIST* was passible and Mortal; and that

† Ipse est propitiatio pro peccatis nostris; non pro nostris autem tantum, sed etiam pro totius mundi.
1 *Joan.* 2. 2.

* Una enim eademque est hostia, idemque nunc offerens sacerdotum ministerio, qui seipsum tunc in cruce obtulit, sola offerendi ratione diversa.
Concil. Trid. sess. 22. c. 2.
Crucientum sacrificium:
Ibid.

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that which is now Daily offer'd upon our Altars, is *Unbloody*; because † **JESUS CHRIST** being rais'd from Death, can Dye no more, and Death has now no more power and dominion over him. But the Saviour of the World, says the Council, having offer'd himself in Sacrifice for us upon the Cross, wou'd not that this Sacrifice shou'd end there. But because he was * *Priest for ever*; he wou'd that this Sacrifice shou'd for ever continue in the Church: And as he was Priest, † *According to the Order of Melchisedech*, who offer'd to God Bread and Wine in Sacrifice, he wou'd that this Sacrifice also, shou'd be offer'd under the Species of Bread and Wine. Wherefore * *The same Night in which he was betray'd, he took Bread*, says the Apostle, and giving thanks to God, he broke it and gave it to his Disciples. At the same time that Men sought to put him to Death, he sought to give them Life; and to accommodate himself to their capacities, he wou'd leave to his Spouse the Visible Church, a Visible Sacrifice; which shou'd not only represent to us, and put us in Mind of the Bloody Sacrifice of the Cross, but shou'd also have the same Virtue, for the Remission of our Sins, and for our Reconciliation with God, and which in effect shou'd be the same Sacrifice. Wherefore he Consecrated his Precious Body and Blood under the Species of Bread and Wine, converting the Bread into his Body, and the Wine into his Blood; and under these Species, he offer'd himself to his Eternal Father; 'twas here, say the Doctors, that the first Mass was Celebrated, and here also it was, that he Consecrated his Disciples Priests of the New Testament; and that by these words, † *Do this in Memory of me*. He commanded them and their Successors in Priesthood, to offer this Adorable Sacrifice. Wherefore some look upon the Feast of the Blessed Sacrament, as the greatest of all those the Church Celebrates: For all the rest are only a Representation and a Memory of Mysteries: Either of the Incarnation, of the Nativity, of the Resurrection, or of the Ascension; upon which Feasts the Son of God do's not make himself Man again, nor begins a new his Birth, nor Raises himself a new, nor Mounts again to Heaven: But the Feast of the Blessed Sacrament, is not only a simple Memory, and Representation of this Adorable Mystery, but tis in effect a Renovation of it, as often as the Priest says the words of Consecration; and the same Sacrifice which

† Christus resurgens ex mortuis, jam non moritur; mors illi ultra non dominabitur.
Rom. 6. 9.

* sacerdos in æternum.
Psal. 109. 4.

† Secundum ordinem Melchisedech. Ibid.

* In qua nocte tradebatur, accepit panem, & gratias agens, fregit, deditque discipulis suis.
1 Cor. 11. 23. 24.

† Hoc facite in meam commemorationem.
Luc. 22. 19.

was

was offer'd, when JESUS CHRIST Dy'd for us upon the Crofs, is Daily renew'd upon our Altars.

Let us here consider how great the Love of JESUS CHRIST was for Man, and how much we are beholding to him. For he is not contented to offer himself once only in Sacrifice for our Sins upon the Crofs; but he wou'd also remain here below, to be offer'd in Sacrifice, not only once but as often as we wou'd; even every Day to the end of the World; that we might have in him the most pleasing Sacrifice, that can ever be offer'd to his Eternal Father for our Sins; and the most worthy present that we can be able to make to appease him. What wou'd become of Christians without this Sacrifice of Propitiation? † *We shou'd be treated as Sodom and Gomorrha*; and God wou'd have punish'd us before this, according as our Sins have deserv'd. The property of this Sacrament is to appease God; and 'tis this which the Apostle expresses by these words, * *He offer'd himself to God for us, to be a Victim of an agreeable sweetness*. For as amongst Men the consideration of any service or present, is the occasion sometimes of our pardoning an injury which we have receiv'd, so here the consideration of the present we make to God, and of the Sacrifice we offer to him, is sufficient to appease him, and oblige him to look upon us with Eyes of Mercy. Had we been able to cast our selves at the foot of the Crofs, at the Death of our Saviour, and that some drops of his most Precious Blood had fallen upon us, what comfort shou'd we have felt in our Souls, and what hope shou'd we not hereby have conceiv'd of our Salvation? A Miserable wretch, who had done nothing but Robb'd all his Life long, found himself so fill'd with confidence at this sight alone, that on a sudden, of a publick Robber, he became a Saint, and from the Crofs upon which he was Nail'd, he rais'd himself to the injoyment of Everlasting Glory. But the same Son of God, who then offer'd himself for us upon the Crofs, still Daily offers himself for us upon the Altars; and the Sacrifice which Daily is offer'd in our Churches, is of as great a Price, and of as great Virtue, as that which was consummated upon Mount Calvary; wherefore the Church is accusom'd to say, † *That the Work of our Redemption is as often perform'd as we Celebrate the memory of this Victim*, the Fruits and Graces of the Bloody Sacrifice of the Crofs, communicate themselves unto us, by the unbloody Sacrifice of Mass.

Moreover

† Quasi Sodoma fuisset, quasi Gomorrhae similes essemus.

Isai. 1. 9.

3. Thom. 3. p.

9. 49. art. 4.

* Tradidit semetipsum pro nobis oblationem & hostiam Deo in odorem suavitatis.

Ephef. 5. 2.

† Quoties hujus hodie commemoratio celebratur, opus redemptionis nostrae exercetur.

In orat. secr.

Dom. 9. post Pent.

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Moreover this Sacrifice is of so inestimable a Value, that it cannot be offer'd but to God alone, as the Council of *Trent* takes notice; for tho' 'tis the custom to say Mass in honor of the Saints, yet 'tis not to the Saints, to whom this Sacrifice is offer'd: For the Priest, says not, *I offer to you Saint Peter, or I offer to you Saint Paul*; but only, *I offer to thee O Lord*: Rendring thanks to God for those Crowns and Victories, which the Saints have obtain'd by the Assistance of his Grace; and begging their Protection; *That those whose Memories we Celebrate on Earth; wou'd vouchsafe to Interceed for us in Heaven.*

Offero tibi
Sancte Petre,
vel Sancte
Paulo. Apo-
stole.

Ut ipsi pro
nobis interce-
dere dignen-
tur in cælis,
quorum me-
moriâ faci-
mus in terris.

So that this Adorable Mystery, is both a Sacrament, and a Sacrifice at the same time; tho' notwithstanding there's a great difference between the qualities of a Sacrifice, and a Sacrament. 'Tis a Sacrifice because 'tis offer'd to God, by the Priest who Consecrates at Mass. The Essence of this Sacrifice, according to all Divines, consisting in the Consecration of the Body of *JESUS CHRIST*, under the two Species; and in the Oblation which the Priests makes of 'em; and the same words of Consecration, which produce the Sacrifice, serve also to make the Oblation thereof; and as the Bloody Sacrifice which *JESUS CHRIST* offer'd for us upon the Cross to his Eternal Father, was intirely accomplish'd at the same instant that our Saviour render'd up the Ghost; so the Sacrifice of Mass, which is a true representation of that of the Cross, and is in effect the same, is Essentially Consummated at the same Instant, that the Priest accomplishes the Pronunciation of the words of Consecration, upon the Bread and Wine. For then in Virtue of these words: The Body and Blood of *JESUS CHRIST* is in the Host, and his Blood in the Chalice, of which, the Consecration is immediately made after that of the Host, is a lively representation, of the Effusion of the Blood of *JESUS CHRIST* upon the Cross; and of the separation of his Body and Soul, which follow'd this Effusion; but after the Consecration, and so long afterwards as the Species of Bread and Wine shall remain, whilst it repoes in the Tabernacle, whilst 'tis carry'd to Sick Persons, and whilst 'tis receiv'd at the Holy Table, 'tis then only a Sacrament, and has no more either the quality or vertue of a Sacrifice. There is another thing yet, here to be taken notice off, which is, that as 'tis a Sacrament, it conduces to Salvation as other Sacraments do, in him that receives it; and confers

Tom. II.

X x x

Grace,

Grace, and other advantages that are particularly anex'd to the Sacrament: But as 'tis a Sacrifice, it helps to Salvation, not only the Priest who receives it, but also all those for whom 'tis offer'd: 'Tis this the Council of *Trent* takes notice off, when it says, that *JESUS CHRIST* Instituted this Divine Mystery for two ends; the one to serve for Nourishment to the Soul, in quality of a Sacrament; and to maintain, fortifie, repair, and renew in it, the Life of the Spirit: The other, that the Church might have a perpetual Sacrifice to offer to God, in satisfaction for our Offences, and in acknowledgment and thanksgiving for those Graces and Benefits we have receiv'd, and to obtain of us a remedy for our weakness, and his help and assistance both in publick and particular necessities. But 'tis not only for the Living, that this Sacrifice is comfortable; 'tis also so, to those who are Dead in the Grace of God, and do expiate their Sins in Purgatory: But there's still something very comfortable herein, which is, that tho' the Priest in saying Mass, offers the Sacrifice for himself and others, yet those who are present at it, may also offer it with him for themselves and for what other Persons they shall think fit. For as when a City sends a Present to a Prince by it's Deputies, all the Inhabitants have their share in the offer of the Present, tho' there be but one of 'em, who makes the offer, or complement: So in the Sacrifice of Mass, tho' there be none but the Priest who speaks, and offers the Sacrifice; yet all that are present fail not to have there share in it. 'Tis true that in relation to the Deputies of a City, each of 'em is able to make the compliment, tho' there be but one who is chosen to carry it; but here 'tis not the same; because it belongs only to the Priest, who is chosen by God to Consecrate and Celebrate; but this do's not hinder, but that those who assist at this Adorable Sacrifice, may also offer it up with him. 'Tis this, that the Priest precisely says in the words of the Offertory. *Pray my Brethren that mine and your Sacrifice, may be pleasing in the sight of God the Father Ommipotent; and in those other Prayers of the Canon of Mass, For whom we offer this Sacrifice, or for those who offer it unto thee.* This consideration ought to be a powerful motive to excite all the World to assist at Mass; and 'tis concerning this, that I shall speak more particularly in the following Chapter.

Orate fratres,
ut meum ac
vestrorum sa-
crificium ac-
ceptabile fiat
apud Deum
Patrem om-
nipotentem.

Pro quibus
tibi offerimus,
vel qui tibi
offerunt.

C H A P.

C H A P. XV.

After what manner we ought to hear Mass.

WHAT I have already sayd, seems to oblige me to speak of the manner, how we ought to hear Mass; wherefore I shall here chiefly treat of three things, which ought to be done in time of Mass; which we must also perform with due respect; since 'tis the Church it self, that proposes 'em unto us. First we must suppose, that Mass, as I have already sayd, is a Representation of the Death and Passion of JESUS CHRIST, who wou'd hereby renew in our Minds, the memory of his love and sufferings; thereby to excite us to love and serve him with more fervor; and to hinder us from falling into that Ingratitude of the *Hebrews*, † *Who forgot the God who had sav'd 'em, and done such great things for 'em in Egypt.* Wherefore according to this, one of the best Devotions, which we ought to apply our selves unto in time of Mass, is to consider with attention, the Mysteries of the Passion, which are therein represented unto us; and by this view, incite our selves, to produce acts of the Love of God, and to make a firm resolution of serving him. But since the understanding of all things that are sayd or done in Mass, will extreemly contribute hereunto, 'tis to the purpose to explicate here before hand, what they signifie; that this knowledge may make us better apply our selves, to the Meditation of those holy Mysteries they represent. For there is not one word sayd in Mass, nor even the least action or ceremony, which do not betoken something that is Holy and Myste-
rious; nay even the Ornaments, with which the Priest is Vested at the Altar, have also a Myste-
rious signification. The *Amis*, which is a piece of linnen cloth, that the Priest puts about his Neck, and which covers his Shoulders, represents the *Vail*, with which the Souldiers cover'd the Face of the Son of God; when striking him, they sayd to him.

† Qui obli-
sunt Deum qui
salvavit eos,
qui fecit mag-
nalia in
Egypto.
Psal. 105. 21.

X x x 2

Prophecy

* Prophetiza,
quis est, qui te
pertussit?
Luc. 22. 64.

* *Prophecy who it is that has struck thee.* The *Albe*, signifies the white Robe, which *Herod* in Mockery caus'd to be put upon him, when he sent him back to *Pilate*: The *Girdle* represents the Cords with which he was bound, when he was apprehended in the Garden; and the Whips with which he was torn by Command of *Pilate*: The *Maniple* signifies the Cords with which he was bound to the Pillar, in the Judgment Hall; which he puts upon the left Arm, which is next the Heart, to signify that 'twas the Excess of his Love, that made him suffer this cruel Flagellation for our Sins, and that we ought to correspond to this Love by all the Tenderness our Heart is capable off: The *Stole*, represents the Cord which they cast about his Neck, when he carry'd the Cross. The *Chasuble* or *Vestment*, according to some, was the Purple Robe which they put upon him, to scoff at him; or according to others, the *Tunick* or *Coat* without seam; which they stripp'd him of, to Crucifie him. The entrance of the Priest into the Sacrestry, to Vest himself with Priests Ornaments, represents the Descent of the Son of God, into the Womb of the Holy Virgin, where he Cloth'd himself with our Fleth, and with our Humanity, to go and Celebrate the Sacrifice upon the Cross. The Quire that Sings the *Introit*, when the Priest go's out of the Sacrestry, represents the Ancient Patriarchs, who expected the coming of the *Messias*, and who begg'd him of God in these Words: † *Send O Lord, the Lamb Governour of the Earth*, * *O that thou wou'dst break thro' the Heavens, and Descend?* And they repeat the second time, the *Introit*, to mark the holy Impatience they were in; and the frequent Prayers they made to God upon this subject. The *Confiteor*, which the Priest afterwards says, as a sinful Man; signifies, that *JESUS. CHRIST* wou'd charge himself with our Sins and satisfy for them; and that he wou'd appear a Sinner, and be held for such, that we might become just and holy: And the *Kyrie Eleison* which signifies, *Lord have Mercy upon us*, represents the miserable state which we were in, before the coming of our Saviour: It wou'd be too long to set down in particular, the signification of each word and ceremony; but lastly there is not one which do's not mark some Mystery. For Example, the many signs of the Cross, which the Priests make upon the Host and the Chalice, signify the many Sufferings of *JESUS. CHRIST* upon the Cross. The Elevation which is made

† Emitte, Domine, agnum dominatorem terræ.

Isai. 16. 1.
* Utinam disrumpes cælum, & descenderes.
Isai. 64. 1.

of the Host and Chalice at Consecration, that the People may Adore the Body and Blood of the Son of God, is besides this, made to represent what the *Jews* did, when they Elevated the Cross of our Saviour, to expose him to the View of all the People: Each one according to his own choice, may apply himself to consider one or two, of these Mysteries, according to the Idea we have now given of 'em. But above all, we must endeavour to render this Meditation profitable, by exciting our selves as much as we are able, to correspond to the Love and Benefits of the Son of God; which will be far more profitable, than to pass over many Mysteries slightly. Behold therefore the first Exercise of Devotion; to which we may apply ourselves in time of Mass.

The second Exercise of Devotion, and the second manner of hearing Mass, is also very convenient, and profitable; and the better to comprehend what it is, we must suppose two things, which we have already taken notice off, in the foregoing Chapter. The first is that Mass is not only a memory and representation of the Passion of *JESUS CHRIST*, and of the Sacrifice in which he offer'd himself upon the Cross, to his Eternal Father for our Sins; but that this is really the same Sacrifice that was then offer'd, and is of the same Virtue Force and Value. The second, that tho' there is only the Priest that speaks in the Sacrifice, and that 'tis he only that offers it, yet all those who assist at Mass, fail not to offer it also joyntly with him. This being so, I say, that the best way of hearing Mass, is to joyn our selves to the Priest in the Sacrifice, and to endeavour to follow and imitate him in all he do's; thinking with our selves, what is very true, that then we are all assembl'd in the Church, not only to hear Mass, but also joyntly to offer with the Priest, the Adorable Sacrifice of the Body and Blood of *JESUS CHRIST*. Also that the People may dispose themselves for it, as the Priest do's with all the Preparation that the Church commands. The Priest is ordain'd to pronounce with a distinct and loud Voice, all that regard this preparation; the which is so prudently instituted, that all that is done in it, and all that is sayd in it, is only to dispose the Priests and Assistants to offer this Adorable Sacrifice, with all possible Piety and Reverence.

To reduce this to a more easie Practise, we must observe, that Mass has three chief parts in it, of which the first is from the *Troait* to the *Offertory*; which is only to prepare the Faithful, worthily to offer this Sacrifice; this is done first by severall Verses of the Psalms, and by the *Confiteor*, which the Priest says, before he go's up to the Altar; and afterwards by the frequent repetition of this Prayer *Kyrie Eleison*, which besides it's signification of the miserable state we were in, before the coming of JESUS CHRIST; it also teaches us that in all things we beg of God, we ought to place our Hope only upon his Mercy. Afterwards *Gloria in Excelsis* is recited; to glorifie God for the Incarnation of his only Son, and to give him thanks for so great a Benefit; and afterwards the Prayer is sayd: Whereupon we must take notice, that the Priest says, *Oremus. Let us Pray*, and not, *Oro, I Pray*; because in effect, all the Assistants ought to Pray with him, and that he Prays also in the Name of 'em all; wherefore that this may be done with more fervor, the Priest turns towards the People, and before hand begg's the Assistance of the Holy Ghost by these words, *Dominus Vobiscum, The Lord be with yee*, to which the People Answer, *Et cum Spiritu tuo, And with thy Spirit also*. The *Epistle* signifies the Doctrine of the Old Testament, and that of Saint John Baptist, which was as a preparation to that of the Gospel. The *Gradual*, which is sayd after the *Epistle* signifies the Penance which the People did after the Preaching of Saint John, and the *Alleluia*, which is sayd after the *Gradual*, signifies the Joy that a Soul is in, after it has obtain'd Pardon of it's Sins, by means of Penance. The *Gospel* signifies the Doctrine that JESUS CHRIST Taught; the Priest, before he reads it, makes the sign of the Cross upon the Book; because 'tis JESUS CHRIST Crucifi'd, whom he ought to Preach to us; afterwards he makes the the sign of the Cross upon his Fore-head, upon his Mouth, and upon his Breast; which the People ought to do also, and is as a Publick Declaration, which all Christians make, to carry JESUS CHRIST in their Heart; and a solemn promise to Confess him with their Mouth before all the World, and to Dye in this Confession. The Candles are Lighted upon the *Gospel* side, to signifie that this Doctrine, is the Light of our Souls, and the Light that the Son of God brought into the World, † To become a Revelation of the Gentils, and a Glory to the People

† Lumen ad
revelationem
gentium, &
gloriam plebis
sue Israel.
Luc. 2.32.

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People of Israël. The Gospel is heard standing, to shew the promptitude, with which we always ought to pay Obedience to it, and to defend it. Afterwards the Creed is sayd, which contains the principal points and Mysteries of our Faith, and which is the Fruit we gather from the Doctrine of the Gospel; and here finishes the first part of the Mass, which otherwise is call'd the Mass of the *Catechumens*; because heretofore, 'twas all that the *Catechumens*, whether Jews or Gentils, were permitted to hear; that thereby they might be Instructed in the Word of God.

The second part of Mass is from the *Offertory*, to the *Pater Noster*, which is properly stil'd the Mass of Sacrifice; which the Christians only were permitted to hear; wherefore in the Old time, the Deacon was then accusom'd to Command all the *Catechumens* to go out, by saying; *Ite Missa est*; to make 'em hereby to understand, that then they began Mass; that is to say, the Sacrifice at which they were not permitted to be present. This part of Mass, is the chief of the three; because therein Consecration is made; and the Priest also therein offers the Sacrifice of Propitiation to the Eternal Father. He here also begins to keep a profound Silence; as being now near the time of Sacrifice; and to say all the Prayers softly to himself; so that those that are present cannot hear 'em; and this is in Imitation of JESUS CHRIST, who a little before his Passion, retir'd himself to the City of *Ephrem*, and forbore for some time to appear in Publick. The Priest being ready to offer this Sacrifice to God, washes his Hands, to let us understand with how great a Purity, we ought to approach this Sacrifice. Then turning towards the People, he says, * *Orate Fratres, Recommending to them who are present, to joyn their Prayers with his to God, that this Sacrifice may be pleasing to the Divine Majesty.* And after having sayd some Prayers very softly to himself, he breaks again his Silence with a recital of the *Preface*, which he says with a loud Voice, and which is a more particular preparation, whereby he both disposes himself for this Sacrifice, and at the same time, the Faithful also that are present. For this end he exhorts 'em to Elevate their Hearts to God, and to give him thanks for having Descended from Heaven to Earth, to Clothe himself with our Flesh, and to Redeem us by his Death; and to give Glory also unto him by these words; † *Holy, Holy, Holy, the Lord God of Host's*; which are the same that both,

Joan. 11. 54.

* Orate fratres, ut meum ac vestrum sacrificium acceptabile fiat, &c.

† Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus, Dominus Deus Sabaoth, i. e. exercituum. Isa. 6. 3.

Ifay

Apoec. 4. 8.

* *Benedictus*
qui venit in
nomine Do-
mini, Hosana
in excelsis.
Matth. 21. 9.

Et omnium
circumstan-
tium.

I say and Saint *John* say, the Blessed Spirits in Heaven re-
peat without ceasing; and also by these others, * *Blessed*
be he who comes in the Name of the Lord, Praise and
Glory to him, who is in the highest Heavens. Which are the
Words of Joy and Acclamation that the People made use
off, at the Entry of *JESUS CHRIST* into *Jerusalem*. Af-
terwards the *Cannon* of Mass is begun, in which the Priest
begg's of the Eternal Father by the Merits of his only
Son, to accept this Sacrifice he presents unto him, For
the whole Church in General, for the Pope, for the Bishop
and for the King. After this, he Prays in Secret for other
Persons, contain'd in the first *Memento*; Which they call
the *Memento* for the Living; and after having offer'd this
Sacrifice for their Intention; he again particularly offers it,
For all that are present. So that it is a thing very advan-
tagious to assist at Mass; because those who assist at it, have
a greater share, than others in the Gifts of God. The
Abbot *Robert* says, that to assist at Mass, is to assist at the
Funerals of *JESUS CHRIST*; but to render our selves
worthy of those Graces which God Communicates to those
who are present at it, we must assist with the same Spirit
that the Blessed Virgin, Saint *John*, Saint *Mary Magdalen*,
and the Good Thief assisted at the Death of *JESUS*
CHRIST. Afterwards *Consecration* is made, in which the
Sacrifice properly consists, and 'tis that is offer'd for those
that are mention'd in the *Memento*.

Wherefore what I say at present, is; that as the Sacrifice
of Mass is offer'd for all that are present, so the best kind
of Devotion which we can then have, is attentively to apply
our selves to all that the Priest do's, or says; and of our
side to say, and do the same he do's as much as is pos-
sible: So that when the Priest makes his *Memento*, for
the Living; 'tis good also, that each one shou'd particularly
make his; Praying for those who are still in this Land of
Exile; and when the Priest makes his *Memento* for the Dead,
'tis good to Pray along with him, for them also. Saint
Francis Borgia in his *Memento*, made use of this following
Method: After he had consider'd the Sac- fice, as Re-
presenting that which *JESUS CHRIST* offer'd upon the
Cross, and as being effectively the same, he apply'd his
Memento to the five Wounds of our Saviour. To the
Wound of his Right Hand, he recommended to God the
Pope, the Cardinals, Bishops, Pastors and the whole Clergy.
To

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To the Wound of his Left Hand, he recommended the King, and all Magistrates and Secular Powers. To the Wound of his Right Foot, he recommended all Religious Orders, and particularly the Society of Jesus. To the Wound of his Left Foot, he recommended his Parents, Friends and Benefactors, and generally all those that were recommended to his Prayers. But as to the Wound of his Side, he reserv'd that for himself, and hid himself † *In the Hole of this Rock, and in the Ruins of this Wall.* Begging pardon of God for his Sins, and at the same time asking such graces and helps as he most stood in need off. By this means he offer'd this Sacrifice of Mass, both for all these together, and for each one of 'em in particular, as if he had offer'd it only for one: But he offer'd it more in particular for those Persons for whom he sayd Mass, either out of Obligation or Devotion; always intending that all that part of this Adorable Sacrifice, that could belong to them, might be apply'd unto them without it being any ways hinder'd of its effect, by whatsoever offering he made for others; he did the same at the *Memento* for the Dead; offering the Sacrifice. First for the Souls of those for whose Intention he sayd it; Secondly, for the Souls of his Parents; and Thirdly, for those of the Society of Jesus; afterwards for those of his Friends, and Benefactors; for those who had recommended themselves to him; and for all those to whom he had any Obligation; and lastly for all those Souls, which were most of all destitute of all kind of particular help, or that suffer'd the most, or that were the nearest and soonest to go out of Purgatory; or for whom 'twas the greatest Charity to Pray. Each one may follow this Method, or any other like to it, as he shall Judge best. But above all, we must offer this Sacrifice, for three things, which carry with 'em a stricter obligation, than all the rest. The first is, in thanksgiving for all the Benefits we have receiv'd from the Hands of God, as well in general as particular; the Second, in satisfaction and compensation for our Sins; and the Third, to beg of God a remedy for our Miseries, and to obtain new Graces of him. Wherefore in daily offering to God this Sacrifice, for these three things; 'tis very good to offer it, not only for on's self, but generally for all the World; and for this end, we must offer it not only in thanksgiving for the Benefits we have receiv'd in particular, but

Tom. II.

Y y y

also

† In forami-
nibus petrae
in caverna
maceriae.
Cant. 2. 14.

also in thanksgiving for all the Favors that God has done or daily do's to all Men in general; not only in satisfaction for our own Sins, but also for the expiation of all the Sins of the whole World; because 'tis more than sufficient to satisfy for them to his Eternal Father: And lastly not only to beg of God, such particular graces as we stand in need of, but to implore also his help and assistance for the whole Church in general. For after this manner we conform our selves more to that which the Priest do's: Besides, Charity and Zeal of Souls require, that we shou'd not only have care of our selves in particular, but that we shou'd also interest our selves for the good of the whole Church in General: And what can we do better, than offer this Sacrifice for all those things, for which JESUS CHRIST offer'd it himself upon the Cross? 'Twill be also very good, every Day at Mass, that we shou'd offer our selves in Sacrifice with him to the Eternal Father, for the same intention; without reserving the least thing to our selves, that we do not offer up unto him. For tho' our actions are in themselves of very small Value and Merit, yet being joyn'd with the Merits and Passion of JESUS CHRIST, and being stain'd with his Blood, they become of very great price and value, and are extremely pleasing to God.

Saint *Chrysostom* says, that there is no time fitter to Treat or Converse with God, than that of the Divine Sacrifice; † *That the Angels take this Conjunction, as the most favorable they can meet withal, to beg Graces and Favours for Men; and 'tis then, that they Pray for us with greater instance and ardour.* He adds that the Quires of Angels, assist at this Sacrifice, Prostrate before the Divine Majesty; and that at the moment 'tis offer'd, these Heavenly Messengers presently fly, to open the Prisons of Purgatory, and to execute all that God has been then pleas'd to grant by the Prayers of the faithful, and Merits of his Son. So that we ought carefully to manage so precious an occasion as this is, and endeavour to profit by it, by daily offering this Sacrifice with the Priest, with so firm a confidence, that we may by this means, appease the Wrath of the Eternal Father, satisfy for our Sins, and obtain those Graces we shall beg of him.

The third sort of Devotion regards the third part of Mass, which is from the *Pater Noster*, quite to the end of it. The Priest Communicates in this third Part; and all the Prayers

he

† Tempore illo Angeli Domino genuflectunt, & Archangeli rogant, & habent sibi tempus illud oblationis auxilium.

Chrys. hom. 18. ad Pop. Antioch. & hom. 3. de incomprehensibilis Dei nat.

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he says after Communion, are in thanksgiving for the inestimable Benefit he has receiv'd; Therefore that which those that assist at Mass, ought then to perform; is to follow and imitate the Priest in this, as much as is possible. 'Tis true that tho' we cannot really Communicate at every Mass, yet we may Communicate Spiritually; and 'tis a most holy and most profitable Devotion, that whilst the Priest really Communicates under the two Species, we shou'd also Communicate Spiritually. Which Spiritual Communion consists in having an ardent desire, of Receiving this Adorable Sacrament, according to these words of *Job*, apply'd to JESUS CHRIST, * *Those of my House-hold*, that is to say, those true Christians that fear God, *have sayd, who will give us of thy flesh that we may be satiated?* For as when we are very hungry, we, as I may say, even devour our Meat with our Eyes; so we ought to devour with the Eyes of our mind, this Celestial Food. Wherefore when the Priest opens his Mouth to receive the Body of JESUS CHRIST, we must at the same time, by an ardent desire of receiving this Divine Manna, open the Mouth of our Soul, and we must a long time after, keep the tast and sweetness thereof in our Mind. To move God to satisfy the desires of our Hearts, and even satiate 'em with an abundant increase of Grace and Charity; according to the words of the Psalmist, † *Open thy Mouth and I will fill it.*

* Si non dixerunt viri tabernaculi mei, id est boni christiani & timorati: Quis det de carnibus ejus, ut satureretur?
Job. 31. 37.

† Dilata os tuum, & implebo illud.
Psal. 80. 17.

Moreover the Council of *Trent*, takes notice of one thing concerning this Subject, which is, that to the end this desire of Communicating may become a Spiritual Communion, it must proceed from a lively Faith, accompany'd with Charity; that is to say, he who has this Desire, must be then in the state of the Grace of God, to be able Spiritually to unite himself with JESUS CHRIST; and to enjoy the Fruit which this union produces: For he who shou'd be in the state of Mortal Sin, wou'd not only not Communicate Spiritually; but the desire which he shou'd have to Communicate in this State; wou'd be another Mortal Sin; but if he shou'd frame this desire only conditionally, and upon condition that he were free from Mortal Sin; then this desire wou'd always be truly good and laudable; yet this wou'd not be a Spiritual Communion; because we cannot Communicate Spiritually, but when we are in the State of Grace. The State of Grace therefore, is absolutely necessary for Spiritual Communion: But when we are in this

Y y y 2

State,

Ex opere opo-
ratio.

State, we may Communicate as often Spiritually, as we have an ardent desire to do so; for God always Communicates himself to those who have this desire; and also giv's the same Graces, which he's wont to bestow upon those who really Communicate under the Species. Nay it may sometimes happen, that he who Communicates Spiritually, may receive more Grace, than he that really Communicates; tho' he be at the same time in the State of Grace. For tho' 'tis very true, that Sacramental Communion is of it self of greater value and advantage, than the Spiritual; because in quality of a Sacrament, it confers Grace; *By the work perform'd*, which has a Vertue annex'd to it; that Spiritual Communion has not; yet 'tis also very true, that when we have a great desire of Communicating, and that this desire is accompany'd with very much Respect and Humility, we may receive by this means, more Grace than another Person, who shou'd really Communicate, yet with fewer dispositions. Another thing, which is very profitable in Spiritual Communion, is, that since it appears not to the Eyes of any one, 'tis free from the danger of Vain-glory, to which Sacramental Communion may be subject; it being seen by all the World. Spiritual Communion, has also this privilege above the other, that we can oftener perform it, for Sacramental Communion, can be receiv'd once a Week, or at ofteneft only once a Day: But Spiritual Communion may be made several times a Day; and 'tis a Pious custom of many devout People, not only to Communicate Spiritually daily at Mass, but as often as they Visit the Blessed Sacrament. This manner also of Communicating Spiritually, which several Servants of God make use of, is very holy; and which I shall here set down, for those who desire to put it in practice. When you hear Mass, or Visit the Blessed Sacrament: In fine as often as you have a desire to Communicate Spiritually, excite in your self an ardent desire of Receiving this adorable Sacrament, and Elevate your Heart to God; saying, O my God, O that I had a Heart sufficiently pure and spotless, to receive Thee. O that I were worthy daily to Receive thee and to carry thee continually in my Breast. How happy shou'd I be O my God, and how Rich? Cou'd I deserve to Receive thee within me? But 'tis not absolutely necessary for this end, that thou comest unto me under the Sacramental Species; thou need'st only look upon me, to enrich me with the Treasures of thy

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thy Grace; thou need'st only to Will it, and 'tis enough; Command therefore O Lord, say but the Word and I shall be justify'd. After this say with the *Centurion*: * *Lord I am unworthy thou shoud'st enter into my House; say but the Word and my Soul shall be Heal'd*. If heretofore there was nothing requir'd, but to look upon the *Brasen Serpent*, to be cur'd of the bitings of Serpents, 'twill be sufficient also, for me to look upon thee with a pure and lively Faith, and with an ardent Desire to Receive thee, to be cur'd of the Wounds of my Soul. 'Twill be Good also afterwards to add this Antiphon: † *O Sacred Banquet, in which JESUS CHRIST is Receiv'd; together with the Versicle: * Thou hast giv'n 'em the Bread of Heaven; and the ordinary Prayer of the Blessed Sacrament, † O Lord who in this wonderful Sacrament, hast left us a perpetual memory of thy Passion. Grant us we beseech thee, so to Reverence the Sacred Mysteries of thy Body and Blood, that we may continually perceive in our Souls the Fruit of thy Redemption, who with the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, Livest and Raignest one God in perfect Trinity, World without End, Amen.*

* Domine, non sum dignus, ut intres sub tectum meum, sed tantum dic verbo, & sanabitur anima mea.
Matth. 8. 8.

† O sacrum convivium, in quo Christus sumitur: * Panem de cælo præstitisti eis.

† Deus, qui nobis sub Sacramento mirabili, passionis tue memoriam reliquisti: tribue quæsumus, ita nos corporis & sanguinis tui sacra mysteria

venerari, ut Redemptionis tue fructum in nobis jugiter sentiamus. Qui vivis & regnas, & in communionem spiritus sancti Deus, per omnia sæcula sæculorum, Amen.

CHAP.

C H A P. XVI.

Some Examples, concerning the Advantage there is in hearing Mass every Day; and of the care Priests ought to have, Daily to Celebrate it: And concerning the Respect with which we ought to Assist at it?

*Fig. II. in sub
Cosmog. in des-
cr. Europa.*

P OPE Pius the II. Recounts, that a Gentleman of the Province of *Istria*, being continually molested with the Temptation of Despair, which incited him to Hang himself; and having been sometimes upon the point of giving way to it; went to a Holy Religious Man; to discover to him the State of his Soul, and to beg his Advice: The Servant of God, after he had comforted and fortify'd him, the best manner he was able, Counsell'd him always to have a Priest in his House, who shou'd Daily say Mass to him; the Gentleman liking his Counsel very well, put it into execution, and retir'd into a Castle that belong'd to him in the Country. Where after having remain'd a whole Year, in very great quiet and repose of Mind, it happen'd that the Priest, whom he had taken to Live with him, ask'd his leave to go to say Mass in a Village hard by, where there was a particular Feast; which he easily gave leave for, intending to go thither to hear Mass, himself; but a business of concern happening, he insensibly remain'd at home, till Mid-day. Then full of fear to loose Mass, finding himself again tormented with his old Temptation; he go's out, and having met upon the way, a Clown of that Village to which he design'd to go, who told him that all the Masses were sayd. This news was so cruel a Heart-breaking to him, that presently he began to lament his Misfortune, and to cry

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cry out that he had lost Mass, and therefore that he himself was lost. The Clown seeing him in this sad condition, told him he shou'd not need to put himself in so great pain, for if he pleas'd, he wou'd sell him the Mass he had heard, and all the Merit he might thereby have gain'd in the sight of God. The Gentleman having taken him at his Word, the bargain was concluded between 'em, for a Cloke which he gave him; after which they parted one from the other. He notwithstanding continu'd his Journey, at last to say his Prayers in the Church, and when he return'd home, after he had made an end of his Devotions, he found the Clown hung upon a Tree, in the very place where the Simony was committed; God having permitted that Despair shou'd carry him so far, as to hang himself in the place where he had committed it. The Gentleman was surpris'd at so strange a Spectacle; which made him comprehend the Danger, out of which God had been pleas'd to deliver him, and began to give thanks for it; and moreover to confirm himself in the Devotion, of Daily hearing Mass for the future: And from thenceforward, he found himself intirely freed from the Temptation, with which he had been for so long a time tormented, and never after found the least attack thereof.

We Read of Saint *Elizabeth Queen of Portugal*, Niece of Saint *Elizabeth Queen of Hungary*, that she was so Charitable towards the Poor; that besides the order she had giv'n to her Amner, never to refuse an Alms to any one; she herself also gave continual Alms, either by her own Hands, or by the Hands of her Domesticks. She ordinarily making use of one of her Pages for this end, in whom she had observ'd a very great Piety: It happen'd, that another Page, either out of envy against him, or to cause jealousy in the King, accus'd him for having a criminal commerce with the Queen; so that tho' the King did not intirely believe the report, yet having already conceiv'd some displeasure against her, and some suspicions having pass'd his Mind, he secretly resolv'd to make away with the Page. The means he chose for this, was, that passing the same Day near the place where they burn'd Lime, he call'd to him the People who had care to look after the Fire of the Lime-kill; and told 'em that the next Morning, he wou'd send a Page to them, to ask 'em whether they had executed his Orders; and that they shou'd not fail presently to cast him into the Fire: After this he return'd home, and gave

Order

*Chron. S. Franc.
p. 2. l. 8. c. 58.*

Order to the Queens Page, to go the next Day very early with this Message: But God, who has always care of his Servants, permitted, that as he pass by a Church to go thither, he heard the sound of the Elevation Bell at Mass, which having oblig'd him to enter into the Church, there to adore the Blessed Sacrament, he there heard the remainder of that Mass, and afterwards two other Masses, which were sayd one after another. In the mean time, the King impatient to know whither the Page had Obeý'd him, accidentally saw the other Page who had accus'd the Queen, and Commanded him to go in all hast to ask the People that had care of the Lime-kill, whither they had Obeý'd his Orders. Who go's immediatly, but scarce had they heard the Message he deliver'd to them, but taking him for the Person of whom the King had spoken, they took him and cast him into the Fire. The other who had in the mean time made an end of satisfying his Devotion, went also to deliver his Message; who having receiv'd for Answer, that they had Executed the Kings Orders, he return'd home to give their Answer to the King, who being surpriz'd with astonishment, and very angry to perceive that what he had design'd, had happen'd quite contrary to his Intention, ask'd him, why he stayd so long; the Page answer'd him, that passing by a Church, to go to the place he had Commanded him, he heard the Elevation Bell, which had oblig'd him to enter, and stay there to the end of that Mass; and another Mass beginning before the other was ended, and a third beginning also before the end of the second, he had heard 'em all; because his Father had seriously recommended to him, and commanded him upon his Blessing a little before his Death, that he shou'd hear all the Masses out, at the beginning of which he shou'd be at any time present. Then the King entring into himself, understood that what had happen'd, cou'd be nothing else but a just Judgment of God; and hereby understood also, that without doubt the Queen was Innocent; wherefore he intirely drove out of his Mind all those bad impressions, he had before conceiv'd against her.

'Tis Récounted also of two Trades-men, who were of the same profession, and liv'd in the same Town; the one of em tho' charg'd with a great company of Children, never fail'd Daily to hear Mass; yet liv'd very comfortably of his Profession. But the other on the contrary, having

*In prompt.
exempt. verb.
Miss. Et Sur. in
vir. S. Joan.
Elem.*

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having only his Wife and himself to maintain, hearing Mass very seldom, and working Night and Day, nay even upon Holy-days, had the greatest pain in the World to Live. This Man Perceiving how well the other's affairs went, ask'd him one Day, as he met him, how he was able to get wherewithal to maintain so great a Family as he had; since he himself who had only a Wife, and who wrought Night and Day, was continually in Want; the other told him that the next Day he wou'd shew him from whence he drew all his profit; who going to him the next Morning to be instructed, he led him to the Church to hear Mass, after which he took leave of him, telling him, he might come to him again when ever he wanted him: He did the same the next Day; but coming the third time for the same end; and he still leading him to the Church, Friend, says he, if I have a mind to go to Church, I need not come to you to lead me thither, I know the way well enough my self, all I desir'd was to know the place, where you found so much profit; and desir'd to go thither with you, to see if I cou'd also find the same; I know no other place, answer'd his Companion, where there is so much to be got, both for this Life and for the next; as in the Church; and for proof of what I say, adds he, have you never heard what JESUS CHRIST say'd in the Gospel.

* *Seek first the Kingdom of God and his Justice, and all the rest shall be added unto you?* These words made the other very well comprehend the design the other had; and from thenceforward, touch'd by the Holy Ghost, he resolv'd to change his Life, and to hear Mass every Day, which he so regularly observ'd, and with so good success both as to his Fortune in this World, and for his Salvation in the next, that in a very short time, he came to live very much at his ease, both in Body and Mind.

Saint *Antony* Archbishop of *Florence*, recounts of two Young Men, who having agreed together to go a hunting upon a Holyday, only one of 'em, took care to hear Mass before they went; and when they were both upon the way: The Sky began to grow dark in an instant, with such a horrible roaring, and continual Lightning, together with such terrible claps of Thunder, that it seem'd to threaten present destruction; that which struck 'em most, was, that amidst all these terrours, they heard from time to time a Voice, that cry'd, *Strike, Strike;* but the Air being a little

Tom. II.

Z z z

cleard,

* Quærite
ego primum
Dei, & iusti-
tiam eius, &
hæc omnia
adicientur
vobis.
Matth. 6. 33.

S. Ant. 2. p. 1. 1.
Gel. tract. 9.
c. 10. §. 2.

clear'd, they began to take courage, and to go on their way, when on a sudden there came a Clap of Thunder, that kill'd him, who had not heard Mass that Day. The other seiz'd with fear, and almost quite out of himself, knew not whither he shou'd go or return back; and whilst he was in this trouble and uncertainty, he heard the same Voice that Cry'd *Strike* this also; which fill'd him still with greater fear, than the example of what had lately happen'd to his Companion, had done: But a little after he was encourag'd, by another Voice he heard in the Air, that sayd, *I cannot Strike; because he has to Day heard, The Word was made Flesh.* Wherefore by these words of the Gospel of Saint John, which are commonly sayd at the end of every Mass, the Voice wou'd signifie nothing else, but that the Young Man had heard the whole Mass; so that 'twas the Mass he heard that Day, that deliver'd him from so sudden and terrible a Death.

Referatur in
ejus vita.

Bonav. in tract.
vnde spirit. 4. 7.
an. 10. ad. 3.

3. Thom. 3. p.
9. 10.

We Read in the Life of Saint *Bonaventure*, that he considering on the one side his own extream baseness; and in the other the Infinite greatness of God. He was for some Days without daring to approach the holy Sacrament of the Altar; out of fear, that he shou'd not be able to perform it with such a disposition as he ought. But one Day as he heard Mass, and just at the time when the Priest breaks the Host, There came a particle of it into his Mouth, and by this signal Favour, which God did him, he comprehended, that 'twas more pleasing to God to approach this holy table with Love and Respect, than to abstain from it, out of fear: Which sentiment he left behind him in Writing; and Saint *Thomas* is also of the same Opinion.

'Tis Recounted of *Hernandus* of *Talavera*, the first Arch-bishop of *Granade*, whom King *Ferdinand* and *Isabella*, had charg'd him with the most important Affairs of the Kingdoms of *Castile* and *Arragon*; being envy'd by some, who knowing not how to blame his conduct, found this to reproach him with all, that amidst the concern of his employments and intricate affairs: he daily sayd Mass, as if he had been, in the retirement and repose of a Monastery: One Day as the Cardinal of *Mendoxe* spoke familiarly to him, of what they sayd of him. My King, Answerd the Servant of God, has impos'd a burden upon me, so much above my forces, that I have no other means that
can

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can hinder me from sinking under it, than by Daily approaching to this holy Sacrament; and therefore I Daily do so, to receive help, and to be in a condition to give a good account of those things, with which I am charg'd.

Surius Reports, that Saint *Peter Celestin* reflecting one Day upon his own dignity, and upon the supream Majesty of our Lord, who is receiv'd in the Eucharist; and on the other side considering, that Saint *Paul* the first Hermit, Saint *Antony*, Saint *Francis* and many other great Saints; durst never raise them selves to the Dignity of being able to offer to God the holy Sacrifice of Mass, nor of approaching Daily to the holy Table, he remain'd for some time in a great doubt and irresolution, what he shou'd do. At last Fear and Humility; but above all other considerations, respect prevaild with him so far, that out of fear for several Days he abstain'd, from receiving the Body and Blood of *JESUS CHRIST*, and even resolv'd to go to *Rome* to consult the Pope, to know whether it wou'd not be better, altogether to abstain from Celebrating, or at least to abstain for some time. Whilst he was upon his way for this end; a holy Abbot who had Dy'd but a little while before, and who had cloth'd him with his Religious Habit, appear'd to him and told him: *Son ther's no Creature, no not an Angel himself; who is Worthy to offer unto God the Adorable Sacrifice of Mass, yet notwithstanding, I Counsel you often to offer it with Fear and Respect; and having sayd these Words he disappear'd.*

Saint *Gregory the Great* says, that a Man being taken at Sea by Pirats, and carry'd a great way from his Country, he remain'd a Slave there for a long time, without any one being able to hear any news of him. His Wife believing him Dead, frequently caus'd Mass to be sayd for the Repose of his Soul; and it happen'd that as often as Mass was sayd for him, he found his Hands and Feet freed from his Fetters. It happen'd that at last he came out of Captivity, and return'd home; and as one Day he recounted to his Wife amongst other things, that at certain times his Chains Miraculously fell off of themselves, she began to count the times and days that this had happen'd, and found that it fell out just upon those Days, when she had caus'd Mass to be sayd for him. Whence you may judge, my Brethren adds the Saint, what Vertue the Sacrifice of Mass must needs have, for the delivery of Souls. Venerable *Bede* Reports, just the the same thing, in his History of the Church of *England*.

Greg. lib. 4. Dial. c. 37.

Bed. lib. 4. Hist. Angl. Ebor. c. 21. p. 22.

Chryf. l. 7. de
Sacerd. c. 4.

Saint *Chrysoftom* says that the Angels are present at the Sacrifice of Mass, and that they compass the Altar in honour of him who is offer'd upon it. He says also, that he heard it recounted from a Person worthy of credit, that a Servant of God, had once seen a great multitude of Angels cloth'd in shining Robes, descend on a sudden from Heaven, and place themselves round about the Altar; and put themselves in a most respectful posture, as Subjects are wont to do before their Prince: Which I have no difficulty at all, adds the Saint, to believe; because where the King is, there also is the Court. Who can doubt says Saint *Gregory*, but that at the same time the Sacrifice is offer'd, that the Heavens open at the Voice of the Priest, and that then an infinity of Blessed Spirits, like good Courtiers, who every where follow their Prince, descend with *JESUS CHRIST*: Many Saints also explicating the Command that Saint *Paul* giv's to Women, to have their Head Veil'd in the Church; *Because of the Angels*, say, that these words, *Because of the Angels*, ought to be understood of the Angels, that are effectually present in the Church, there to adore the Blessed Sacrament that reposes in it.

Propter Ange-
los.
1 Cor. 11. 10.

Nil. in ap. ad
Anasth. tom. 5.
2. 2. Bibl. Patr.

Saint *Nilus*, who had been the Disciple of Saint *Chrysoftom*, writes, that when this great Saint, once enter'd into a Church, he there saw a great multitude of Angels cloth'd in White, that surrounded the Altar with a profound respect, and appear'd as seiz'd with astonishment, at the sight of their Sovereign Master there present. When yee are before the Altar where *CHRIST*, repotes, says the same Saint *Chrysoftom*, yee ought no longer to think that yee are amongst Men: Do yee not perceive then that there are troops of Angels and Archangels that stand by yee, and that tremble with respect before the Sovereign Master of Heaven and Earth? Wherefore my Brethren, continues the holy Doctor, when yee are in the Church, keep your selves there in Silence, with fear and Veneration. Think with your selves what Circumspection and Recollection Courtiers keep in the Presence of their Prince, and from hence, learn to remain in God's Presence, with such a respect as you ought.

Chryf. l. 3. de
Sacerd. c. 4.

The End of the Second Part.

THE
PRACTICE
OF
Christian & Religious
PERFECTION.

Written in Spanish by R^d. Father
ALPHONSUS RODRIGUEZ
of the SOCIETY of JESUS.

Translated into English out of the French Copy
of Mr. REGNIER DES-MARAIS,
of the Royal Academy of PARIS.

THE THIRD PART.



L O N D O N.
Printed by Thomas Hales, M.DC.XC.IX.

THE
AUTHOUR
TO THE
READER.

THE Matters I have treated of in the first and second Tome, regard a Religious Life in general, but these I now treat of regard it in particular, and therefore I have given this third Tome this following Title, The Practice of Christian and Religious Perfection, in which notwithstanding things are dispos'd after such a manner, that they do not only suit, as well with all other Religious Orders as our own, but also that they may become very profitable to all Secular Persons, that aspire to Perfection: For tho' the first Treatise, for Example, speaks of the End and Institution of our SOCIETY in particular, yet it omits not to treat of several general matters; such as are that of good Example, of Zeal for the Salvation of Souls, of diffidence in our selves, and Confidence in God, of Fraternal Correction, of Manifestation of Conscience towards our Confessor and Spiritual Father,
all

The Authour to the Reader.

all which, are subjects in which all the World are no less concern'd, than Religious Persons are. And generally, all those Vertues of which I treat in this last Tome, are proper to all sorts of Persons; because every one may embrace and practice 'em in desire, tho' the Obligation of their State hinders 'em from observing 'em in effect. Or they may make use of 'em to resist and overcome those contrary Inclinations, which Nature causes in 'em, I hope by the Mercy of God, that the Reading of this work will excite Religious more and more to the Practice of Perfection, according to the Duty of their Profession; and will Inspire Seculars with a desire of Imitating 'em, as far as the State of each one will permit; so that the one and the other will hereby daily increase their Feruour in God's Service.

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- THE

THE FIRST TREATISE OF

The End for which the SOCIETY of JESUS was Instituted, and the means whereby it may help it self to this End; which also regard's all Religious Persons in General.

CHAP. I.

Of the End, and Institution of the SOCIETY of JESUS.

† TAKE care of the Conduct and Instruction of others. Carefully apply thy self to these two things, and by this means thou shalt Save thy self, and those also that do harken to thee. The End and Institution of the SOCIETY, consists in these two things, of which the Apostle speaks; and 'tis this that our Constitutions particularly take notice off: and the Popes Bulls expressly signifies the same, saying, Tom. III.

† Attende illis, & doctus: in illis. Hoc enim faciens, & teipsum salvum facies, & eos qui te audiunt.

1 Tim. 4. 16.

A.

That

* Finis hujus Societatis est, non solum salutem & perfectionem propriarum animarum, cum divina gratia vacare, sed cum eadem impense in salutem & perfectionem proximorum incumbere.
Cap. 1. exam. §. 1.

Claud. Aquav. in instr. pro Confessor. 10.

In vita S. Ignat. l. 3. c. 15.

† Messis quidem multa; operarii autem pauci.
Matth. 9. 37.
Luc. 10. 2.

Chrysost. hom. 16. ad Pop.

Euseb. Hist. Eccl. p. 2. l. 6. c. 3.

* *That the End of this SOCIETY, is, that all those who compose that Body, may with the Grace of God, not only labour for their own Salvation and Perfection, but also seriously apply themselves to the Salvation and Perfection of their Neighbour.* 'Tis not sufficient to apply our selves after an ordinary manner, but we must according to the Latin words, *Earnestly apply our selves*, that is, we must apply our selves with Zeal, and all our Forces to this end; but 'tis to be noted also, that as our Constitutions oblige us to labour not only for our own Salvation, but also for our Perfection; so after the same manner, it will have us labour not only for the Salvation of others, but also for there greater Perfection, and greater advancement in Virtue: Wherefore Father *Aquaviva*, in his Instructions to Confessors, Counsels 'em to take less care to have a great number of Souls under their Direction, than in Daily more and more Perfecting those which are under it. Lastly the same care we have for our own Advancement and Perfection, we ought also to have for the Advancement and Perfection of our Neighbour.

In effect, 'tis particularly for this, that we were Instituted; for Saint *Ignatius* of the one side, perceiving that the Church was furnish'd with many Religious Orders, which continually opply'd themselves to the Divine Worship, and there own Spiritual Advancement; and considering on the other, that it was afflicted with an infinity of Heresies Disorders and Scandals; † *That the Harvest was great and that the Workmen were but few.* Was Inspir'd by God to Institute our SOCIETY, to be, as he himself sayd, like a kind of Flying Camp, that shou'd be ready at the least Alarm; and always be in a condition to fight the Enemy, and to afford help and succour where ever it shou'd be wanting; and for this reason he wou'd not have us Subject to the keeping of Quire, nor to other Spiritual Practises, which might hinder the help of Souls. If you shou'd see, says Saint *Hierom*, a Blind Man that was upon the point to cast himself into a Ditch, you wou'd endeavour to hinder him from it: How then can we behold our Brethren cast themselves headlong into the Abyss of Hell, and not stretch out a Hand to draw them back.

We see that even the Ancient Fathers of the Desert, tho' particularly call'd by God to Solitude; yet they quitted the repose of their Cells in the hard times of the Church's Persecutions, and went into Towns to oppugn Hereticks

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reticks, to Instruct the Faithful, and to Suffer Constantly all things for the Love of JESUS CHRIST. Thus great Saint Antony did in the time of *Constantin*. The same thing was practis'd by the Holy Old Man *Acephimus*, who had liv'd threescore Years in the Desert, without having had any communication with any Body; and this is that which many others have done at other times: We have an admirable example hereof in the time of the Emperour *Valence*, in the Person of a holy Man call'd *Aphraates*: This Emperour having cast all Catholicks, not only out of their Churches in Towns, but also out of many others in the Country, to which they retir'd to say their Prayers, and to offer holy Sacrifices of Praises to God; This holy Old Man left his Cell to take care, and to defend the Flock of JESUS CHRIST. One Day as he went to the place where they were Assembl'd, the Emperour, to whom they had discover'd him, caus'd him to be call'd to him, and ask'd him whether he went; the Saint reply'd, that he went to offer his Prayers to God, for the Preservation of the Empire; and the Emperour having told him, he wou'd do much better, to go and offer 'em in his Cell, according to the custom of Hermits; 'tis true, courageously reply'd the holy Man, 'tis there I shou'd offer 'em, If you did not hinder me from doing so; for this is what I have ever done, till such time as the Flock of JESUS CHRIST, were not permitted peacefully to enjoy their Pastors: But at present when they are driven away, and in danger of being lost, all things must be quitted, for their Conservation and Defence from the Wolves. If a Virgin shou'd live in great Retirement and Modesty, and shou'd see the House of her Father on Fire, what ought she to do? Ought she out of Niceness and Modesty, to remain with foulded Arms, with hafard of letting the House be burn't and of being burn't in it herself? Or ought she not rather to run and cry out for help and use her endeavours to put out the Fire? Wherefore seeing the House of God is at present on Fire, who is our Father; and that you your self Sir have set it on Fire, 'tis to extinguish this Fire, that we who liv'd before in Retirement, now come from all places to succour it.

Saint *Chrysostom* speaking of the care we ought to have for the Salvation of our Neighbour, makes use of another very pat comparison, when we are out at Sea, says he, and discover a Vessel a far off, that suffers Ship-wrack, we

*Theod. in vita.
S. Aphra. c. 4.*

*Chrys. hom. 16.
ad pop.*

feel our selves presently touch'd with compassion, and how good a Wind so ever we have to Steer on our own course, we turn and Steer towards the place where the Vessel was lost: We approach it, we take in our Sails, we cast Anchor we throw our Ropes and Planks on all sides, and infine, we do all things imaginable, to endeavour to save those we perceive in danger. 'Tis thus we ought to carry our selves during the course of our Navigation upon the Sea of this World; where Tempests continually rise upon it; and the Banks and Shelves, which 'tis full of, continually cause very sad Ship-wracks; wherefore when we see our Neighbour in this condition, we must presently quit all our affairs and run to his succour, since the danger in which he is, permits no farther delay.

Wherefore 'twas precisely for this end, and a particular conduct of his Divine Providence, that God rais'd our SOCIETY in these sad and lamentable times, in which the Church had need of our assistance. Ecclesiastical Historians rake notice that upon the self same Day, that *Pellagius* was Born in England, Saint *Austin* was Born in Africa; God so uniting the Remedy to the Disease, that when the other shou'd endeavour to spread abroad the Darknesh of his Heresie over the whole Earth, the other shou'd be ready to dissipate it by his Light; and to Triumph over Errour, by his Doctrine. He that writs the Life of Saint *Ignatius*, also observes, that in the same Year that *Luther* began to unmask himself, and and to declare open War against the Church, and against Truth; God permitted that Saint *Ignatius* shou'd be Wounded in the Defence of *Pampilona*, and that he shou'd be drawn by this means to his Service; that he might put him in the head of a new Militia, he had a design to raise for the defence of his Church. 'Tis after this manner that the Divine providence; which continually keeps watch for the Salvation of the Faithful, never fails to send them extraordinary succours, when they stand in need of 'em.

The same Author, enlarging himself upon this matter; shews also, that at the same time when the *Albigenses*, and other Hereticks, molested the Peace of the Church; and when the Field of our Lord was so fill'd with Brambles and Thorns, that the good seed was almost choak'd; God rais'd Saint *Dominick* and Saint *Francis*, to oppose themselves with all vigour against Heresie, to fight against Vice and Errour, by the Purity of their Lives and Doctrine: And that

Ribadeneira l.
2. c. 8. vis. 5.
Igne.

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57

that in Imitation of the Ancient Fathers, they thou'd enlighten the World by their Light, and Sanctify it by their Example. 'Twas also by the infinite Providence of God, that when the Eastern Church was oppress'd by Infidels, that he form'd several Military Religious Orders, to defend it with the Sword in Hand. And lastly 'tis the same Providence that has lately establish'd so many Religious Orders, and our SOCIETY in particular; the Institution of which, is at present the Subject of my discourse. For in the beginning of the Heresie of Luther, which destroy'd that Obedience which is due to the Pope; that deny'd the Truth of the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar; and that would have abolish'd that of Penance; God rais'd our SOCIETY, which makes a singular profession of Obedience to the Pope; and particularly engages it's Religious thereunto by Vow; as also to apply themselves particularly to Instruct all Persons in the truth of our Faith, concerning the Sacraments of Penance and the Eucharist, to Preach the frequent use of 'em, and to render themselves worthy of Receiving 'em by a reformation of their Lives: And just as a good General, when the Battel is begun, takes notice of what side is most of all attack'd, that he may give succours, where they are wanting, and sometimes makes one Squadron advance on the one side, sometimes a Batallion on the other: So JESUS CHRIST who is the General of the Christian Army, beholds from Heaven, above the State of his Church, in those different Combats which it has to sustain; and according to it's necessities, he sends from time to time new Recruits of Doctors and Heads of Orders to succour it, and herein the Providence and Mercy of our Saviour is very great, never to permit any Distemper without applying a remedy to it in due time: But 'tis properly this, that is the end for which our SOCIETY was Instituted, and according to what the Bull of it's Confirmation says, 'tis to defend the Faith against Hereticks, 'tis to carry it to Infidels, 'tis to conserve it amongst Catholicks, by our Doctrine and Example, for which God has chosen us.

CHAP.

C H A P. II.

How glorious an enterprize it is, to labour for the Gaining of Souls to God; and of how great a Price and Merit the same is.

THERE cannot be a more noble nor higher End, than that of the Salvation of Souls, 'tis for this, that God Descended from Heaven and became Man; 'tis for this, he chose his Apostles, desiring, that of Catchers of Fish, they shou'd become Fishers of Men. Saint Denis says, † *That to Coöperate With God, in the Salvation of Souls, is the most Divine, of all things or Impleyments.* And Saint Chrysostom assures us, that there's, * *nothing more pleasing to God, than the Salvation of Souls; neither is any thing that he more takes to Heart.* † *'Tis his Will, says the Apostle, that all Men shou'd be Sav'd, and come to the knowledge of the Truth:* And do's not God himself tell us by the Prophet Ezechiel, saying, * *Is the Death of a Sinner my Will, or not rather that he shou'd be Converted and Live?* Lastly God Desires the Salvation of all Men, and therefore we can do nothing that is more pleasing to him than by labouring for their Salvation. Wherefore, † *Tho' your Riches shou'd be never so great, says Saint Chrysostom, and tho' you shou'd give all you have to the Poor, yet you wou'd do far more in Converting one Soul, than by doing all this.* Saint Gregory says, 'tis a greater Miracle to Convert a Sinner, than to Raise one from the Dead; and in effect, the Salvation of a Sinner is a far greater work of God than the Creation of the World; wherefore we ought only for this end, to see what the one and the other cost him. The Creation of the World cost him only a word, * *He sayd, and all things were made: He Commanded and all things were Created;* but the Salvation of Men cost him far dearer than Words, they cost him both his Blood and his Life. Do's not JESUS CHRIST himself sufficiently signifie to

us

† Omnium divinorum divinissimum est cooperari Deo in salutem animarum.

De celest. hier. cap. 3.

* Nihil ita gratum est Deo & ita curæ, ut animarum salus.

Rom. 2. & 40. sup. Genes.

† Qui omnes homines vult salvos fieri, & ad agnitionem veritatis venire. 1 Tim. 2. 4.

* Nunquid voluntatis meæ est mors impij, dicit Dominus Deus, & non ut convertatur a vijs suis, & vivat?

Ezech. 18. 23. & 33. 11.

† Et si immensas pecunias pauperibus eroges; plus tamen effeceris, si unam converteris animam.

Chrys. homil. 3. sup. ep. ad. Cor. 1. lib. 3. dial. cap. 17. & hom. 19.

* Ipse dixit & facta sunt, ipse mandavit & creata sunt. Ps. 33. 9.

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us, of how great Merit it is in the sight of God, to imploy our selves in the Salvation of Souls, when he says in Saint John, † *'Tis for this reason that my Father Loves me; because I layd down my Life;* the Saints mark very well; * *That he says not that his Father Loves him; because by him all things were Created,* but only that his Father Loves him; because he lays down his Life. And wherefore do's he give his Life, but to Save Men? Whereby we may consequently see, that nothing is more pleasing to God, than to labour for the Salvation of Souls. Saint Thomas explicates in the same Sense, what our Saviour says in the self same place. † *As my Father knows me, so I know my Father, and I give my Life for my Flock.* JESUS CHRIST, says the Doctor, wou'd not only exprels by these words, that as his Father knows him by a full and perfect knowledge, so he knows also his Father after the same manner; for he had already sayd it, as we see by these other words, * *No one knows the Son, but the Father, nor do's any one know the Father besides the Son;* but as a Child that is well Born, do's nothing but what he knows most of all will please his Father, and if we shou'd ask him why he do's it, he wou'd Answer; because he knows his Father very well; and knows what he likes best. So our Saviour, having sayd, that a good Pastor gives his Life for his Sheep, and desiring to prevent the Question, that might have been made him, why he gave so Precious a Life, for so Vile a thing? He answers it before hand, by saying, *I know my Father very well, and I lay down my Life for my S/heep;* as if he shou'd have sayd, I know my Fathers Sentiments, I know very well, that his Sheep are very dear unto him, and 'tis this that causes me with with so good a Heart, to give my Life for 'em. We ought to act by the same Principle; and this knowledge of the Bounty of God towards Man, and the Love which he has for those that labour in the Salvation of Souls, ought to move us to imploy our selves therein with all our Forces. Saint Chrysostom takes notice upon this Subject, that JESUS CHRIST having thrice demanded of Saint Peter whether he Lov'd him. He gave no other Answer to all the assurances that Saint Peter gave him of this; but only, *Feed my S/heep;* as if he wou'd have sayd, 'tis true, you Love me indeed, but you cannot testifie this your Love better, than by labouring with me in the Salvation of Souls, which I have Redeem'd with my Blood.

We

† Propterea me diligit Pater, quia ego pono animam meam.

Joan. 10. 17.
* Non dicit: Propterea me diligit Pater, quia in principio omnia per me creavit.
S. Thomas.

† Sicut novit me pater, & ego agnosco patrem, & animam meam pono pro ovibus meis.
Joan. 10. 15.

* Nemo novit Filium, nisi Pater; neque Patrem quis novit, nisi Filius.
Matth. 11. 27.

Ego agnosco Patrem. Et animam meam pono pro ovibus meis.
Joan. 10. 15.

Serm. de Beato Philog. & de Naz. Domini.

Pasce oves meas.
Joan. 21. 17.

The First Treatise Chap. 2.

We may also judge of the excellency of this Employment, and how pleasing 'tis to God, by the greatness of the price that is annex'd thereunto; which is first seen by our Saviour himself, and by the glorious recompence that follow'd his Death. * *For 'tis for this*, says the Apostle, *that God Exalted him, and gave him a Name above all other Names, that at the Name of JESUS all Knees shou'd bow both in Heaven, Earth and Hell; and that all Tongues shou'd confess that JESUS CHRIST is in the Glory of his Father.* King David lets us understand the self same thing, when he speaks of the Messias; how that upon his way, † *He will Drink of the Water of the Torrent, and for this reason his Head shall be Exalted.* 'Tis also the sense of these words of the Prophet *Isay*, * *If he give his Life for Sinners he will see a long Posterity*; that is to say, that for all which he shou'd suffer for Men, he shou'd be Glorify'd Eternally by his Father, † *He*, says Saint James, *who shall bring back a Sinner from the Error of his Life, shall save his Soul, from Death, and shall cover a Multitude of Sins.* And Saint Gregory says hereupon, that if the delivering a Man from Corporal Death, who must dye sooner or later, be an action worthy to be recompens'd, what recompence do's he not deserve, who delivers a Soul from Everlasting Death, and is the cause that it Eternally enjoys God in Glory? The Scripture do's not also content it self, to say, * *That those who shall Teach Wisdom to Men, as JESUS CHRIST did, shall have Life Everlasting*, it says moreover, † *That those who shew the way of Justice to many, shall shine like Stars for all Eternity.* God himself assures us by the Mouth of Jeremy that * *If we separate that which is precious from that which is Vile, we shall be like his Mouth.* That is to say, if we disengage Souls from the servitude of Sin; who are so precious and dear to him, he will love us tenderly. This is a way of speaking we sometimes make use of, for example, that we Love a Person as our own Life, and as our own Eyes: God makes use of the same Phrase, something after the same manner, saying we shall be as his own Mouth, and by that he gives us sufficiently to understand how precious a Soul is in his sight, and how dear those that labour in the Salvation of Souls become to him.

'Tis reported of Saint Catherine of Sienna, that when she saw a Preacher go thro' the Streets, she presently ran out

Propter quod & Deus exaltavit illum, & donavit illi nomen quod est super omne nomen, ut in nomine JESU, omne genu flectatur, caelestium, terrestrium, & infernorum, & omnis lingua confiteatur, quia Dominus JESU CHRISTUS in gloria est Dei Patris. Philip. 2. 9. to. 11.

† De torrente in via bibet, propterea exaltabit caput. Isai. 49. 7.

* Si posuerit pro peccato animam suam, videbit semen longævum.

Isai. 53. 10. Greg. 1. 19. Mor. c. 12. in illud.

† Qui converti fecerit peccatorem ab errore viae suae, salvabit animam ejus a morte, & operiet multitudinem peccatorum.

Jac. 5. 20.

* Qui eluciant me, vitam aeternam habebunt.

Eccles. 24. 31.

† Qui ad justitiam erudiunt multos, fulgebunt quasi stellae in perpetuas aeternitates. Dav. 12. 3.

* Si separaveris pretiosum a villi, quasi os meum eris.

Jerem. 15. 19.

Part. 3. Of the End of the Soc. of JESUS. 9

out, to Kifs the Ground upon which he had troden; one Day being ask'd why she did so, she answer'd that God had clearly let her see, how great the beauty was, of a Soul in Grace, and therefore she had so great a Veneration for those, who were imploy'd in the Conversion of Souls, that she cou'd do no less than give some mark hereof, by kissing the ground which they had trod upon.

But 'tis to the dignity of this imployment that God has call'd us. And 'tis properly our end, to cooperate with him in the highest and most excellent function in the World, which is the Salvation of Souls; wherefore we may truly say with the Apostle, that * *we are God's assistants,*

* Dei enim sumus adju- res. Sic nos exstimet ho- mo ut mini- stros Christi, & dispensato- res mysterio- rum Dei. 1 Cor. 3. 9. & 4. 1.

and that *Men ought to look upon us, as Ministers of Jesus CHRIST and as dispensers of the Mysteries of God.* Can any thing therefore be imagin'd greater than this imployment? Which the Son of God himself came upon Earth to Exercise, for which he Sacrific'd both his Blood and his Life, and by which we are call'd Children of God, according to the words of the Evangelist; † *Blessed are the Peace-makers; for they shall be call'd the Children of God.* For the Gospel, by this word Peace-maker, understands nothing else, as says Saint Hierom and Theophilact; but those who after having overcome their own Passions, enjoy a peace within themselves. Or those who procure peace and union between Men; but above all such as procure peace between God and Men, by Converting Sinners, and reconciling 'em to God: Happy then are these sort of Peace-makers: They shall with Justice be call'd Children of God; because 'tis an imployment which the Son of God himself Exercis'd, * *Reconciling all things to his Father, and pacifying, by the Blood he shed upon the Cross, whatsoever is upon Earth, and whatsoever also is in Heaven.* 'Twas for this reason that the Angels sung at his Nativity, † *Glory be to God on high, and Peace upon Earth to Men of good Will.*

† Beati pacifici, quoniam filij dei vocabuntur. Matth. 5. 9.

† Per eum reconciliare omnia, in ipsum pacificans per sanguinem Crucis ejus, si ve quæ in ter- ris, si ve quæ in cælis sunt. Col. 1. 20.
* Gloria in excelsis Deo, & in terra pax hominibus bonæ voluntatis. Luc. 2. 14.

We ought to draw three things from what I have sayd, for our Spiritual profit. The first, is a great love and esteem of our Ministry; because 'tis so high, so pleasing to God, and so profitable to our Neighbour. And the Second, is a very great confusion, to see our selves call'd to so Sublime a Ministry; we being so inconsiderable as we are; and at the same time to see, that considering the great difficulty we have, to render a good account of our selves, yet we are notwithstanding charg'd also with the Salvation and Per-

Tom. III.

B

fection

In Epist. ad
Lugian.

* Exaltatus
autem humili-
atus sum, &
conturbatus.
Psal. 87. 16.
Father Nadas.

fection of others. 'Twas the Counsel which Saint *Francis Xaverius*, a most Apostolical Man, consummated in Virtue, and arriv'd to a very great height of Perfection, gave to the Fathers of *Portugal*, in a Letter he writ to them. I advise yee my Brethren, says he, that when yee think of the greatness of the Ministry which yee Exercise, and of the Esteem Men make of yee, that yee think of nothing else, but Humbling and Confounding yourselves before God, according to the words of the Prophet.

* *When I was Exalted I humbl'd my self, and fill'd my self with Confusion.* One of the first Fathers of our SOCIETY and one of the most eminent for his Piety and Learning; sayd, that when he consider'd the excellency of the End for which the SOCIETY was Instituted, and cast his Eyes upon himself; he was so Confounded, to find how incapable and unworthy he was of so sublime a Ministry, that he not only found no Vanity in being call'd to it, but on the contrary, made it a new subject of his Confusion and Debasement. 'Tis thus we ought to do, and by this means neither the consideration of the excellency of our employment, nor the esteem that Men shall have of us, nor the Honours they shall give us, will ever be any prejudice to us. The third thing which the consideration of our Ministry, ought to produce in us, is a serious application to our Spiritual advancement; for as I shall say hereafter, we ought to have labour'd very solidly for our own Perfection, and be very well advanc'd towards our own Salvation, to be able profitably to labour for the Salvation and Perfection of others.

CHAP.

C H A P. III.

That this Pious enterprife, regards the whole SOCIETY in general; and that even those who are not Priests, have notwithstanding their part in it.

BECAUSE those who are engag'd in the SOCIETY, in the quality only of Brothers, may perhaps think, that the end, of which we have spoken, do's only regard those that are Priests; and the Office of those that immediatly Direct Souls: And that this thought may not discourage 'em; I shall here make it appear for their comfort, that they have also their share in this Holy Enterprife: That when they shall well understand, that their Functions, such as they are, do all of 'em relate thereunto; this consideration may excite 'em to apply themselves to their duty with a new Fervour. We all of us together make but one Body; and the end of all this Body is, what I have already sayd; which is not only to labour for our own proper Salvation and Perfection, but to labour also, for the Salvation and Perfection of others. But to come to this end, 'tis necessary that the different Members of this Body, shou'd have different Employments; there must be some of these Religious to Preach; there must be some to hear Confessions; there must be some to Instruct others; and there must be some also to serve others, in their Temporal Necessities: 'Tis the same in an Army well Disciplin'd; there must be some Troops in it that Fight, and and there must be some to keep the Baggage; yet notwithstanding the one has as great a share of the Victory as the other, and as great a share also in the Spoils and Recompence. * *For the part of him who go's to Fight, and of him who remains with the Baggage, ought to be equal, and equally to be divided between 'em.* 'Tis that which David sayd, at his return from the Expedition against the Amalecites; and

* Equa enim pars erit descenditis ad prælium, & remanentis ad sarcinas, & similiter dividetur.

the Scripture takes notice, that 'twas always afterwards observ'd after this manner by the People of *Israël*, as an inviolable Law. Which was done with a great deal of Justice; for all the Troops of an Army do compose but one and the self same Body; and those that remain with the Baggage contribute no less to the Victory, than those that Fight; because those cou'd not Fight, if the others did not remain with the Baggage. 'Tis the same amongst us, all of us who are Religious, make but one body of Christian Souldiers, who propose to our selves the Conquest of Souls. There wou'd not be one who wou'd be able to Preach, nor to hear Confessions, nor to Teach, nor to Study; If there were not some that took care of Temporals; so that he who takes care of 'em, helps to Preach, to hear Confessions, and to gain Souls to God; and therefore has his part in the Victory and Merit. Saint *Austin* says, that Saint *Paul* by keeping the Cloths of those that Ston'd Saint *Stephen*, did worse than they. † For 'twas he, says the Saint, that Ston'd him by the Hands of all the rest. He guarded their Cloths, and did more hurt by this service he did 'em, than if he had Ston'd the Saint with his own Hands. If this may be sayd of bad Actions, we may with great reason, say the same of good ones, God being more inclin'd to Recompence than Punish.

† Ut enim esset in omnium lapidantium manibus, ipse omnium vestimenta servabat: magis faciens omnes adjuvando, quam suis manibus lapidando.

Aug. serm. 14. de sanctis.

Tom. 3. Epist.

Father *Avila* writing to two Priests, who were upon the point of entring into the SOCIETY, tells 'em that tho' by their Character, they were already Work-men in our Lord's Vineyard, and that the SOCIETY, into which they had a design to Enter, made particular Profession of laboring for the Salvation of Souls; yet they ought not to propose this to themselves in their Entring into it, nor be troubl'd after their Entry, if they were not employ'd in this Ministry. The Reason he gave 'em for it, was that which I have just now spoken off; which was, that all which is done in the SOCIETY, even the Lowest and most Vile Functions, was the self same, as if they were immediatly employ'd in the gaining and helping of Souls to God; because the Institution of the SOCIETY, regards intirely the Salvation of Souls, and the progress that is made in it, depends extreamly upon the Preservation and Encrease of the SOCIETY; so that which at the same time in any kind contributes to the Conversion of Souls, ought consequently to be imbrac'd with a great deal of Joy. Since therefore we are all Members of the

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same SOCIETY, we all of us contribute every one in his Function to the Fruit that is produc'd by means of the whole SOCIETY. and we participate also of the Merit of all the Conversions, and all the good works it performs. 'Tis this which our holy Founder expressly tells us in his Constitutions, speaking of those who assist in the Temporal Employments of the SOCIETY; so that each one ought to have a great deal of Satisfaction and Comfort in his Employment, and ought to look upon it, as a great and special Grace of God, to be a Member of a Body, that labours so profitably to God's Glory, for the Salvation of their Neighbour, and the Conversion of Souls. Lastly, as I have sayd before, even the Meanest and most Vile Functions of the SOCIETY, do all of 'em contribute to the Conversion of Souls; because their Conversion, being the End which the SOCIETY proposes to it self, 'tis to contribute to the same End with her, to serve her even in any kind whatsoever. *Cap. 6. Exam. §. 3.*

To Prove this more clearly, if amongst us 'twere only those who Preach, who hear Confessions, and who employ themselves most of all in the Direction of Souls, had only all the Merit, and all the Glory of the Fruit which the SOCIETY produces in Souls; Superiours wou'd be those, who shou'd have most reason to complain of their Employments; because effectively 'twou'd be they, who wou'd be less able to attend to these kind of Ministeries. For the Functions which are inseparably annex'd to the charges of General, Provincial, and others of the like Nature, do so take up their whole time, that they have none left to employ in the Help and Salvation of their Neighbour. Notwithstanding 'tis very true to say, that a Superiour who performs his duty well, and who takes care, that all who labour under his charge, do theirs well also, in this renders more service to his Neighbour, than if he were continually employ'd in Preaching and hearing Confessions: For as an Architect, who takes care of a Building, renders more service, than all those others who labour in it; and as the General of an Army, performs more by the good Orders he giv's, than if he shou'd charge the Enemy as a common Souldier; and even do's more than all the rest do, by the care he takes of ordering every thing: And 'tis for this reason that ordinarily speaking, all the Honour of the Victory is attributed to him. But if for the reason I have alledg'd, Superiours have their share of the Fruit which Preachers and Confessors produce in Souls,

Souls,

Souls, all those also, who serve the SOCIETY in any Function whatsoever, have their share therein; because in assisting the Preachers and Confessors, in things necessarily belonging to their Functions, they give 'em occasion, to apply themselves intirely thereunto, which otherwise they would never be able to do.

'Tis this properly that makes us all to be one Body, and to be Members also of the same Body. But as the Members of the Body have Functions and Properties different from one another, and what every Member do's, it do's not for it self, but for the whole Body. The Feet, for example, do not walk only for themselves; the Hands do not work for themselves alone; nor the Mouth Eats only for it self; and so of the rest: So all the Mystical Members of an Order, ought unanimously to conspire to the general good of of the Order, in the different Functions that belong to them. This Metaphor is taken out of the Apostle, who makes use of it, to shew that all the Faithful make but one Body in JESUS CHRIST, and that each of 'em ought to be contented with the rank in which God has plac'd him. * *The Body is one, and has many Members, notwithstanding all the Members are but one Body: Wherefore if the Foot says that 'tis not of the Body; because 'tis not the Hand, is it not therefore of the Body? And if the Ear says, 'tis not of the Body; because 'tis not the Eye, do's it for this reason cease to be of the Body? If all the Body were an Eye, where would the Sense of Hearing be? and if it were all an Ear, what would become of the Sense of Smelling? Since therefore God has plac'd each Member in the Body, after such a manner as he thought fit, and that the Eye cannot say to the Hand, I want not your help; nor the Head in like manner say to the Feet, I have no need of yee: So God has plac'd in his Church, in the first place Apostles; in the second Prophets, in the third place Doctors: And to the one he has given Power and the Virtue of Commanding, to others he has given the Grace of Healing, and to others the Understanding of Languages.* 'Tis necessary therefore that there shou'd be divers Functions and different Degrees in the Church of God: But 'tis always one and the self same Spirit, that works all these things, distributing 'em to each one as he

† Unum corpus est, & membra habet multa, omnia autem membra corporis, cum sint multa, unum tamen corpus sunt. Si dixerit pes: Quoniam non sum manus, non sum de corpore: num ideo non est de corpore? Et si dixerit auris: Quoniam non sum oculus, non sum de corpore: num ideo non est de corpore? Si totum corpus oculus, ubi auditus? Si totum corpus auditus, ubi odoratus? Nunc autem posuit Deus membra, unumquodque eorum in corpore sicut voluit. Non potest autem oculus dicere manus: Opera tua non indigeo, aut iterum caput pedibus: Non estis mihi necessarii. Et quosdam quidem posuit Deus in Ecclesia primum Apostolos, secundum Prophetas, tertium Doctores, deinde virtutes, exinde gratias curationum: genera linguarum, interpretationes sermonum, &c. Hæc autem omnia operatur unus atque idem Spiritus, dividens singulis prout vult.

1 Cor. 12, cap. 12, vs. 16, 17, 18, 21, 28, ver. 11.

pleases.

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pleases. 'Tis the same in a Religious Body, there cannot be therein all Eye, all Tongue, nor all Ears; all cannot be Superiours, Preachers, and Confessors; there must be some Religious in it, to serve the others in Temporal Functions; *And the Eye cannot say to the Hand I want not your help; nor the Head say to the Feet I do not Want yee.* Because the whole Body of the SOCIETY stands in need of the different Functions of it's Members, to arrive to the End it proposes; and therefore the Fruit which the whole SOCIETY produces in Souls, is the work of all particulars together.

But 'tis not only after this manner, that all the Religious of the SOCIETY may contribute to the Salvation of Souls; for without speaking of the Example of a holy Life, which is one of the things may most of all contribute hereunto, as I shall hereafter speak off, they may also, herein assist very much by their holy conversations with their Neighbour, which is one of the means whereby we produce the most Fruit in Souls: Moreover, amongst all those of this nature; of which Saint *Ignatius* speaks in the seventh Part of his Constitutions, where he takes notice of this, as, one of the most proper; and as one of the most general means, which all the Religious, and even the Lay-Brothers themselves ought to make use of in occasions, and therefore expressly do's there assign it as such; and to make us better comprehend the importance thereof, and the more still to excite us to practise it, he has made a particular Rule hereof: Let all the Religious, says he, each one according to his State, apply themselves in all occasions, to render themselves useful to their Neighbour; by Pious Discourse, Exhorting those of the World to good Works, but above all to Confession; So that 'tis not only the Preachers or Confessors, which ought to endeavour to contribute to the Salvation of their Neighbour by their Discourses; in proposing to one, one sort of Devotion, to another, another sort; Counselling this Man to Swear no more; the other to make a good Confession; the third, who is already more advanc'd then the rest, to make his Examen every Night, and so of other Devotions; but this obligation belongs to all the Religious in general, and to the Lay-Brothers as well as to the rest: In effect there has been many of 'em amongst us, who by this means have made great progress in Souls, and who perhaps have gain'd more hereby to God, than many Preachers and Confessors have done.

We

7. P. Constit. c. 4.
6. 8. Ec. 6. c. 4.
9. 4. c. 1. reg.
42. Comm.

We may moreover help to the Conversion of Souls by Prayer, which is the means most capable to contribute thereunto, as I shall afterwards speak off. And this means, is in a manner in the power of all the World. Very often a Preacher or a Confessor; or one who afflicts a Dying Person, imagins the fruit he produces in Souls, to be his own work, when perhaps 'tis the work of the Brother who accompanies him; who shall have put himself in Prayer for this End; or of some other Brother, who has mortify'd his Body for this Intention; and who has offer'd up his Sighs before God. How many Preachers and Confessors imagine themselves to have gotten many Spiritual Children, whom at the Day of Judgment, they'll find not to be theirs? They being at present only adopted Fathers, and as, † *'Twas believ'd that this Infant was the Son of Joseph.* So 'tis believ'd that this Preacher, or this Confessor, has begotten such a one in JESUS CHRIST, but then they'll perceive 'twas the Child of the Tears and Prayers of some Poor Ignorant and good Religious Brother. * *She that was Barren had many Children, and she who had many Children was Depriv'd of 'em.* This Directour, who seem'd to have a great number of 'em, will find himself perhaps to have none at all. † *Rejoyce therefore thou that art Barren, who bringest forth no Children, try out with joy thou that bringest forth none; because she that that was cast off and deserted, shall have more Children, than she who has a Husband.* Rejoyce yee therefore my Brethren, whose Ignorance and Simplicity seems to render yee incapable of having Spiritual Children, perhaps yee'll have a great many more, than the most renown'd Preachers and Confessors shall have, and then surpris'd with astonishment to see your self to have so many Children, * *You'll say within your self, who has giv'n me these Children, I who am Barren and Deserted? And who has bred 'em up for me? You'll say I am neither Preacher nor Confessor I have no Knowledge, nor have any Talent, from whence then do these Children come? Would you know from whence? They come from your Prayers, from your Sighs, from your Tears, and from your Groans, † For God hears the Desire of the Poor, * Our Lord do's the the Will of those that fear him, and hears their Prayers;* behold what it is that giv's these Children to those who never seem'd to have any. Saint Francis Xaverius sayd, that Preachers and Confessors ought to make use of these helps for two reasons, the one that the Labour being

† Ut putabatur filius Joseph.
Luc. 3. 23.

* Donec sterilis peperit plurimos: & quæ multos habebat filios, infirmata est.
1 Reg. 2. 5.

† Lactare sterilis quæ non parit: erumpe, & clama quæ non parturit, quia multi filii desertæ magnæ, quàm ejus quæ habet virum.
Is. 54. 1.
Gal. 4. 27.

* Et dices in corde tuo: Quis genuit mihi istos? Ego sterilis, & non pariens... & istos quis enutrivit?
Is. 49. 21.

† Desiderium pauperum exaudivit Dominus. Ps. 9. 48.

* Voluntatem timentium se faciet, & deprecationem eorum exaudiet.

Psal. 144. 19.
Ejus visus est.

cap. 16.

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being parted between them and their Brethren, they'll thereby remove the occasion of esteeming themselves more than them; and the other, that they may always entertain within themselves the Spirit of Union and Charity.

One advantage which the Brothers have in contributing after this manner to the Salvation of Souls, is, that they are in greater security than Preachers, Confessors, or Divines. For Preachers and Divines are continually expos'd to the attacks of Vanity and Pride; and as to Confessors the direction of Souls is so hard and delicate a matter, that they always ought to be in fear to be deceiv'd, in the Conduct they hold therein: Moreover these sorts of Ministeries and imployments, are accompany'd with so many cares and difficulties, that oftentimes to satisfy what their duty requires therein, they forget their duty to themselves, and their own Spiritual Advancement; but as for the Lay-brothers, since their State defends 'em from Vain-glory, and delivers 'em from these cares and fears. The Merit of what they do towards the Conversion of Souls, comes whole and intire to them, without being the least corrupted by any thing: So that without having any part with us in the danger, they participate in the Profit and Merit; and oftentimes even gain the better part. God grant that it do's not sometimes happen, that Vain-glory be not all the Preachers part, and that all the Merit and Fruit which he shou'd have got, comes not to the Brother his Companion. For this wou'd be a very bad division; wherefore God grant by his Mercy, that we may enjoy all the fruit of our labour, by doing every thing, always with prospect of his greater Honor and Glory.

Tom. III.

C. CHAP.

C H A P. IV.

That to labour profitably for the Salvation of Souls, 'tis necessary first to be well grounded in Virtue.

THE two things I just now spoke of, to labour for our own Salvation, and to labour for the Salvation of our Neighbour, are equally the End of the SOCIETY; and they are so link'd together by our Constitutions, that each one helps the other, and reciprocally lends a Hand. The means also which the SOCIETY makes use of, for the Spiritual Advancement of it's Children, are very different from those, that are made use of by other Orders, who by their establishment are not engag'd to the help of their Neighbour as we are. Saint Ignatius was wont to say, that if he had look'd upon the particular good of the SOCIETY, he wou'd have made many Regulations in it, which he did not, hereby to leave it in a better State, to apply it self to the service of it's Neighbour; and if he had only had consideration of himself, he wou'd have run about the Streets as a Fool, the more to make known the contempt he had of the World, and also to give to the World a greater occasion of condemning him. But the Zeal he had for his Neighbour, repress'd these motions in him, and the fear he had of Scandalising and prejudicing 'em by his neglect of Gravity and Civility, caus'd him to abstain from all those Humiliations, which might be contrary thereunto? He says moreover, that if he had follow'd his own Inclination, and regarded the profit he drew from that plain Song which is us'd in the Church, he wou'd have establish'd the use thereof in the SOCIETY; but that he did not do it; because God had made him understand, that he wou'd have the SOCIETY serve him in other Exercises of Piety. Since therefore the SOCIETY do's not propose to it self, only it's own Spiritual Advancement, but also

*Lib. 5. ejus vit.
capitib. 3. 5. 10.*

also the Advancement of it's Neighbour; it has in prospect that the means which it has giv'n us for our Spiritual Advancement, is able to render us more fit to labour for that of our Neighbour; and it pretends at the same time, that the Functions of Charity in which we shall be employ'd for our Neighbour, help to our own particular Advancement. Wherefore we ought to make account that our progress in Virtue and Perfection, consists in well acquitting our selves of our Functions: And on the one side to behold the help of our Neighbour as a proper means for our particular Advancement; and on the other, regard the graces and helps which God bestows upon us for that End, as a means to become more profitable to our Neighbour; but if we do not apply our selves to this practice; we deserve that God shou'd stop the course of his Graces; because 'tis in prospect of this, that he bestows 'em so abundantly upon us; and 'tis that, to which the Grace of our Vocation is united. Moreover, it was not for the particular advantage of Joseph, that God rais'd him to so high a State of glory and power in Egypt; but it was for the advantage of all his Brethren, and to save them and all their Families in the time of the Famine, as he he himself acknowledg'd when he told 'em.

* 'Tis to save yee that God sent me hither before yee, so that 'tis not for our particular profit, that God calls us to the SOCIETY, and that therein he powers down his Graces upon us, with so great an abundance; 'tis for the profit of our Neighbour, 'tis that our light may shine before Men, and not that we shou'd hide it under a Bushel. But let us speak of these two things a part, tho' they always have a connexion one with the other.

As to the first which regards the Advancement of each one in particular, 'tis certain that to be in a State, to labour profitably for the Advancement of our Neighbour, we ought first of all to have labour'd for our own; and 'tis this which the Apostle recommends to us in the first place, as the foundation of all the rest, when he says, *Attend to thy self*: Each one ought first of all to attend to himself, and seriously apply himself to his particular advancement; for God, who is the Author of Grace, as well as of Nature, who strongly † *Imbraces the Univerſ from one Extremity to the other, and Disposes all things with Sweetness*; keeps the same Order in the Works of Grace, that he do's in those of Nature; where to speak, in Philosophical

* Pro salute enim vestra misit me Deus ante vos. Gen. 45. 5.

Attende tibi. 1 Tim. 4. 16.

† Attingit à fine usque ad finem fortiter, & disponit omnia suaviter. Sap. 8. 1.

* Omne simile generat simile.

terms, * *Every like produces it's like.* Since then in Natural things, we see that besides the general causes of their Production, there ought to be also a near and immediate cause of the same species, to give to each Being, that particular form which it ought to have: And as for example, there ought to be Fire, to produce another Fire; and Light, to produce another Light; so in Spiritual things 'tis God's Pleasure, that to produce Patience, Charity and Humility in a Heart, the Preacher or Confessor, who is the immediate cause he makes use of, shou'd be Humble, Patient and Charitable. Moreover as in Natural things, we see, for example, that a Plant produces no Seed, for the Multiplication of it's own Species, 'till it be grown great: So in things of Grace, God will have us to be great in Virtue and Spirituality, to bring forth Spiritual Children, and to be able to say with the Apostle, † *By means of the Gospel I have begotten yee in JESUS CHRIST.*

† In Christo Jesu per Evangelium ego vos genui.
1 Cor. 4. 15.

'Tis for this reason, that the first thing, in which the SOCIETY employs those that it Receives, is to labour in their own Advancement, that in the beginning, they may lay a solid Foundation; and this is the reason also, why it appoints such different times of Probation; first, it causes 'em to make two Years of Noviship before their Studies; afterwards when, all their Studies are ended, they put 'em again into the Fire, to give 'em a new heat and temper, by causing 'em to make another Year of Probation; to the end that if by their application to their Studies, they shou'd perhaps have relented any thing from their first fervour, they may regain new forces, before they begin to treat with their Neighbour; and therefore wou'd not have 'em treat of Spiritual things with others, till they are before Hand well grounded in Spirituality themselves. Moreover even after all this, it seems that we are never to cease almost to be Novices; our Profession is defer'd for so long a time, that almost our whole Life, as it were, passes in a Noviship and Probation, before the SOCIETY Admits and Acknowledges us, for true and fit Work-men in the Vineyard of our Lord: And it do's this; because, the matter in Question, is the conferring upon us, what is of the greatest importance in the World; and therefore 'tis necessary to have a good Trial of us before hand, to see what we are, and what we are capable of. The thing in Question, is to charge us, not only with the Conversion, but with the Perfection also of our Neighbour; and therefore 'tis necessary we shou'd

first

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first have labour'd very well in our own. 'Tis hereby easily to be seen, how those are deceiv'd, who seem to think the time of these kinds of Probations too long, or at least less profitable; and from the first Ray of Light that they receive in Prayer; from the least spark of Piety, they feel in their Heart; wou'd upon a sudden put themselves upon Preaching, and upon helping their Neighbour, Saint Ephraim deplores this abuse, and says, 'tis a sentiment that comes not from the Spirit of God, but from the Spirit of Presumption and Pride. * *They wou'd begin, says he, to Teach before they know any thing themselves. They wou'd intrude themselves to give Laws and Rules to others, before they have learn'd the Law or Rules themselves; they take upon 'em to give their opinion in every thing, before they have begun to Spell; and before they are capable of receiving correction, they take upon 'em to correct others.*

Saint Gregory speaking of those who are guilty of this fault, treats this Subject perfectly well, and to render things more sensible, he makes use of some Familiar Comparisons. † *Such Persons as these, says he, ought to be admonish'd to consider, that little Birds, who wou'd Fly before their Wings are fully Feather'd, fall upon the Ground, instead of Flying in the Aire: When also a Wall is fresh, and new made, if the Timber be charg'd upon it, it rather destroys than makes a Building: Moreover Woemen, who are brought to Bed before their time, rather encrease the number of Graves, than augment Families.* The Employments that regard the help of our Neighbour, require a great stock of Vertue and Mortification, without that, he who engages himself herein, has more reason to fear, than hope; and lest he himself shou'd rather take in the Spirit and Sentiment of the World, than that the World shou'd take in his. Wherefore the same Saint Gregory takes notice, that tho' JESUS CHRIST the Eternal Wisdom of the Father, was infinitely Wise from the first Moment of his Conception, yet he began not to Teach others, till he was thirty Years of Age, and after he had prepar'd himself for it, by his retreat in the Desert, by forty Days Fast, and many other Austerities. * *'Tis not that he stood in need, says this great Saint, of any preparation; but he wou'd Teach us by his own Example, how great a Preparation, and Perfection is requir'd, for so great a Ministry. Also when he was Twelve Years of age, when he stay'd in Jerusalem, and his Parents went thither to seek him,*

* Antequam doceatur docere appetit; priusquam dicat jura legesque, ferre ambigit; antequam syllabas jungere noverit, philosophatur. Priusquam corripit sustineat, corripit. *Jerm. de vita & Exerc. Mon.*

† Admonendi sunt isti, ut considerent quod pulli avium, si ante pennarum perfectionem volare appetant, unde ire in alta cupiunt, inde in ima merguntur. Quod structuris recentibus, necdum solidatis, si lignorum pondus superponitur, non habitaculum, sed ruina fabricatur. Quod conceptas soboles femininx, si priusquam plene formentur, proferant, nequam domos, sed tumulos replent.

* Hinc est quod idem Redemptor noster, cum in exilis sit Conditor, & Doctor Angelorum ante triennale tempus in terra magister no-

they

luit fieri hominum, ut videlicet imbecillibus vim saluberrimi rimoris infunderet: cum ipse etiam qui labi non posset, perfectæ vitæ gratiam, non nisi perfectâ ætate prædicaret. quod cum Jesus annorum duodecim dicitur in medio Doctorum sedens, non docens, sed interrogans invenitur, quo exemplo scilicet ostenditur, ne infirmus doceat quis audeat, si ille puer doceri interrogando voluit, qui per divinitatis potentiam, verbum scientiæ ipsius suis doctoribus ministravit. Hinc est quod ipsa veritas, quæ repente quos vellet roborare potuisset, ut exemplum frequentibus daret, ne imperfecti prædicare præsumerent, postquam plene Discipulos de prædicatione virtutis instruxit, illico adjunxit: Vos autem sedete in civitate, quoadusque induamini virtute ex alto.

Greg. 3. p. Pastor. ad m. 26.

* Soror nostra parva, & ubera non habet, Cant. 8. 8.

† Repleti sunt omnes Spiritu Sancto, & cepunt loqui varijs linguis, magnalia Dei. Act. 2. 4. & 11.

Hieron. in illud: * Si repleta fuerint nubes, imbrem super terram effundent. Isai. 1. 3.

they found him in the Temple in the midst of the Doctors, bearing 'em and asking 'em Questions. Whereby, continues this Father, those that are still Weak and Infants in Virtue, ought to Learn not to meddle with Teaching of others, nor intrude themselves before their time, into so Sublime a Ministry; since JESUS CHRIST himself, wou'd at the age of Twelve Years, be Instructed by those, whose Master he himself was; and was contented to hear and to ask 'em Questions, tho' 'twas he, who Inspir'd 'em, with all the Light and Knowledge they had, to Answer him. 'Twas also for this reason, says the same Saint, that JESUS CHRIST having Commanded his Apostles to go and Preach the Gospel thron' out the whole World, and having then the power to give 'em Grace necessary for this End, yet he wou'd not do it, nor permit 'em, in the weak and imperfect State they were in, to go and Preach his Word, but commanded 'em, saying, go into the Town and remain, there till yee shall be Replenish'd with the Virtue of the Holy Ghost. And this he did to let us see, that we ought to be very well grounded in Humility, Mortification, and all other Virtues, that the employments, which engage us to treat with our Neighbour, may be profitable for their Salvation, without being prejudicial to our own.

Saint Bernard upon this Subject makes use of these words of the Canticles, * Our Sister is little, and as yet has not any Breasts, and applying 'em to the state of the Church before the Descent of the Holy Ghost, he says the Church was then very little, and at that time had neither Breasts nor Milk, to Nourish it's Spiritual Children; but when the Holy Ghost Descended upon the Apostles, he Replenish'd 'em with Milk and with his Gifts and Graces. † All were fill'd with the Holy Ghost, says the Scripture, and they began to Denounce in different Languages, the Wonderful Works of God, and to work Conversions without Number; if you wou'd therefore produce Fruit in Souls, and raise your Spiritual Children to God, you ought to have your Breasts full of Milk, one of 'em ought to be fill'd with the Milk of all kinds of Virtue. The other with the Milk of pure and wholesome Doctrine.

Saint Hieron explicating these words, * When the Clouds shall be fill'd, they shall pour down Rain upon the Earth in abundance, says, that the Preachers of the Word of God are Clouds, and that as the Clouds Water the Earth when they are full of Rain, so when Preachers are full of the

wholesome

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wholsome Water of Evangelical Doctrine, they Water the Hearts of Men. 'Tis for this reason, that when God threaten'd his Vineyard by the Prophet *Isay*, he sayd that † *He wou'd Command the Clouds to give no more Rain upon it.* Whereby, says this holy Father, he wou'd give us to understand, that one of the greatest Chastisements, with which he is wont to punish the Sins of Men, is to hinder the Rain of his Divine Word from falling upon 'em, and not to send them Preachers; or not to permit that they produce any Fruit. When therefore these Clouds shall be full of the Celestial Rain of Grace, they may then, says the Saint, throw down their Waters upon the Earth, and these words of *Moses* may be apply'd to them: * *Let the Earth hear the Words of my Mouth, let my Doctrine be pour'd down like Rain, let my discourse fall like Dew; let it be like Rain upon the Grass, and as drops of Water upon the Meadows.* 'Tis then that they'll be able to render the Earth Fruitfull, when they shall soften and temper the dryness of Mens Hearts, and render 'em capable to produce the Fruits of Justice and Salvation. But if these Clouds have no Water, what will happen hereby? Wou'd you know? Behold what Saint *Jude* in his Canonical Epistle, says of it, † *They are Clouds without Water, which the Winds drive every way.* So that as the Clouds, which are not full of Water, are easily carry'd by the Wind from one side to another; because of their great lightness; so if a Preacher be not full of the Spirit of Humility and Mortification, if he be not fill'd with all sorts of Virtue, he'll infallibly be carry'd from one side to another with the Wind of Vain-glory and Self-love; and this quality of an Evangelical Preacher, this quality of the Cloud, which is rais'd above the Earth, will serve him for nothing else, but to make him be the more easily turn'd, and tosd up and down by all sorts of Winds.

Saint *Austin* speaking of Riches, says. * *'Tis hard to be Rich without being Proud; because 'tis the ordinary effect of Riches to ingender Pride.* Every thing, says this Father, has a particular Worm that Eats it. All sorts of Fruit; all sorts of Grain, all sorts of Wood, have a particular Worm; and the Worm of an Apple, that of a Pear, that of a Bean; that of a Grain of Corn, are each of 'em different one from another; the Worm of Riches is Pride. If therefore the Rich be so expos'd to Pride; because their Riches draw to them the esteem of Men, how much more are they expos'd who are elevated

† Et nubibus mandabo, ne pluant super eam imbrem. If. i. 6. Greg. Moral. l. 27. c. 14.

* Audiat terra verba oris mei: Concresecat ut pluvia doctrina mea, fluat ut ros eloquium meum, quasi imber super herbam, & quasi stillæ super gramina. Dent. 32. 1. & 2.

† Hi sunt nubes sine aqua, quæ à ventis circumferuntur. Jud. seu. Thad. ep. unius v. 12.

* Difficile est ut non sit superbus qui dives. Nihil enim quod sic generent divitiæ, quomodo superbiam. Aug. l. 10. bom. 13. Omne potum omne granum, omne lignum habet vermem suum, & alius est vermis mali, alius pyri, alius fabæ, alius tritici: vermis divitiarum est superbia. Aug. de verb. Dom. sup. Matt. bom. 5.

*Chry. l. 3. de
Sacerd.*

elevated, as the Clouds above the Earth, to Water and render it fruitful by the Rain of their Word; who are look'd upon as Saints of our Lord; and whose Functions and Ministries render 'em Venerable to all the World? We owe more respect to Priests and Spiritual Fathers, says Saint *Chrysostom*, than to Kings and Princes: Nay we owe more, and have a greater obligation to them, than to our own Fathers: For these beget us for the World, and to live in the World; but those beget us for Heaven, and to Live Eternally with God. There is nothing so great amongst Men, nor draws a greater respect from 'em, than to be in Reputation of Sanctity? All the honours they give upon other motives, they are ordinarily only Exteriour, and very often accompany'd with the contempt of him that renders 'em; but the honours given a Man upon account of his being esteem'd a Saint, are always fill'd with sincere and profound Veneration. But as Vain-glory is the Worm that sticks ordinarily to good Actions; and the greater and more holy they are, the greater fear there is of their being corrupted; there ought, without doubt, to be a greater Foundation of Humility, to sustain the weight of Reputation and Honors, which they draw unto them; Wherefore, Saint *Chrysostom* speaking of the Dignity of Priesthood, and the dangers that accompany it, puts Vain-glory in the Head of 'em; and says 'tis a far more dangerous Rock, than all those, whereof the Poëts have made such frightful Descriptions.

C H A P.

C H A P. V.

That the care of the Advancement of our Neighbour; ought not to render us negligent in what regards our own, but on the contrary, it ought to oblige us, more seriously to apply our selves thereunto..

* **H** E L P your Neighbour in whatsoever you are able, but take care, that you fall not your self. Behold here what is properly the End of the Institute of the SOCIETY, behold the great and high road, in which all of us ought to walk; out of which we cannot go, but only two ways, either upon the right Hand, by intirely withdrawing our selves from conversing with our Neighbour, to think only upon our own Advancement; or upon the left, by so intirely giving on's self to the help of our Neighbour, as thereby to become forgetful of our selves. Both these extremities are Vitious; wherefore that we may keep our selves in the middle between both extreams, in which Perfection do's consist; and that we may not turn either to the right Hand or to the left, I shall speak of each a part. First, then to speak of that which is most dangerous, which is the giving of our selves so intirely to the help of our Neighbour, that thereby we become forgetful of our selves: 'Tis an inconvenience which our Saviour himself sufficiently admonishes us of, when he says: † *What do's it profit a Man to gain the Whole World, if he come to loose his own Soul? And what can a Man give in Exchange, to purchase his Soul again when it shall be lost?* There can be no loss like this, of which no compensation can be made; and therefore Reason, and well order'd Charity require, that we shoud not neglect our own Salvation, for any thing whatsoever in this World; and that we never ought to relent in the care of

Tom. III.

D

our

* Recupera proximum secundum virtutem tuam, & attende tibi ne incidas.
Ecccl. 29. 27.

† Quid enim prodest homini si universum mundum lucretur, animæ vero suæ detrimentum ratiatur? Aut quam dabit homo compensationem pro anima sua? Matth. 16. 26.

* Bonitatem
& disciplinam
& scientiam
doce me.
Psal. 118. 66.

*Nicol. Pap. c.
Scisitantib. 15.
q. 8.*

*Idem Bern. in
Nat. S. Joan.
Bapt.
Bern. Serm. 78.
Sap. Cast. in
silyd. Oleum
effusum no-
men tuum.
Cant. 1. 2.*

† Quamobrem
si sapis con-
cham te ex-
hibebis, &
non canalem.
Ibid.

* Totum spi-
ritum suum

our own Advancement. the Psalmist observes this Order very well, when he begs of God saying, * *Teach me Goodness, Discipline, and Knowledge*: For he puts Goodness in the first place, as what is more particularly necessary for him, and more for his Advantage than the other. We ought not therefore to forget our selves, or to neglect our own Salvation, upon pretence of laboring for the Salvation of our Neighbour; which wou'd be a very great abuse; and *Seneca* himself speaking of those, who have greater care of the amendment of others, than of their own. Compares 'em to Pits out of which clear Water is drawn, and the Mud is kept to themselves. Pope *Nicolas* also, in one of his Decrees, makes use of a Comparison very proper for our Subject; he demands whither Priests of an ill Life, can validly administer the Sacraments? And after having decided the Question, that they may; because they do prejudice to none but themselves, he says, that they are like lighted Torches, which give Light to others, but at the same time consume themselves.

Saint *Bernard* writing upon these words of the Canticles, *Your Name, is like Oyl spread abroad*; treats this matter perfectly well. He says that the Holy Ghost works two things in us; the one, by which he first establishes us in Vertue for our own Advancement, he calls *Infusion* or pouring in; the other, by which he communicates to us his Gifts and Graces, for the Profit and Advantage of our Neighbour, and this he calls *Effusion*, or pouring forth; because 'tis a Grace that is given us to bestow upon others; but this *Infusion*, says he, ought to precede the *Effusion*: We ought first to be well fill'd with Vertue, before we can fill others therewith. And hereupon he makes a Comparison, which explicates his thought very well. He says there is this difference between a Channel, or Pipe that serves to conduct the Water from a Fountain, and the Bason that receives it; that the Channel receives and renders the Water at the same time, without retaining any thing of it; whereas the Bason first fills it self, and afterwards the superfluous Water runs out; which it cannot do, without still keeping it self full. Wherefore, † *You'll do very wisely*, says he, *to become like the Bason, and not like the Channel*, and that you may not contemne this Counsel, continues the Saint, as coming from my self, know that 'tis not I, but the Holy Ghost that gives it. * *The Fool lets all that is in*

his

Part. 3. Of the End of the Socy of JESUS. 27

his Heart evaporate, but the Wise Man defers to do so, and reserves it for another time. The one retains nothing, no more than a Channel do's; the other on the contrary is like a Bason, that lets nothing run over, till it be first brim full it self. * But alas, says this Father, the Misery is, that we have now adays a great many Channels and Pipes in the Church, but very few Basons. There are many People who are Channels, out of which the Water of the Divine Word passes, to Water the Hearts of the Faithful, and to cause 'em to bring forth the Fruits of Grace and Benediction; but when they have gather'd any quantity together; they retaining nothing for themselves, wou'd give all to others; they are always readier to speak, than to execute: They wou'd teach that, which they have not yet learnt: They wou'd lead and help others, and know not at all how to help themselves. There's a great deal of Folly, and no Charity at all in this; because there is no degree of Charity above that, which the Wise Man advises us to have for our selves, when he says: † Take pity on your own Soul, by rendering it pleasing to God, behold here the first thing we ought to do, behold what we ought to begin with all; as to what regards the help and Advancement of our Neighbour, this ought only to follow it.

* For if I have but a little Oyl left for my own use, as the Widow of Serepta had, do you think I'll deprive my self of it for your sake? I'll keep it for my self, and will not give it, but at the Prophet's Command. But if one of those who perhaps think better of me, than they see me deserve, or hear me spoken off, do with instance press me for it. I'll Answer 'em with the Wise Virgins, † For fear there shou'd not be enough for me and thee too. Go rather to those that sell it, and buy some for thy self: * For 'tis not just, says the Apostle, to give to others that they may be at their Ease; and that we shou'd, for want of what we give, remain in straits our own selves; but we must observe an equality. This is all that true Charity requires of you, which Commands you to * Love your Neighbour as your self; behold here the equality of which Saint Paul speaks: But he do's not require of you that you love your Neighbour more than your self; that you prefer him before your self; and that you neglect the care of your own Advancement, to labour for that of others. † Let my Soul, says the Prophet, be fill'd with exquisite and delicious Meat, and then O Lord my Mouth shall sing Hymnes of Joy and Thanksgiving. Our

D 2

Heart

profert stultus: sapiens differt & reservat in posterum.
Ervv. 29. 11.

* Canales multos habemus hodie in Ecclesia, conchas vero paucas.
In Cant. ferm. 18. mm. 5.

† Misereere animæ tuæ placens Deo.
Ecclesiæ. 30. 24.

* Quod si non habeo nisi parumper olei quo unguas tibi debeo dare, & remanere inanis? Servo illud mihi, & omnino, nisi ad Prophetæ iustitiam, non profero. Si institerint rogantes aliqui ex his, qui forte existimant de me, supra id quod vident in me, aut audiunt aliquid ex me. Id. Ibid.

† Ne forte non sufficiat nobis & vobis, ite potius ad vendentes, & emite vobis.
Marth. 25. 9.

* Non enim ut alij sit remissio, vobis autem tribulatio, sed ex æqualitate.
2 Cor. 8. 13.

† Diliges proximum tuum sicut teipsum.
Marth. 22. 39.

* Sicut adipe & pinguedine repleatur anima mea, & labijs exultationis laudabit meum.
Psal. 62. 6.

* Ex abundantia cordis os loquitur.

Matth. 12. 34.

† Propter eam abundantius oportet nos observare ea quæ audivimus ne forte perefluamus.

Hebr. 2. 1.

* Qui tetigerit peccem inquinabitur ab eâ.

Eccî. 13. 1.

† Et erit sicut populus, sic Sacerdos.

Osee 4. 9.

Lib. 5. c. 11.
Vit. S. Ign.

* In medio nationis pravæ & perverfæ.

Philip. 2. 15.

Heart therefore ought first to be fill'd, that it may be
 * *From the abundance of the Heart, that the Mouth speaks:*
 and 'tis for this reason that the Apostle says, † *That we ought very carefully to observe what we hear; for fear we loose, and pour it out by our Words.* We ought carefully to conserve in us, what the Grace of God has pour'd into us, we ought to let it flow from us as from a Vessel that is full, and not let it spill or leak out, as out of a crack'd Vessel, that can retain nothing. So that the care of the Advancement of our Neighbours Salvation, ought to be so far from rendring us negligent in what concerns our own, that 'tis this that ought to oblige us, to apply our selves more earnestly thereunto: For a great Stock of Humility, Mortification, and all other sorts of Virtue are requir'd, as I have already sayd, to be in the World, and not to partake of the Sentiments of the World; and to hinder, that the World instead of conforming it self to our Spirit, do's not perhaps make us conform our selves unto it's own,
 * *He that handles Pitch; says the Scripture, Will have his Hands defil'd therewith.* And they ought to be well rub'd over before hand with Oyl, if he wou'd not have the Pitch stick to them. 'Tis the same with us in regard of those of the World, we ought to be well fill'd and penetrated with the unction of Grace and Prayer, that Worldly Conversation may not stick to us, and Defile us. But if we take not this precaution, we shall have reason to fear that it may communicate it's Vices and Maxims to us, and that these may draw us along with 'em, into it's irregularities and disorders to verify that saying of *Osee*, † *Such as the People are, such is the Priest.*

One of the chief Instructions, that Saint Ignatius gave to those, whom Charity engag'd to converse with their Neighbour, was to perswade 'em, that those they had to do withal, were not Perfect; but they went, as says Saint Paul,
 * *Into the middel of a Wicked and Perverse Nation,* and this Advertiment teaches us to be extremely upon our guard, lest the Scandals and Disorders we see amongst 'em, ihou'd corrupt our Minds and Hearts. The Physicians and such as assist the Sick, are accusom'd, when the Diseases are very Contagious, to take Preservatives; and to carry great Perfums about 'em, to hinder the effects of the Contagion, and that the bad Air, which is Breath'd by Sick Persons, may do us no hurt. But the Sick which we Treat,
 and

Part. 3. Of the End of the Soc. of Jesus. 29

and have greatest Conversation withal in the World, are attack'd with Contagious Diseases, which are easily catcht, if great care and precaution be not taken, by the preferatives of Mortification and all sorts of, Vertue. 'Tis requir'd that a Confessour, who is continually oblig'd to apply his Hands, to Wounds full of filth and rottenness, shou'd have a good Stomack, to prevent, that the bad Odour of so many Sins, that Confessions are fill'd withal, turn's not his Stomack, and excite not bad Thoughts and Motions, that may corrupt the purity thereof.

Some say very well that we ought to be like certain Rivers, who enter into the Sea, without loosing any of the Sweetness of their Water; and without mixing with that of the Sea. Saint *Chrysostom* desirous to let us see, what Priests ought to be, whose Ministry and Zeal of Souls, oblige 'em to converse with all sorts of People in the World, says, they shou'd be in the mid'st of the World, as the three Children were in the mid'st of the fiery Furnace of *Babylon*; for in effect we are in the World, in the mid'st of flames, and these flames are far more ardent, than those of that furnace were. The flames of Ambition, of Impurity, of Envy, of Detraction, raise themselves furiously round about us, and encompass us on all sides; and because the Fire penetrats wheresoever it finds an entrance, and spoils and blackens all it meets withal: The Priest of God, add's this Father, ought to take care, lest this Smoak approaches so far as to touch himself. And prevent the flames not only from burning us, but even hinder the Smoak, they send forth, from being able so much as to Blacken us. What precautions therefore ought we not to take; and with what circumspection ought we not to carry our selves? Saint *Austin* explicating these words of our Saviour in the Gospel. * *Ye are the Light of the World*, says, *That Light contracts no Uncleaness by passing thro' foul places*. But on the contrary, it purifies 'em, and driv's away their bad Smell, without receiving any impression thereof in it self. 'Tis after this manner that our Light ought to manifest the Sins of the World, and penetrate their filth, without contracting any corruption from thence; 'Tis thus that it ought to purify the Heart of Sinners, and drive away the bad exhalations of Vice: But to do this, we ought to have a great application to our Spiritual Exercises, to Prayer, Examens, Spiritual Reading, Pennance and Mortification. but above all we must

Lib. 3. de Sacer.

* Vos estis
lux mundi.
Matth. 5. 14.
Lux enim per
loca immunda
transeat, non
inquinatur.
Aug. tract. 4.
sup. Joan.

must never neglect our Prayer; which each of us is oblig'd daily to make for his Spiritual Progress, and 'tis a thing of which we cannot take too much care; because the Devil, who perceiv's that he knows not how to hinder us, in laboring for the Advancement of our Neighbour; because we are particularly oblig'd thereunto by our Institution; endeavours to make us apply our selves so to it, that we come at length to forget the care which we have of our own; and to neglect the means most necessary for it. The Rivers that over-flow their Channels, ordinarily enrich the grounds they over-flow; but they carry also a great deal of Mud along with 'em. Behold here what is the Devils aim, when he moves us to employ our selves too much, in the commerce with Worldly People; and not to keep such measures therein, as we ought to do: Wherefore since this kind of Temptation is very ordinary, we ought to be extreamly upon our guard. That also, which chiefly ought to oblige us to do so, is, that the care of our particular Advancement, is, as I shall say afterwards, the best means we have, profitably to help our Neighbour, and to produce much Fruit in Souls; so that the greater affairs we have in that kind, the more we ought to give our selves to Prayer, to obtain of God a blessing upon our Ministry, and to cause it to succeed: 'Twas after this manner that the Saints were wont to do. We Read of Saint *Dominick*, that he Divided his time, after this following manner; he gave the Day to the Service of his Neighbour, and the Night unto Prayer; behold here what made him bring forth such great Fruits; 'twas because he Consulted at Night with God, what he ought to do the Day following; and before he put his Hand to work, he had already obtain'd the success, by his Prayers. *JESUS CHRIST* himself has also giv'n us an Example of this practice; by retiring himself to Mountains and retir'd Places, and there passing whole Nights in Prayer: He employ'd the Day in Preaching to the People, in Healing the Sick, and in Casting out Devils; and as the Gospel says, *He pass'd the whole Night in Prayer to God.* He did this, as Saint *Aambrose* very well takes notice of, not because he stood in need of the help of Prayer, but that he might hereby give us an Example; of what we ought to do.

But if Prayer be so necessary for those who are Exteriously employ'd, in the ordinary Functions of Charity, 'tis also

Erat pernoctans in oratione Dei.
Luc. 6. 12.
Ambr. in locum sup. cit.

Part. 3. Of the End of the Society of Jesus. 31

also more particularly necessary for those who are employ'd in Missions. The Rules which we have concerning Missioners, expressly take notice hereof. Behold one of 'em; † *Let 'em take care not to fail in their Exercises of Prayer and Examin of Conscience, which they are wont to have in Colledges, and in other Houses of the SOCIETY, and 'tis without doubt, with a great deal of reason, that the Rule expressly has these terms, that they take care, for in effect, 'tis needful they shou'd extreamly take care of themselves, and that they do not neglect these Exercises, when they are employ'd after this manner abroad: 'Tis indeed very easie to satisfie 'em in our Houses, where our employments are more regular, where we are advertis'd and call'd by the Sound of the Bell to these Exercises, and where the Example of others excites us to do as they do. But when we are employ'd abroad in laborious Functions, with which we are sometimes as it were over charg'd; when we are neither advertis'd by the sound of the Bell, nor excited by the Example of our Brethren, but on the contrary we meet with many things that distract and hinder us, we ought to have a continual attention to our selves, that we may not be frequently wanting in these Spiritual Duties: 'Tis also very certain; that Missions require Persons of a try'd Vertue, and therefore Saint Francis Borgia was wont to say, that he was never content with those Missions he furnish'd, but when they cost him a great deal of trouble. Which was in effect; because he cou'd not without a great deal of difficulty, send such Persons as were requir'd, and as he desir'd to choose for such like employments. Lastly with a great deal of reason, many more things are requir'd for employments abroad, than for those at home; From hence it happens that amongst us, those only who have made four Vow's, are destin'd for Missions, for 'tis suppos'd, that these are already sufficiently try'd and advanc'd in Vertue. Moreover besides all this, 'tis necessary that they shou'd not stay too long time abroad, without returning to their Houses to Recruit themselves; for fear that the interiour Spirit of Piety, shou'd be extinguish'd in 'em, by their continual exterior labours abroad.*

† Caveant ne
conducta in
Collegiis ac
domibus oran-
di, & exami-
nanda con-
scientia exer-
citia imminu-
ant. Regul. 16.
Miss.

4 Book. 3 chap.
of his Life.

But if the Ministries, which concern the Salvation of Souls, ought never to make us neglect our ordinary Exercises, that regard our Spiritual Advancement; because 'tis not just that the interest of our Neighbour shou'd make us

us

us forget that we ought to have for our selves; what consequence therefore ought we not to draw from hence, for all the employments and occupations that regard Temporal affairs? This remark, belongs no less to People in the Word, than to those in Religion; and each one may make an application thereof to himself, conformable to the State that it has pleas'd God to put him in: But let the State be what it will, and how good soever his Functions may be of themselves, there ought always to be a very great care, that exterior things make not a Christian neglect, the care of his own Salvation; or cause not a Religious Person to dispence with those Practises of Piety, which regard his Advancement, which always ought to take place. This is the Order that God wou'd have us keep; 'tis this that the Superiours require of us: We ought to take care, for Example, not to quit our Spiritual Exercises, or to make 'em in hast or by halves; that thereby we may apply our selves intirely to our Studies. For what will it profit a Religious Man to become learn'd, if he do's not in the first place satisfie the Duties of his Profession? But that which ought still to oblige us, Faithfully to acquit our selves herein; is, that these Spiritual Exercises are so far from hindring us from making any progress in Learning, that on the contrary they serve to obtain from God, all that Light and Knowledge we shall stand in need of, to succeed therein.

Albertus Magnus was wont to say, that in Divine Sciences a greater Advancement was made by Piety and Prayer, than by Study; and he alledg'd for proof of this, the words of the Wise Man, † *I desir'd to have a right Knowledge of things, and God gave it me, I Invok'd the Lord, and he fill'd me with the Spirit of his Wisdom.* 'Tis also by this means, that Saint *Thomas*, who Study'd under him, became so knowing and enlighten'd; and 'twas this that made him say, that for all that he knew, he was more oblig'd to Prayer; than to his own labour or studies. We Read also of Saint *Bonaventure*, that when he taught Divinity at *Paris*, with a great deal of Reputation; and when by his works, he drew to himself the Esteem and Admiration of all the World; Saint *Thomas of Aquin*, going one Day to see him, beg'd of him to shew him those Books he made use of for his Studies. Whereupon Saint *Bonaventure* led him to his Cell, and shew'd him some ordinary Books that lay upon his Table, and when Saint *Thomas* told him he had

*Hist. Ord. S.
Dem. l. p. 1. s.
cap. 45.*

† Optavi, &
datus est mihi
sensus: invo-
cavi, & venit
in me spiritus
sapientiæ.

*Sap. 7. 7.
1. p. Hist. Ord.
S. Dem. l. 3.
cap. 37.*

*Chron. S. Fran.
2. p. l. 2. c. 2.*

had a great mind to see those other Books, out of which he drew so many wonderful things; the Saint then shewing him his Praying place, upon which he had a Crucifix, behold, Father, says he, all my Books; and behold the chief Book out of which, I draw all that I Teach and all that I Write; and 'tis by casting my self at the Feet of my Crucifix, 'tis by demanding light in my Doubts, 'tis by affixing at Mass, that I have made greater progress in Sciences, and that I have gain'd more true and greater Lights, than by the Reading of any Books Whatsoever.

CHAP. VI.

That we ought to take care not to fall in another Extremity, which is intirely to withdraw our selves from conversing with our Neighbour, upon pretence of applying our selves to the care of our own Salvation.

BUT if the conversing with our Neighbour, as you may object, be fill'd with so many dangers, I'll not expose my self thereunto, but live in Retirement, to think only upon my own Salvation; for I have a greater obligation to take care of my self, than of others; and 'tis not just, I shou'd expose my self to loose my own Soul, to save the Souls of others. Behold here another kind of extremity, and another way of going out of the way of our Constitutions; But the Gospel furnishes us with a very just Answer to this objection, in the Parable of the Talents. The Gospel tells us, that a Man having a long Voyage to make, divided his Mony amongst his Servants, to take care thereof; and to one of 'em he gave five Talents, to another two, and to a third, one. The two first made a double profit of their Mony, and were

Tom. III. E prais'd

Matth. 25.
Luc. 19.

† Domine, scio quia homo durus es, metis ubi non seminasti, & congregas ubi non sparsisti; & abscondisti talentum tuum in terra: ecce habes quod tuum est. Respondens autem dominus ejus, dixit ei: Serve male, & piger, de ore tuo te iudico; sciebas quia meto ubi non semino, & congrego ubi non sparsi. Oportuit ergo te committere pecuniam meam numulariis, & veniens ego recepissem utique quod meum est cum usura. Tollite itaque ab eo talentum, & date ei qui habet decem talenta. Omnes enim habent dabitur, & abundabit: ei autem qui non habet, & quod videtur habere, auferetur ab eo. Et inultum servum eiecit in tenebras exteriores: illic erit fletus, & stridor dentium. *Matth. 13. v. 12. ad 30.*

Lib. de fide & operib. c. 17.

Videamus, ne reddamus rationem pro otioso silentio. Est enim & negotiosum silentium, & est silentium otiosum. *Amb. l. 1. Offic. c. 3.*

prais'd and recompens'd by their Master at his return; but the third, who had receiv'd one Talent, buried it and when he was call'd to account for it by his Master. † *My Lord,* says he, *I know you are a hard, and difficult Man to deal withal, you Reap where you have not Sow'd; and gather together what you have not spread abroad; wherefore being affraid, I hid your Talent; behold where it is: 'Tis all that I have receiv'd of you. To whom his Master sayd, O wicked and lasse Servant, I judge thee from thy own words, thou knew'st that I Reap'd where I Sow'd not, and that I gather'd together what I did not Spread abroad; which being so, thou oughtest to have given my Money to the Bankers, that at my return I might receive back with Interest, what belong'd to me; take therefore his Talent and give it to him that hasten; for to those that have shall be given, and they shall be in great abundance; but to him that has nothing, that which he seems to have, shall be taken away: And as to this unprofitable Servant, cast him into Exteriour Darknes, where there shall be nothing but Weeping and Gnashing of Teeth, Saint Austin explicates this Parable much to our purpose; and says, that 'tis propos'd to us by JESUS CHRIST, for the Instruction of those, who being able profitably to serve the Church and their Neighbour, in the dispensation of the Word of God and help of Souls, refuse to charge themselves therewith, under pretence that they have no Mind to Answer to God for the Sins of their Neighbour. Let 'em learn Wisdom from this Example, says the Father, for in the bottom, we perceive no cause of the Damnation of this Servant, but because he made no profit of the Talent he had receiv'd. For he had neither lost it, nor made any ill use of it; but on the contrary he had carefully hid it under ground, for fear of being rob'd thereof. Wherefore, says Saint Ambrose, let us take care that we have not an account to render to God, for our unprofitable Silence: For there are two sorts of Silence, A Silence very profitable and efficacious, as the Silence of *Susanna*, who held her peace before Men, whilst she Elevated her Heart to God; and did far more hereby, than if she had spoken in her own defence. The other is unprofitable and vain, as when we may contribute to the Salvation of our Neighbour by our discourse, and we fail to do it. But as we shall render one Day an account to God for our unprofitable Words, so we shall render an account for our lasy and unprofitable Silence.*

Silence. Moreover he will require of us a very exact and severe account hereof, by reason of the Talent of his Word which he has confided to us; and of the charge he has given us to help Souls: For he will not content himself in requiring an account of our particular Advancement, as he will require of those who ought not to labour in any thing else; but he'll require an account also of us, of what we have done for the Advancement of our Neighbour; and if he finds that we have Buried the Talent, he will take it from us, and punish us as bad Servants. We have therefore two things to propose to our selves at the same time; our own Perfection, and that of our Neighbour; and we are oblig'd to labour for both: So that the care of the one ought not to hinder us from taking care of the other. The Example also of the Son of God, teaches us what method we ought to keep herein. The Gospel takes notice that having put himself to Prayer in the Garden of *Olives*, he rose three times from it, to go to Visit his Disciples, and presently return'd to it again. Behold here what we ought to do, to pass from Prayer to Employments of Charity, and from Employments of Charity, presently to return back to Prayer.

Matth. 26. 39.

Saint Bernard perfectly well Treats this matter in applying the words of the Bridegroom, to his Spouse upon this subject.

* *Arise make hast my belov'd, my Dove my fair one and come: Who can doubt,* says he, *but that he calls her to the Conquest of Souls.* But how comes it to pass, adds the Father, that he wou'd have her rise in such hast? Had he not forbid her to rise a little before? † *Yee Daughters of Jerusalem I Conjure yee by the Goats and Hindes of the Country, that yee trouble not the repose of my Beloved, and that yee do not wake her till she will her self.* How comes it then to pass that she must not only rise, but that she must also make hast? He had a little before forbid, that they shou'd wake her, and almost at the same moment, he wou'd have her get up, and that quickly too. What do's this sudden change in the mind of the Bridegroom signifie? Can you think that 'tis perhaps out of lightness and changeableness, that it happens? And that now he will not have what he just before desir'd? Ther's no such matter, but that he only wou'd let us hereby understand, that he wou'd have us continually pass from the repose and sweet Sleep of Prayer and Meditation, to the Employments of Charity, and to the Ministry of the Salvation of Souls. For the Love of God cannot remain idle,

Bern. serm. 79.
or 18. sup.
Cant. in illud:
* Surge, pro-
pera amica
mea, columba
mea, formosa
mea, & veni
Cant. 2. 10.
† Haud dubi-
um quin ad a-
nimarum lu-
cra, Adjuro
vos filiz Jeru-
salem per ca-
preas cervos-
que campos-
rum, ne susci-
tetis, neque
evigilare faci-
tis dilectam,
donec ipsa ve-
lit, Cant. 2. 7.

'Tis a Fire that by it's continual activity, wou'd put the whole Earth in a Flame; and upon this consideration, he wou'd not only have her quit the Repose and Sweetness of Contemplation, but to press and hasten herself to do so; to the end he may let us see his Zeal, and Ardour for the Salvation of Souls. Do we not perceive, says Saint Bernard, that the Spouse had scarce taken any repose in the Breast of her Bridegroom, * *His left Hand was under my Head*, says she, *and his right Hand embrac'd me*: But presently he awakes her and commands her to employ herself in more profitable things: I say more profitable, continues this Father; because 'twas more profitable and more meritorious in the sight of God, to labour in the Salvation of Souls, and for her own Salvation also at the same time, than only to labour for her own. But this is not the first time that the Bridegroom had thus treated his Spouse. She had a long while had a desire to enjoy the Repose and Sweetness of Contemplation, in the Embraces and Kisses of her Bridegroom: † *Let him give me the Kisses of his Mouth*, and he Answers her, *That her Breasts are more Delicious than Wine*, whereby he gives us to understand, that she ought to have Children, and that she ought to think of breeding 'em up, and nourishing 'em: Remember therefore that you are a Father, that you have Children, that you ought to nourish 'em, and that you ought to quit your Repose and Tranquility, to have care of 'em. The Holy Scripture giv's us a Figure of this in the Person of Jacob: When he expected with impatience to possess Rachel, who was fair but Barren, they gave him Lia, who was blear-ey'd but was proper to have Children. The same also happens here, when the Spouse breath'd after and long'd for the Embraces of her Bridegroom, he represents to her that she ought to be a Mother, and that she ought to have Children, and that *Her Breasts are more Delicious than Wine*: Which signifies in effect, that the Fruit which one brings forth in Souls, by the employments of Charity, is more pleasing to God, than the holy Drunkenness of Contemplation. 'Tis true, Lia is not so fair as Rachel, but she is more like to have Children; and this quality is far more to be esteem'd, than the beauty of Rachel. 'Tis the same in the Active and Contemplative Life; the Contemplative Life is in truth more Perfect than the Active, but when the Active Life,

*⁂ Læva ejus
sub capite
meo, & dexte-
ra illius am-
plexabitur me.
Cant. 1. 6.*

*Idem serm. 47.
sup. Cant. in
illud: 1. Ocu-
letur me oculo
oris sui.
Cant. 1. 1.
Quia meliora
sunt ubera
tua vino.
Ibid.*

Genes. 29. 23.

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that regards the employments of Charity, and the help of Souls is joyn'd with the Contemplative, 'Tis without doubt far more Perfect, than the Contemplative Life alone. 'Tis in this sense that Saint *Chrysostom* Interprets these words of Saint *Paul*, * For I desir'd to become accus'd and to be separated from JESUS CHRIST for the sake of my Brethren; who according to the Flesh are a kin to me. The Apostle, says he, desir'd for some time to be separated from the Conversation of JESUS CHRIST, and that whatsoever Sweetness he felt in those acts of the Love of God, which he continually produc'd, yet he wou'd interrupt 'em, to apply himself the more to the Salvation of Souls. And 'twas in this manner that he wou'd become Anathema or separated from God for the Love of God. But all the Doctors agree, that in this Saint *Paul* made an Act of Charity sovereignly perfect; and consequently we see that the Zeal of Souls, which seems in a manner to separate us from God, Do's nothing else but more straightly unite us to him; wherefore we ought to convince our selves, that the care we shall take in the Advancement of our Neighbour; will not at all hurt our own; but on the contrary will help it, and be a means, to cause us to make greater progress in Vertue and Perfection. *Clement Alexandrinus* makes use of some comparisons for the clearing of this truth: The more Water, says he, that we draw out of Wells, the clearer, and the more wholesome 'tis to Drink; but when we draw out none at all, it grow's muddy and corrupts: The more we make use of a Knife, the clearer and brighter it becomes; but if we make no use of it, it presently grow's rusty: The Flame do's not at all diminish by Communicating it self, but rather becomes greater, and more violent. Do we not also perceive, add's he, in Human Sciences, that he who teaches others, learns himself by teaching 'em; and thereby renders himself more able and learn'd. 'Tis by use and communication, that we become more profound and illuminated therein; the Word of God is a two edged Sword, that cuts no less on the side, that is next him who makes use of it, than on the other against whom he uses it. That which I say to others do's often regard my self; and perhaps I have as much need of it as they; and if I do not practise, what I teach 'em, I presently feel my Conscience reproach me, and cry out unhappy they, who do not what they teach! The Sins that are discover'd

Chrys. l. de comp. cord. in illud:

* Optabam enim ego ipse anathema esse pro fratribus meis, qui sunt cognati mei secundum carnem. Rom. 9.3.

Lib. 1. Strom.

to me in Confession, are an admonition to me to keep my self upon my guard, and a Subject to give God thanks that he has not permitted me to fall into the like faults; and to beg of him, that he wou'd always sustain me by his al-powerful Hand. We learn also by assisting others to Dye, to have Death always present before our Eyes, and to put our selves in such a State, that we may never be surpris'd thereby. We learn by visiting Prisons and Hospitals, and in labouring to Reconcile Enemies, how many Miseries and Disorders there are in the World; and thereby we come to have a greater esteem of the Happiness of our Vocation. Lastly, the Offices in which Charity employs us, are so far from being an occasion of liberty, that on the contrary they help us to stand more carefully upon our guard, and to excite our selves more and more in Vertue and Perfection.

Add to what I have sayd; those Graces which God pour's down upon such as busie themselves in employments of Charity. For if he has promis'd so great recompences to works of Mercy, which regard only the necessities of the Body, how will he reward the works of Charity, that regard the necessities of the Soul, and consequently are as far above the others, as the Soul is above the Body? Saint *Chrysostom* says, that these words of the Gospel are address'd to those, that Exercise these works. * *Give, and it shall be given to yee, and these others of the Proverbs, The Soul that Blesseth shall be made Fat, and he that Inebriates, shall be Inebriated.* Those that feed others with Spiritual food, and Inebriate 'em with the love of Heavenly things, God will feed 'em also with Consolation, and Inebriate 'em with his Love. Some compare 'em to the Almoners of Princes, to whom they give great summes to distribute, according to the Almes they give; but this comparifon is not very just; because if an Almoner be Faithful, he keeps nothing for himself of what is given him, and is not enrich'd by giving to others; whereas those that Exercise Spiritual works of Charity, enrich no less themselves, than their Brethren, Saint *Peter Chrysologus*, who compares 'em to Nurses of Kings Children, is more in the right. † *As,* says he, *care is taken that the Nurses of Kings Children be fed with more delicate Meats, than ordinary, that thereby their Milk may be better; so the King of Kings takes care that the Ministers of his Word, shou'd always be nourish'd with the best Meat of his Table, that they may nourish his Children with so much the better Milk.* But

Chrys. in illud:
* Date & dabitur vobis.
Luc. 6. 38.
Anima quæ benedixit impinguabitur, & qui inebriat, ipse quoque inebriabitur.
Prov. 11. 25.

† Ut enim infantis. Regij nutrices delicatis cibis pascuntur, ut purissimum lactis fontem alumnis suis propinent; sic supernus ille Rex verbi sui ministros, licet immeritos, propter filiorum suorum alumniam, cælestis sue mensæ cibis pascit & nutrit, quo delicatius illos lactare & pascere valeant.

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But we above all others have a particular obligation to apply our selves to Works of Charity towards our Neighbour, since God has made it a means for our Advancement engaging us thereunto, even by our Vocation. 'Tis after this manner that the Bull of our Institution speaks hereof, where Julius III. after having set down the end which our SOCIETY proposes to it self, and the Offices which 'tis oblig'd to Exercise towards our Neighbour: * *Let it take care, says he, first of all to have God before it's Eyes, and always to behold to what 'tis engag'd to by it's Institute, which is a path that leads directly to him*; so that as the Spiritual Advancement of some Religious Orders, consists in an exact observance of Recollection and Inclosure, of Singing the Divine Office, and of keeping certain Fasts, and undergoing such other Austerities as they are particularly oblig'd unto; so our Advancement and Spiritual Progress, consists in well acquitting our selves of our Duties and Charities towards our Neighbour; because 'tis to this that we are call'd; as the others were to Solitude and Retirement. Wherefore we may say to those towards, whom we Exercise these Charities, what Saint Paul sayd to the *Philippians* and *Thessalonians*, † *Yee are my Joy and my Crown: Yee are our Glory and our Joy*; * *For 'tis certain, says Saint Ambrose, upon these words of the Apostle, That the progress of Schollars is a Joy and Advancement to their Master.* We ought therefore to make account that our Perfection and Merit consists in well acquitting our selves of these duties, so that tho' the Spirit of Prayer and Retreat ought to be a very laudable thing amongst us, yet such a Spirit of Prayer and Retreat that wou'd withdraw us from the help of Souls, and other Offices of Charity, wou'd be a kind of Temptation. Had you been in the World, or had God call'd you to another Religious Order, that made it not it's particular Profession, to apply it self to the Salvation of Souls, that inclination that you shou'd have to entertain your self continually with God in Retirement, and to think only of your own Perfection, might perhaps come from the Spirit of God; But here it can be nothing else but an Illusion of the Devil; who Transforms himself into an Angel of Light, to deceive you, and so endeavour to withdraw you from your Vocation, under the pretence of labouring for your own Advancement, and of avoiding those dangers, that are met withal in treating with your Neighbour. We ought to give our selves to

Prayer,

* Curetque primum Deum: deinde sui institutioni rationem, quæ via quædam est ad illud, quoad vident, ante oculos habere. In Bulla inf. Jul. 3.

† Gaudium meum & corona mea.
Phil. 4. 1.
* Vos enim estis gloria nostra & gaudium.
1 Thesal. 2. 20.
Manifestum est quod perfectio discipulorum gaudium & perfectio magistrorum est. Ambros. 2. cund. loc.

Prayer, according to the Spirit of our Vocation, that is to say, with a prospect of getting new lights and new strength for the help of Souls; for that we may be able to say with *Job*, * If I go to Bed, to Sleep, I will say, when shall I rise again? and in the Morning, I shall be impatient 'till the Evening approaches. Lastly, we ought to look upon Prayer as a necessary preparation for the well acquitting our selves of our Employments of Charity; and the better you shall find your self dispos'd for these employments, when you leave your Prayer; the more you may assure your self of your having made your Prayer well, and the more, the Love of God will thereby have increas'd in your Heart, the more Zeal and Fervour you ought to have at your leaving it, for having gain'd Souls to God, and procur'd that God thou'd be Lov'd and Glorify'd by all the World.

* Si dormiero
dicam: Quan-
do confurgam;
& rursum ex-
pectabo vespere-
ram.
Job. 7. 4.

Father Alphon-
sus Rofe Fran-
ciscan Frier.

We Read of a Holy Religious Man of the Order of Saint *Francis*, that after he had for many Years very profitably labour'd in the Conversion of the *Indians*, he had a great desire to retire himself, the better to prepare himself to Dye well; and in effect he for this end retir'd into a Monastery of his own Order in *Spain*, where he liv'd in a very Austere Recollection, notwithstanding, as often as he went to Prayer, he seem'd as if he saw *JESUS CHRIST* Crucify'd, tenderly making this Complaint to him, *Why hast thou left me thus upon the Cross; whilst thou searchest thy own Repose and Quiet?* and he was so touch'd with this Vision, that he return'd again to the Harvest he had left, and therein serv'd God again for a very long time.

CHAP.

C H A P. VII.

Some Remedies against the pusillanimity and cowardise of those, who dare not engage themselves in the Employments of Charity, for fear they shou'd thereby hassard their own Salvation.

TO cure our selves intirely of this vain fear, that we may have of loosing our own Souls, whil'st we labour for the Salvation of others; and to encourage herein the most Scrupulous and Fearful Persons, we must in the first place suppose one thing, which is very true, that in what way soever, God has been pleas'd to call and place us, we are in that, in far greater security of our own Salvation, than in all others that we can imagine wou'd be more secure; so that whither Obedience sends us to Preach in publick places; or sends us to the Confession seat, to Confess the most wicked and impure wretches in the World; we shall hereby be in greater security, than we shou'd be in, if we avoided these sorts of employments, and the dangers they expose us unto; or by whatsoever retirement we shou'd embrace, by our own choice. For perhaps in the Solitude of Retreat, we might give way to a hundred bad thoughts, whereas in the employments we Exercise by Obedience, God who has put us in 'em, takes care of us, † *And covers us with the Buckler of his good Will.* Do not imagine, says Saint Basil, that to become Chast, and to be deliver'd from Temptations of Impurity, that we only ought to live in Solitude; Solitude contributes nothing hereunto, Saint Hierom himself confesses, that in the Desert, where he liv'd only upon Hearbs, and where he practis'd continual Penance, his Imagination often carried him into the midst of the Dances of the Roman Ladies, and that neither his Fasts nor Austerities, nor his
Tom. III. F decaying

† D. c. m. g.
scuto bonæ
voluntatis ruz
coronasti nos.
Psal. 5. 13.
Basil. in cons.
Mon. c. 6.

Hier. in Epist.
ad Eustoch.

*Pallad. in Hist.
Lausac. fol. 32.*

Das. 3.

* Diligenti-
bus Deum om-
nia cooperan-
tur in bonum.
Rom. 8. 28.

decaying Age, were able to hinder his Flesh, from these rebellions; nor deliver him from these rude Combats. On the contrary the Abbot *Hely*, for forty Years together, govern'd three hundred Religious in one Monastery, without ever being attack'd, with so much as one Temptation against purity; and this, as *Palladius* reports, without ever feeling, his Imagination troubl'd, with the least bad thought. The flames, did not so much as touch the Habits of the three *Hebrews*, which were cast into the fiery Furness of *Babylon*; which in an instant destroy'd those that cast 'em in, who seem'd to be far enough from receiving any hurt thereby; which shews that God can easily free those from Flames that expose themselves to them for love of him: But he was not only contented to free the three Children from 'em; but he caus'd that the Furness shou'd even become a place of delights unto them; where they shou'd imploy themselves in Blessing God, and singing forth his Prayses. The same thing happens to those, whom the zeal of Gods Glory, and the Salvation of Souls, cause to enter into the burning Furnace of the *Babylon* of the World; there they sing the Prayses of God in the midst of Flames; and bleis him for having call'd 'em to Religion; whilst the same Flames devour the People of the World: And the conversation of the World which is the ruin of so many Persons, serves only to give 'em a greater knowledge, and a greater contempt of the Vanity thereof, and to give 'em a greater esteem of the advantages they enjoy in Religion. * *All things turn to good to those that Love God*; all things succeeds well in their employments; 'Tis the love of God and Obedience, that engage 'em therein; and Oyl and Hony run out of the Rock to feed 'em. Lastly when we have a Heart lively touch'd with a desire of serving God, when we are not call'd to the Exercise of our Functions by our selves, but are call'd unto them by God: We must not loose courage; but on the contrary, hope that God who has call'd us thereunto, will render us useful and profitable for his Glory, and our own Salvation.

But laying aside many other reasons, that might perswade us to what I now speak of; I will only at present insist upon one, that ought intirely to convince us, and to be a subject of confidence and consolation to us; either in the employments for the Salvation of Souls; or in other Offices belonging to the Vocation of our SOCIETY; which

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is, that *The Works of God are Perfect*, he makes nothing that is unprofitable; and as in the order of Nature; he never gives any Natural cause the power of producing any effect, but in like manner. *He gives it the means to reduce into Act, the power that is given to it; without which this power wou'd be absolutely Vain and Unprofitable.* In like manner in the Order of Grace, which is more perfect than that of Nature, he never calls any Person to any State, or for any End, without giving him the means and necessary helps to to arrive thereunto: This being so, 'tis not to be doubted, but that when God Institutes a Religious Order for any end, he gives at the same time such Grace as is necessary, whereby those who are call'd to this Order, may be able to compass this end: And this Grace is call'd the Grace of Religion, which is common to all Orders; that they may arrive to that State of Perfection, for which they were Instituted: But there is a difference in each of these Graces, according to the difference of the particular End for which each Order was Instituted; and according to the difference of the means, which are proper to compass it. The one for Example receives a particular Grace to Live holily in Solitude, in Retirement, and in a continual Abstinence. Others receive another Grace, to Celebrate the Divine Office, and so of the rest. But our SOCIETY is a Religious Order, Instituted in the Church, by the Authority of the Pope, for the help of Souls; and God who has particularly Instituted it for this End, has given it also such means, as are proper to compass it; which as the Bull of our Institute says, are to Preach, to hear Confessions, to Teach, to give Rules for Spiritual Exercises, to labour in Reconciling Enemies, and to Visit Prisons and Hospitals. So that as 'tis call'd by God for the help of Souls: 'Tis also call'd, to those Functions that regard their help or service; and this deserves to be well taken notice of, and ought to be a great subject of comfort to us, that the Offices which we exercise towards our Neighbour, are no less of our Institute, than the end for which we perform 'em. In effect, 'tis our Institute to Preach and to hear Confessions; 'tis our Institute to Teach both Divine and Human Sciences, and not only these kinds of Spiritual employments are of our Institute, but also all Corporal Works of Charity; as to visit Prisons and Hospitals and the like; as the Bull of our Establishment evidences.

Dei perfecta
sunt opera.
Dens. 32. 4.

Fructus est po-
tentia quæ
non reducitur
ad actum.
S. Thom. 1. 4.
dist. 24. q. 1.
art. 2. ad 1.

But to come at present to a Conclusion, it follows from all that I have sayd, that our SOCIETY receives a particular Grace from God, to arrive to the End for which 'twas Instituted, which is the help of Souls; and to arrive thereunto by such means, as are proper to our Vocation; and which he himself has given us for this effect; and this is that Grace which it has pleas'd God particularly to graunt to the SOCIETY. Wherefore we ought to have a great confidence in God, in all those Offices of Charity, which we perform for the help of Souls; and to assure our selves, that he will particularly concur with us, to render 'em efficacious; as by his infinite Mercy we daily Experience. For to what, think you ought we to Attribute the Fruit, that a Preacher of the SOCIETY produces? Who oftentimes tho' he comes fresh from his Studies, even fills a whole town, with the Spirit of true Conversion and Penance; and causes such reconciliations as no one before was able to compass; abolishes and takes, away such Publick Scandals, as neither the Magistrates nor Ecclesiastical Superiours were ever able to correct before? Do's this proceed from his Learning, from his Eloquence, and from his Abilities? Not at all; it comes from the particular grace of the Vocation of the SOCIETY, which was Instituted for this effect; and which God for this reason, out of a particular Love, favors with his Grace, in the Exercising all the means he has given, to compass this End. For a proof of this, do we not at other times perceive, that some Preachers who preach'd with a great deal of Reputation and Fruit, whilst they were in our SOCIETY, and who believ'd they shou'd have the same success, when they were no more of it; yet had none at all, as soon as they quitted it: Which shew's that 'twas the Grace of the Vocation of our SOCIETY, that gave 'em Wings to raise themselves as they did, and that being depriv'd of 'em by their quitting it, they came necessarily to fall. We Read in the fifth Chapter of *Machabees*, what is very much to our purpose: Some of the cheif amongst the Jewes, speaking of the wonders that the *Machabees* had wrought, and of the great Victories they had obtain'd against the Gentils; had a mind to take an occasion of rayling their own esteem, saying, * *Let us also make our selves a Name*: For this effect they gather'd all their Troops together, and went against the Enemy, but the success answer'd not their hopes; for their Enemies came upon 'em, defeated 'em, and kill'd above two thousand: And hereupon the Scripture

takes

* *Faciamus &
ipfi nobis
nomen.
1 Mach. 3. 57.*

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takes notice, * *That they were not of the Race of those Men, which had been chosen by God to serve the People of Israël.* Behold here the reason of their Defear; that they presum'd too much upon themselves, and that they call'd themselves to a thing, to which God had not call'd 'em.

So therefore none of us ought to attribute to our selves the glory of that Fruit, which God works by our means. 'Tis to God, to whom we must intirely render it, 'tis to the choice that he has been pleas'd to make of us, † *To be Ministers of the Spirit of the new Testament.* 'Tis to the Religion to which he has been pleas'd to call us. These particular Graces which he giv's you to gain Souls to him, and to work your own Salvation by laboring for theirs, he gives it you; because you are a Member of a Religion, which he has Instituted for this End; and this is that, we ought well to fix in our Mind; because, as it serves on the one side to repress our Vanity, so it serves on the other to give us confidence and courage. Saint Bernard upon these words of the Spouse. * *Come, arise, make haste, my Belov'd, my Dove my Fair one, Come:* The Bridegroom says he: Desiring to have his Spouse quit the sweet Sleep of Contemplation, to go to the employments of Charity; he says not to her *Go*, but he says, *Come*; and this ought extremely to encourage us; because he makes us hereby to understand, that the command he gives us, do's not separate us far from him, but on the contrary causes us to approach nearer unto him; and that 'tis a means to draw us nearer unto himself. 'Tis not therefore to separate us from himself, that he employ's us in works of Charity; 'tis only to unite us the more to himself; by this Path we go to him, and hereby he leads us streight to himself, and go's always along with us; wherefore we have no reason to fear any thing in Order to our selves: but on the contrary, we have reason to fill our selves with confidence and courage, and to hope by these means, that we shall make great progress in our own Salvation. For this end let us imagin, that God says the same words to us, that *Abfalon* sayd to his Servants. † *Fear nothing 'tis I that command yee, take courage and be Men of Resolution.* For in effect, what Subject of apprehension can I have, if thou O Lord commandest me to apply my self to the help of my Neighbour, and if thou engagest me hereby to a commerce with the People of the World? How dangerous soever it may be,

* Ipsi non erant de semine virorum illorum per quos salus facta est in Israël.
1 Mach. 5. 62.

† Qui idoneos nos fecit ministros novi Testamenti, non littera, sed spiritu.
2 Cor. 3. 6.

Bern. serm. 18. sup. Cant. in illud. * Surge, propera, amica mea, columba mea, formosa mea, & veni.
Cant. 2. 10.

† Nolite timere, ego enim sum qui precipio vobis: roboramini, & estote viri fortes.
2 Reg. 13. 13.

* Si ambulavero in medio umbræ mortis non timebo, mala quoniam sum mecum es.
Psal. 121. 4.

be, I am there in greater Security; if I be there by thy order; than if by my own choice, I were shut up between four Walls; wherefore * *When I shall walk in the midst of the shades of the Night, I Will fear nothing, because thou art with me.*

Hereby we may see how much some Religious deceive themselves, who hearkening only to their own sentiments, are disgusted with their employments, and imagin if they had been given any other, or had they been sent to any other House; they shou'd have labour'd there more profitably for their own Salvation, and for the service of God. 'Tis a great abuse to think we shou'd work our own Salvation better in those employments we chuse our selves, than in those, in which the Hand of God has plac'd us; and God grant that the experience we have already had, makes us not know too well how dangerous this illusion is. We have seen several Religious, who have been weary and uneasie, in the employments that God and Obedience had put 'em, and have sought others with a great deal of earnestness, imagining they cou'd produce in 'em more Fruit for themselves and for their Neighbour; and at length have found means to induce their Superiours to accord what they desir'd: But we have also seen their bad success, and how ill they have found themselves in this Change; so that they themselves were convinc'd, that this was a just punishment of God. Wherefore we ought to take very great care, not to desire any thing of our selves, nor to harken to our own Inclination in the choice either of place or employments, in which we are to be put. All that we have to do herein, is, intirely to cast off our own Will; and to abandon our selves to that of God; and to permit our selves to be led to him, by the way of Obedience: For without doubt we shall never any where be in greater security of our Salvation, than where God has been pleas'd to put us.

C H A P.

C H A P. VIII.

Of the means to produce Fruit in Souls; and first of all, of Sanctity of Life, which is the first means.

I SHALL speak at present of some general means, that may help us to produce Fruit in Souls, and which are taken notice of in the seventh part of our Constitutions; and lay aside the other particular means, which the fourth part takes notice of, and which properly regard such Religious, as are already Priests. But tho' that which I propose here to speak of, seems chiefly to regard the Salvation and Spiritual Advancement of our Neighbour; yet it fails not also to regard our own Advancement and Salvation. For these two things, as I have already sayd in the beginning of this Treatise, are so link'd together, that that which serves for the Spiritual Advancement of our Neighbour, serves also for our own; and that which serves for our own, serves also for that of our Neighbour. So that what I shall say of this Subject, may be of equal profit to all Persons. The first means that Saint Ignatius recommends to us to make use of, for the Advancement of Souls, is that of good Example and Sanctity of Life; * *In the first place, says he, the good Example which we give by leading a most holy and Christian Life, has great power over the Minds of Men; wherefore we ought to take care to Edifie our Neighbour as much or more by our Actions, than by our Words: in effect the most efficacious and most proper means to produce much Fruit in Souls, is to lead a holy and irreproachable Life; and to be such our selves, as we wou'd have others to be; for as a Tree the greater it grows, the more Fruit and Profit it brings to it's Master; so the more progress a Preacher or a Confessour makes in Vertue, the more he renders himself Profitable to those, of whom God has given him the Care and Conduct.*

* Et primo quidem confert bonum exemplum totius honestatis ac virtutis christianae, ut non minus bonis operibus, imò magis quam verbis edificatio- ni esse quibus- cum agitur, curent.

4 P. conf. l. 3.

Moreover

Moreover the importance and necessity of this means is easily perceiv'd: First in this, that 'tis certain that Example has more power over Men, than all the words in the World; and 'twas for this reason, that the Saviour of Souls, taught us the way to Heaven by his Actions, before he taught it us by his Words. JESUS CHRIST, says Saint *Luke*, * *Began to do and to Teach*. He would practice for thirty Years together, that which he was to Teach in three: Saint *John Baptist*, says Saint *Hierom*, made choice of a retreat in the Desert, to make known the Kingdom of God; and call's himself, † *The Voice of him that cry's in the Desert*. But how comes it to pass, says this Father, that the Preacher and Precursor of JESUS CHRIST, made choice of the Desert to Preach in? For the Desert seems a place more proper, than one shou'd be neither seen nor heard in it by any Body, than a place wherein to Instruct others. 'Tis, answers the Saint, because he knew very well, that Example moves more than Words, and therefore he wou'd by the Example of the Austerity of his Life, move Men to bring forth Fruits worthy of Penance, and to Imitate what he practis'd: * *He was*, says the Gospel, a *shining Light*, that burnt and enlighten'd; he burnt within himself with the love of God, and he enlighten'd others by the Example of his holy and penitential Life.

'Tis a saying of *Seneca*, which is in the Mouth of all People, † *That the way to Vertue is shorter by Example, than by Precepts; because Men more easily believe what they See, than what they Hear*. Saint *Bernard* gives us another Reason for this: * *Example*, says he, is a very efficacious, and a very proper lesson to perswade; because it shew's that what it Teaches is feasible. And 'tis that which most of all moves; Mans Weakness; and is so great, says Saint *Austin*, that one is very hardly mov'd to do what is good, which he do's not see others perform before him; wherefore it extremely imports, that Preachers of the Gospel, shou'd be holy Men, that their Auditours may have in them a Model to Imitate. The Apostle knew very well this truth, and how great the power of Example was, when he told the *Corinthians*, † *Be ye Imitators of me, as I am of JESUS CHRIST*.

Add to this, that when the Life of a Preacher is conformable to his Doctrine, what he says has more force; because they perceive he is the first, who is convinc'd thereof; Whereas

* *Cœpit Jesus facere & docere. Act. 1. 1.*

Hier. Epist. de vera circumcis. † Ego vox mannis in deserto. Joan. 1. 23.

* *Erat lucerna ardens & lucens. Joan. 8. 35.*

† *Longum iter est per precepta: breve & efficax per exemplum. Quia homines amplius oculis quam auribus credunt. Sen. Ep. 1. 1. c. 16.*

* *Sermo vivus & efficax exemplum operis est: plurimum faciens suadibile, quod monstratur suadibile.*

Bern. serm. de S. Ben.

Aug. l. 1. contra Crescon. gram. c. 6.

† *Imitatores mei estote, sicut & ego Christi.*

1. Cor. 4. 16.

Part. 3. Of the End of the Socy of JESUS. 49

Whereas when his Actions do not correspond to his Words, these can never make any impression.

Saint *Basil* and Saint *Chrysostom*, speaking of those, who Preach only by their words, say, that they are not true Preachers, but only Comedians, who Act their Parts upon the Stage, and are not the Persons they Represent. You represent Humility very well in the Exterior; you represent also very well the Vanity of the things of the World, and the contempt that ought to be had of 'em; but if you are not really Humble, if you do not truly contemne, whatsoever may any way separate you farther from God, you are not a Preacher of the Gospel, you are a Comedian, who only Act your Part. Saint *Basil* compares 'em also to Painters, who tho' they are ugly themselves, yet fail not to make and Paint, very beautiful Pictures; so these, says he, Paint Humility in it's true shape and colours, but they themselves are fill'd with Vanity and Pride; they make beautiful Pictures of Patience, but Impatience and Collar transports 'em every Moment: Lastly they make beautiful Pictures of Modesty, Recollection and Silence, but they are continually dissipated, and distracted by a thousand frivolous objects. Saint *Austin* compares 'em to marks, that are set up at cross ways in the road, to direct passengers into the right way, which always remain in the same place. And this, says he, is what the Scribes and Pharisees did; they shew'd the Sages the way to *Bethlem*, but they themselves went not thither with 'em. Saint *Hierom* writing upon these words of the Proverbs † *The slothful Man hides his Hand under his Armpit, and 'tis a pain to him to carry it to his Mouth*; says, that the slothful, of whom the Wise Man speaks, is a figure of a Preacher, that practices not what he says; and whose Actions agree not with his Words. Saint *Gregory Naziansen* says, that those who Preach not by their Actions, as well as by their Words, draw Souls to them with one Hand, and drive 'em away with the other; they build with one Hand, and pull down with the other; as the Scribes and Pharisees did, whom the Son of God severely reprehends in the Gospel; w^o be to those who practice not what they say. They touch not the Heart, and produce no Fruit at all by their discourse: * *But he who do's what he Teaches, he, says our Saviour, shall be call'd great in the Kingdom of Heaven*; it belongs only to Apostolical Preachers, who do what they Teach, truly to touch and move Hearts, and

Tom. III.

G

produce

*Basil Hom. 14.
Chrys Hom. 2.
in Acta Apost.
circa illud.
Capit. Jesus
facere & do-
cere.*

*Basil. Hom. 14.
Serm. 34. de
Temp.*

† Abcondit
piger manum
sub alcella sua,
& laborat, si
ad os suum
eam conver-
terit.
Prov. 26. 15.

* Qui autem
fecerit & do-
cuerit, hic
magnus voca-
bitur in regno
celorum.
Matth. 5. 19.

produce great fruit Fruit in Souls. 'Tis only the Sanctity of their Lives, whereby they draw to themselves the Veneration of all the World, and make themselves be consider'd rather as Angels; than as Men; whereby all that they say is receiv'd as coming from Heaven, and consequently makes a great and more lively Impression upon the Heart. The Apostle also, wou'd have the Labourers in our Lords Vineyard live an unrepachable Life, that they may be irreprehensible in their Words and Actions, and also be an example of all sorts of Vertue to the whole World; that by this means their Doctrine may better penetrate the Hearts of Men, and drive out from thence whatsoever it findes there, contrary to JESUS CHRIST.

Wherefore Sanctity of Life, is that whereby we ought to begin to render our selves useful for the help of Souls; first because good Example has a great deal of Power; and secondly because if we wou'd be fit Instruments to bring forth much Fruit in our Neighbour, we must before hand have brought forth much fruit in our selves; and have made great progress in Vertue. Saint Ignatius in the tenth Part of his Constitutions, speaking of the means how to arrive to the end, for which the SOCIETY was Instituted, which is the help of Souls; says, that the means which dispose us for this effect as to what regard's God; and whereby we put our selves into his hands, that he may do with us what he pleases; are the means of Piety, and all other Christian Vertues; which are means far more proper than those, which dispose us to what regard's the World, such as are Sciences, and other Natural means; and therefore 'tis upon the first, that we ought chiefly to insist; let all says he, give themselves to Spiritual things and solid Vertue, and rely chiefly thereupon; because these are those interiour gifts of Grace, which give force and efficacy to Sciences; and other Natural Talents, and render 'em useful to the end we have propos'd to our selves. The reason hereof is very clear, which is, that if truly we have only Human prospects; Human Prudence, and other Human means, may suffice for a good success therein: But the Conversion and Sanctification of Souls, which is the end we propose to our selves, being a Divine and Supernatural End, which has no proportion or likeness with any Human means which we can make use of, and which can only be the work of God; 'tis certain that we cannot compass this end, but by Divine and Supernatural means. He who sayd

2. Tim. 1. 15.
Et Tit. 1. 7.

10. p. conf. §. 2.

Reg. 16. sum.

in

Part. 1. Of the End of the Society of JESUS. 51

in the beginning of the Creation of the World; *Let there be Light, and there was Light.* Whose words are like Fire, and who has the words of Everlasting Life; he only can give such an efficacy to our words, and discourses, as is able to cause a new light to be born in our Souls: Wherefore the more we shall be united to him, the fitter Instruments we shall become to Convert and Sanctify them; because then we shall be in a better State to draw his Graces unto us, and consequently to communicate 'em to others.

Saint Denis speaking of the Sanctity and Perfection, which Priests and Ministers of the Gospel ought to have, whom God has chosen to be the dispensers both of his Blood, and of his Word; says, *† That they ought to be Saints, to the end they may Sanctify others; Perfect, that they may render others so; and Enlighten'd, that they may also Illuminate the Faithful by their Light;* they ought to be inflam'd by the Love of God, that thereby they may inflame others; because as Saint Gregory says, ** He who burns not, cannot set another on Fire;* which is conformable to the words that Saint Thomas Villanova was wont to repeat very often, how is it possible that from a congeal'd Heart, Inflam'd words shou'd proceed? Wou'd you have your words Inflame your Neighbour, endeavour that they proceed from a Heart Inflam'd with Divine Love, and then 'twill happen that you shall communicate to all the World that Fire, which the Son of God came to bring upon Earth. *† I came to set the Earth on Fire, and what do I desire? Nothing more, than that it shou'd burne.* Then it will happen that one word of yours shall have a greater effect, than all that you cou'd be able to say at another time.

Plato speaking of the Vertue of the Loadstone, makes a comparison, in which he exceeded the bounds of his knowledge: He says, that as Iron touch'd with the Loadstone, draws Iron to it; so a Man touch'd by God, draws other Men to him; but if your words be not of a Man touch'd by God, how can they be able to draw other Men to God? And how can you be able to Inflame others with the Love of God, if you be not first Inflam'd your self? Do's not Rhetorick it self teach us, that there is not a better means to excite any Passion in the Heart of others, than first of all to excite it in our own? For how can an Oratour draw Tears from his Auditory, if he sheds not a Tear himself? 'tis the same here: How can you inspire the contempt of the World

* Fiat lux, & facta est lux.
Gen. 1. 3.
Verba mea sunt quasi ignis.
Jerem. 23. 29.
Verba vitæ æternæ habes.
Joan. 6. 68.

† Sacri & sanctantes: perfecti & perfectientes: illuminati & illuminantes.

* Qui non ardet non incendit.
In his Life &c.

† Ignem veni mittere in terram, & quid volo, nisi ut incendatur?
Luc. 12. 49.

Nemo dat
quod non
habet.

Quasi ærem
verberant.
1 Cor. 9. 26.

† Ego cum
venissem ad
fratres, veni
non in subli-
mitate sermo-
nis, aut sapien-
tiae annuntia-
as vobis testi-
monium Chri-
sti. Non enim
judicavi me
scire aliquid in
ter vos, nisi
Jesum Chri-
stum & hunc
crucifixum.
Sermo meus
& prædicatio
mea non in
persuabilibus
humanae sapi-
entiae verbis,
sed in ostensi-
one spiritus, &
virtutis, ut fi-
des vestra non
sit in sapientia
hominum, sed
in virtute Dei.
Non in sapien-
tia verbi, ut
non evacuetur
crux Christi.
1 Cor. 2. 1. 4. 5.
6. 1. 17.

* Non enim
nosmetipsos
prædicamus,
sed Jesum
Christum Do-
minum nos-
trum, 2 Cor. 4. 5.

to your Auditours, if you do not truly contemn it your self? How say you move 'em to Mortification and Penance, if you are not your self mov'd thereunto? And how can you render 'em Humble, if you are not so your self? We can never communicate that to another, which we have not in our selves; according to the common saying, *No body giv's what he has not.* How can you intpire to others those sentiments, you have not your self? Preachers who have nothing else but words, are like Pieces of Canon, which are discharg'd without a Bullet, the whole effect of which, ends in making a great noise. They make a great deal of noise by their words, *But this is only, as it were, to beat the Aire.* For in reality they touch the Heart of no body; because they have not that within themselves, with which they ought to touch others; and they have not the Spirit of God, which is to give weight and force to all that they say.

The Talent of Preaching consists not in knowing how to make use of the art of Rhetorick, and to speak of things that are very Spiritual and very high; for 'twas not after this manner, that the Vessel of Election Preach'd, whom God made choice of for the Conversion of the Gentil. † For my part Brethren, says he, speaking to the Corinthians, *when I came amongst yee, to Denounce the Testimony of JESUS CHRIST, I came not with high and Elevate discourses full of profound Knowledge; for I believ'd not, that I knew any thing amongst yee, but only JESUS CHRIST and him Crucified; and I grounded my Words and Preaching not upon such termes, as are proper to persuade according to the Rules of Human Wisdom, but in the Spirit and power of God, which appear'd in me; that your Faith also might not be founded upon the Knowledge of Men, but upon the Power of God; JESUS CHRIST not having sent me to Preach the Gospel with studied discourses, for fear of rendring thereby his Cross unprofitable.* Ecclesiastical History prayles very much the Ancient Fathers for this, that contemning the vain Ornaments of Eloquence; they contented themselves, to give Holy Instructions to the People, and to apply such remedies to the Spiritual Maladies of their Auditories, as would be most proper for them. We ought to do the same in our Sermons; * *Because we Preach not our selves,* says the Apostle, *but JESUS CHRIST our Lord.* And without doubt such Preachers, as love to make their Ambition and Eloquence appear, will for two reasons produce very little Fruit; first, for the reason

reason I have already spoke of, which is, that those few of their Auditours that have sense, know very well that he who Preaches after this manner, admires himself in all that he says; and seeks more to make his Eloquence appear, and to gain their approbation, than to Instruct and procure their Salvation. In the second place; because the same Eloquence and Multiplicity of words, hinders 'em from saying what wou'd produce Fruit; and so the more it appears that they have taken care in regard of their words, the less they touch. Moreover those who have taught the Precepts or Rules of Rhetorick, do not they themselves say, "That even the sense, flags in a discourse, where we tie our selves too much to words? Whereby they wou'd say, that the too great application to the choice of words, cools the Imagination, and renders it less Lively for the production of solid sense; and hereby wou'd have us understand, that affectation in words, distracts and hinders the Auditors from that attention, they ought to have to the truths that are sayd, and causes 'em instead of thinking of what a Preacher sayd, to think of the manner with which he sayd it. If Masters of Rhetorick look upon this affectation as a great fault in an Oratour, with how far greater reason ought it not to be blam'd in a Preacher of the Gospel? Who ought only to think of the Spiritual profit of his Auditours. † *Tis for profit,* says the Apostle; *that the Manifestation of the Spirit of God is given to every one,* and therefore a Preacher ought never to regard any thing else but the profit and advantage of Souls. * *Preach,* says Saint Hierom, *after such a manner, that the Church may rebound with the Sighs and Sobbs of the Auditory; rather than with their Acclamations; and that their Tears may become your Prayses.* The mark of a good Sermon is not the Applause of the Auditours, 'tis not to hear 'em say as they go from it, "Never any Man spoke like him; O what fine things did he say! How well did he speak! But 'tis to excite in 'em a sincere compunction: 'Tis to make 'em Weep for their Sins, 'tis to make 'em change their Lives. The Talents of a Preacher consists chiefly in touching the Hearts of his Auditours, in undeceiving of 'em concerning the Vanities of the World; to make 'em comprehend the Misery of their disorders, and to move 'em to Convert themselves to God with all their Hearts. 'Tis not to Preach, sayd Father Avila, to be an hour in speaking of God in Publick, 'tis not only for this that 'tis undertaken, but 'tis to Convert his Auditours,

Jacet sensus in oratione ubi verba laudantur. *Quint. l. 8.*

† Unicusque autem datur manifestatio spiritus ad utilitatem. *1 Cor. 12. 7.*

* Docente re in Ecclesia non clamor populi, sed gemitus suscitetur. *Lazarus auditorum laudes tunc sint.*
Epi. l. 2 ad Nepot.
Numquam sic locutus est homo. *Jean. 7. 46.*

to change those into Angels, who were before Devils; behold here, in what consists the Talent of a good Preacher. Another Servant of God sayd, that when we go from a Sermon with our Eyes cast upon the ground, without speaking to any one, 'tis a sign the Sermon was good and profitable; because, 'tis a mark that each one found in it, what was convenient and advantageous to himself.

We Read in the Life of Saint *Francis Borgia* that when he Preach'd in *Biscay*, the greatest part of his Auditory understood not what he sayd; and this happen'd; because the Multitude of People was so great, that very few cou'd come near the Pulpit; as also because very few understood *Castilian*. Yet 'twas a wonderful thing to see that attention, with which they heard him; and the Tears which they shed at his Sermons; and when some were ask'd why they wept at his Sermon, since they understood not what he sayd? They answer'd that they Wept, because they beheld so great a Person; that was become so great a Saint; and because they felt within themselves a Divine Inspiration, that made 'em understand the sense of what the Preacher spoke. Another time whilst he was at *Lisbon*, he was no sooner come to town, but the Cardinal *Dons Henry*, who was afterwards King of Portugal, sent to begg of him to Preach; and the Saint having excus'd himself; because he was extreemly tyr'd with his Journey: I do not ask him to Preach says the Cardinal, but only that he wou'd go into the Pulpit, and shew himself to the People; that they may see him, who has quitted all for God. Behold here in effect that which produces fruit in Souls, and that which Preaches most to the People; which is, Example and Sanctity of Life: and therefore 'tis to this, that Confessours, Preachers, and all those whose employments have any Relation to their Neighbour, ought chiefly to apply themselves; to the end that God may make choice of 'em, to be profitable Instruments for the Salvation of Souls.

CHAP. IX.

Of the second means to produce Fruit in Souls,
which is that of Prayer.

THE second means that Saint Ignatius gives us, to make us become useful to our Neighbour, is Prayer; *Our Neighbour also is help'd*, says he, *by fervent desires and Prayer*, for since the affair of converting Souls is purely supernatural, we better effect it by fervent Prayers, by Tears and Sighs of Heart; than by Eloquence and Force of words. The Prayer of *Moyſes* had a greater share, in the Victory the *Iſraelites* gain'd against *Amalec*, than all the Lances and Swords they made use of against 'em. So long as *Moyſes* was able to keep his Hands lifted up towards Heaven, the advantage was of their side, but as soon as he let 'em fall down; they began to give way to their Enemies; so that during the Fight, 'twas necessary to have two Men to sustain him, the one on the one side and the other on the other; to the end that his Hands might always be lifted up; whereby the *Iſraelites* intirely gain'd the Victory. 'Twas after this manner that the People of God Defeated their Enemies by Prayer; and 'twas this, that the *Madianites* wou'd signify, when astonish'd at the great Victories they had gain'd, they sayd, † *This People will destroy all those, that live round about 'em, like as the Ox, which is accusom'd to bite the Grass to the very Roots*. They intended hereby, says *Origen*, and Saint *Austin*, that as the Ox feeds upon the Grass with it's Mouth, and bites it to the very Root, so the People of God destroy'd their Enemies with their Mouth, that is to say by Vertue of their Prayers; but if even in War, where the success seems to depend upon Human forces, God accords the Victory to the merit of Prayer; what shall it be in this Spiritual Warfare, which we have undertaken for the Conversion of Soul, and where our Forces are so far

Juvatur etiam
proximus fan-
ctis desideriis
& oratio-
nibus.
7 p. conf. c. 4.

Exod. 17. 12.

† Ita delebit
hic populus
omnes qui in
nostris finibus
commorantur,
quo modo so-
let bos herbas
ulque ad radi-
ces carpere.
Num. 22. 4.
Aug. serm. 93.
de Temp.
Origen. Hom. 13.
super Num.

short

short of the end, that we propose to our selves? 'Tis then by our Prayers and by our sighs, that we must endeavour to gain the Victory, 'Tis hereby that we must endeavour, to appeale the Wrath of God, and obtain his Grace, for the Conversion of our Brethren.

Saint *Austin* writing upon these words, that God sayd to *Moses*, * *Let me alone that my Fury may be inflam'd against 'em, and that I may Destroy them.* Takes the occasion to speak of the Merit of Prayer, and to let us see: how efficacious and powerful a means it is, to obtain any thing of God, God had a mind to destroy the Children of *Israel*; because they had ador'd a golden Calf, *Moses* interceeds for 'em, and says to God, † *Why is thy Anger inflam'd against this People, whom thou hast brought out of Egypt, by the force and power of thy Hand? Give not I beseech thee an occasion to the Egyptians to say, he has brought 'em well hither, to destroy them in the Mountains, and to blot 'em out of the Earth: Let thy Anger cease and permit thy self to be appeas'd for this Sin of thy People. Remember Abraham, Isaac and Jacob thy Servants; to whom thou hast sworn by thy self, that thou wou'dst multiply their Seed as the Stars of Heaven, and that thou wou'dst give them and their Posterity all this Land thou spokest of. Let me alone,* says our Lord, *I will destroy them.* But what dost thou mean by this O Lord, says Saint *Austin*, why dost thou say, *Let me alone?* who hinders thee, or who is able to do so? Who can tye thy Hands? * *Who can resist thy Will?* How comes it to pass then, that thou sayst, *Let me alone?* You'll see from whence it proceeds, continues this Father, 'tis certainly; because the force of Prayer, hinders the effect of his Anger; and 'tis this he wou'd have us to understand by these words *Let me alone*, which are neither words of Command; because, had they been so, *Moses* wou'd have done very ill to disobey them. Nor are they words of Petition; because God do's not beg of his Creatures; but shews only that the Prayers of the Just, are capable of appeasing God's Wrath. Saint *Hierom*, says the same thing, upon these words of our Lord to *Jeremy*, † *Do not thou therefore Pray for this People nor Elevate thy Voice and Prayers for them, and do not resist me.* God, says this Father, makes us hereby to understand, that the Prayers of the Saints are able to resist his Anger; and he more expressly declares this unto us, by the words of *David*, * *And he had resolv'd to destroy*

Aug. 9. 149.
sup. Exod.
* Dimite me
ut irascatur fu-
ror meus con-
tra eos, & de-
leam eos.
Exod. 32. 10.

† Cur, Domi-
ne, irascitur
furore tuus
contra popu-
lum tuum,
quem eduixisti
de terra Ægy-
pti, in fortitu-
dine magna,
& in manu ro-
busta? Ne,
quæro, dicant
Ægyptij; Cal-
lide eduxi-
cos, ut inter-
ficeret in mon-
tibus, & dele-
ret e terra:
quiescat ira
tua, & esto
placabilis su-
per nequitia
populi tui. Re-
cordare Abra-
ham, Isaac, &
Israel, servo-
rum tuorum,
quibus jurasti
per temetip-
sum, dicens:
Multiplicabo
semen vestrum
sicut stellas
cæli; & uni-
versam terram
hanc, de qua
locutus sum,
dabo semini
vestro, & pos-
sidebitis eam
semper.

Exod. 32. 11. 12.
13.

* Voluntati
enim ejus quis
resistit?

Rom. 9. 19.

Aug. ubi sup.
† Tu ergo no-
li orare pro
populo hoc:
nec assumes
pro eis lau-
dem & oratio-
nem, & non
obstas mihi.
Jerem. 7. 16.

* Et dixit ut
disperderet eos,

destroy them, if *Moyſes* had not ſtood before him in the breach, to turn back his anger, and to hinder him from destroying 'em. When God had his Hand already lifted up, to ſtrike and deſtroy his People, *Moyſes* withheld him by his Prayers, † And the Lord was appeas'd, ſays the Scripture, ſo that he did not that Evil, which he had threatn'd to his People.

The ſame thing happen'd in the Sedition rais'd againſt *Moyſes*, and *Aaron*; becauſe of the Death of *Core*, *Dathan* and *Abiron*, which the People of *Iſrael* imputed to them; and God was ſo angry hereat, that he wou'd have deſtroy'd all the People, and had already kill'd more than fourteen thouſand by Fire, when *Aaron* advancing himſelf by the Order of *Moyſes*, into the middle of the Dead and Dying Perſons, with a Thurible in his Hand; who having Offer'd Incenſe and Prayers to God for the People, the Plague, ceaſt: Wherefore the Wiſe Man ſpeaking of this Plague, and of the manner that it came to ceaſe, call's Prayer a Buckler.

* But thy anger. O Lord laſted not long, for a Man without reproach, made haſt to Pray for the People, Offering thee his Prayer, which was the ſole Buckler he had to reſiſt thee, and joyning Incenſe to his Prayers, he ſtop'd thy Anger, and put an end to that Deſolation. Another Verſion has, Making haſt to fight for the People? So that to pray, is in effect to fight, and 'tis by fighting after this manner, that *Aaron* diſarm'd God's Anger. † O how admirable a Buckler is Prayer, ſays Saint *Ambroſe*? It beats back all the Darts which our adverſaries ſhoot againſt us.

But what is more than all this, is, that when God has lifted up his Hand to puniſh us, he is pleas'd that we ſhou'd hold back his Hand, and interpoſe our ſelves to hinder him from ſtriking. A Father who extreamly loves his Son, is not inclin'd to Chaiſe him as often as he deſerves it, but on the contrary is pleas'd to find any one that will hinder him from it; and ſometimes even gives a ſign to one of his Friends to do ſo. 'Tis the ſame with God, he is a Father that tenderly cheriſhes us, and lets us ſee he do's ſo; becauſe he has given even the laſt Drop of his Blood for us; and when he is about to Chaiſe us, he wou'd willingly produce no effects thereof, and therefore he deſires that his Friends ſhou'd award or bear of his blows; and ſeeks out ſome one that will do ſo; and when he finds none that will do it, he is troubl'd, and makes great complaint thereof. * I ſought, ſays he, amongſt 'em a Man that might put a Hedge

Tom. III.

H.

between

ſi non Moyſes
electus ejus
ſtetiſſet in
conſpectu
ejus, ut aver-
teret iram o-
jus, ne diſper-
deret.
Pſal. 105. 33.
† Placatuſque
eſt Dominus
ne faceret ma-
lum quod lo-
cutus fuerat
adverſus popu-
lum ſuum.
Exod. 32. 14.

Et plaga ceaſ-
avit.
Num. 26. 48.

* Sed non diu
permanſit ira
tua. Propterans
enim homo
ſine querela
deprecari pro
populis, pro-
ſectens ſervitu-
tis ſue ſecurum
orationem, &
per incenſum
deprecationem
allegans, reſi-
tis iræ, & ſi-
nem impoluit
neceſſitati.

Sap. 18. 20. 21.
† Bonum ſcu-
tum oratio,
quo omnia ad-
verſarij ignita
ſpicula repel-
luntur.
Ambr. rom. 5.
in orat. fun. de
obitu Valenti.
Imp.

* Et quaſi vide-
cis virum qui

Interponeret
sepiem, & sta-
ret oppositus
cogitavit me pro
terra, ne dis-
perderem eam,
& non invenit.
Ezech. 11. 30.
Non ascendis
ex adverso,
neque oppo-
suitis murum
pro domo Is-
rael.

Ezech. 13. 5.
Ita Descen-
sionis sancto-
rum precibus
frangitur.

Hieron. in la-
cum sap. cis.
Non est qui
invocat no-
men tuum, qui
conferat &
teneat te.

Is. 64. 7.
Non dimit-
tam te nisi be-
nedixeris
mihi.

Gen. 32. 16.

between us, and wou'd take part with the Earth against me, that I might not destroy it, and I was able to find none. You have not come up, says he in another place, nor oppos'd a Wall against me for the Defence of the House of Israel, where-upon Saint Hieron says, that as the Walls and Rampire of a City, serve to beat back the attacks of the Enemy, * So do the Prayers of Saints, serve to repulse the effects of God's Threats. Isay complains also, that ther's no body that took care to stop and appease him, † Ther's no one, says he, O Lord, who calls upon thy Name, who raises himself against thee, and holds thee back; ther's no Jacob to be found to wrastle, Hand to Hand against the Angel of the Lord, and that will say to him: * I will not let thee go, till thou hast Bless'd me. All this lets us clearly see, of how great Merit the Prayers of the Just are in the sight of God; because they have the power to hold back his Hand, and to disarm his Wrath: And confirms very well, what I have sayd in the precedent Chapter, that we ought to be in favour with God, to be profitable to our Neighbour; and that 'tis the best means we can make use of for this effect. For 'tis of very great importance, that he who deals with any one, to oblige him to pardon another; shou'd be very much in the favour of him whom he intreats; otherwise he wou'd rather more irritate than appease him. In a word Sanctity of Life is so great an advantage for the help of Souls, that if we shou'd do nothing else for our Neighbour, than labour to become Saints, we shou'd always do very much for him.

That which God sayd to Abraham, upon the occasion of the Destruction of Sodome, proves this Truth very well. The abominations of Sodome and Gomorrha, were come to such a height, that God resolv'd to destroy these two Cities; he discovers his Intention to Abraham in the way to Sodome, † And Abraham being already near the City sayd to him, Alas! O Lord wilt thou Destroy the Just with the Wicked? If there are fifty Just Persons in the City, shall they Perish with the rest? Or rather if there be found fifty Just Persons wilt thou not pardon the rest for their sakes? Take heed of doing such a thing, as to Destroy the Just with the Wicked, and to cause the Just to be treated like them; this is not so At like thy self, who dost render Justice to all the World; thou wilt not therefore treat 'em after this manner? If I find fifty Just persons in Sodome, answers our Lord, I'll pardon the whole

† At appropin-
quant ait:
Numquid per-
des iustum
cum impio?
Si fuerint
quingenta
iusti in civi-
tate, peribunt
simul? Et non
parces loco
illi propter
quingenta
iustos, & fue-
runt in eo?
Abstine te, ut
rem hanc fa-
cias, & occi-
das iustum

cum inopia,
fugit; iustus
scurrit inquit
non est hec
tum: qui iu-
dicas omnem
terram: ne-
quissimum fa-
ciens iustum
hoc. Dixitque
Dominus ad
eum: Si inve-
nero Sodomis
quingenta ius-
ti in civitate,
dimittam om-
ni loco propter
eos. Respon-
dendique
Abraham ait:
Quia semel
cepisti loqui
ad Dominum
meum, cum
inimicus es
civis. Quid
minus quin-
quaginta
iustos, quin-
que facient?
Et respondit,
propter quin-
quaginta ius-
tos, universam
urbem? Et
ait: Non de-
beo, si inve-
neris ibi quin-
quaginta ius-
tos. Rursum
que locutus est
ad eum: Sin
autem non in-
venieris ibi in-
veniti fuerint,
quid facies?
Ait: Non pec-
cavi propter
quingenta
iustos, sed pro
iniquis indig-
neris. Domi-
no ibi triginta.
? Ait: Non
quid ibi inven-

ne, si loquar: Quid si ibi inventi fuerint triginta? Respondit: Non faciam, si invenero ibi triginta. Quia semel, ait, cepi, loquar ad Dominum meum: Quid si ibi inventi fuerint viginti? Ait: Non interficiam propter viginti. Obsecro, inquit, ne irascaris, Domine, si loquar adhuc semel: Quid si inventi fuerint ibi decem? Et dixit: Non delebo propter decem. Gen. 18, 33. a Ro.

* Circuite vi-
as Jeruslem,
& aspiciite, &
confiderate,
& querite in
plateis ejus
an inveniatis
virum facien-
tem judicium,
& querentem
fidem, & propi-
tius ero ei.
Jerem. 9. 1.

can be found, amongst such an infinite number of Sinners, he will pardon 'em all for the love of him alone. The love of God for a Just Man, ought to be very great and tender, since for his consideration, he will shew Mercy to so many Sinners. This shews us, how great an esteem we ought to have of good and Vertuous Men, and how great service they do in all things, to the publick wealth they live in, tho' they do nothing else but live Vertuously; wherefore this is one of the reasons which the Saints and Divines bring, to prove that Religious Persons ought to be maintain'd at the Publick charge, tho' they shou'd render no exterior service to the Publick, but shou'd remain retir'd in their Cells. Since even in this retreat in their Cells, they thereunto render very great service. Because 'tis for the love of a small number of Vertuous Persons, that God suffers and has patience with so many Wicked in the World; 'tis because of the good Seed, that for some time he lets the Cockle grow up, * *For fear, says he, that in gathering the Cockle yee shou'd also draw up the Wheat by the Roots; Let 'em both grow till the Harvest.*

What is also to be taken notice of, concerning this Destruction of Sodome, is that which the Scriptrue adds, that † *When God overthrew the Cities of this Country, he rememb'r'd Abraham? and deliver'd Lot; from the ruin of the Cities in which he liv'd.* Yet there is no mention made that Abraham pray'd for Lot; how therefore comes it to pass that God deliver'd Lot, for the love of Abraham? 'Twas because he lov'd Abraham so tenderly, that he took care of whomsoever was related to him, without expecting to be pray'd to do so. Lot was the Nephew of Abraham, and for this reason God presses him to save himself; * *Make hast to go to the City, for which thou hast spoken,* says the Angel of God, *and save thy self there, for I can do nothing, till thou art enter'd into it.* O Bounty, O Infinite Mercy of God! How tender a love hast thou for the Just, and what is there that thou dost not do for them? Thou tyest the Hands of thy Ministers of Vengeance, and wilt not permit 'em to do any thing, till he be in Security. Wherefore my Brethren take care to be just; take care to gain God's Favour, and labour what you can, for this End; and be assur'd that God will have care of whatsoever belongs to yee. He'll be mindful of your Parents, of your Friends,

* Ne forte colligentes zizania, eradicetis simul cum eis & triticum. Sinite utraque crescere usque ad messem.

Matth. 13. 29.
† Cum enim subverteret Deus civitates regionis istius, recordatus est Abraham, & liberavit Lot de subversione urbium in quibus habitaverat.

Gen. 19. 29.

* Festina & salvere ibi quia non poterō facere quidquam, donec ingrediaris illuc.

Gen. 19. 32.

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Friends, and of all that relates to yee, tho' yee shoud not not so much as think to Pray for 'em; and the more he sees, that the care yee take to give your selves intirely to him, hinders yee from thinking of them; and of asking any thing for them; the more he will pour down his Benedictions and Graces upon 'em. For the Voice of Actions draw God more to harken unto them, than the Voice of words; and if the Crimes of the Wicked cry to God For Vengeance, according to the words of Scripture.

† *The Voice of thy Brothers Blood cry's out to me from the Earth.* Ought we not to believe that the Picty and good Works of Vertuous Persons, cry out also more efficaciously unto God for Mercy, who is so ready to do us good, and * *To whom is proper to Pardon, and to have Mercy.* Behold therefore a very Holy means to obtain of God, whatsoever our Parents and Friends stand in need of.

† Vox sanguinis fratris tui clamat ad me de terra. Gen. 4. 10.

* Cui proprium est miseri-ri semper & parcere. He Lir. 55.

CHAP.

C H A P. X.

The third means to bring forth Fruit in our Neighbour, is a great Zeal of Souls.

*Zelus domus
sue comedit
me, & oppro-
brium tibi
ecceiderunt su-
per me.*

Psal. 68. 10.

*"Zelus sine-
rus animarum
ad gloriam ejus
respiciens qui
eas creavit ac
redemit, quo-
vis alio emolu-
mento pos-
sibito.*

10p. cens. 9. 2.

*TO mi frater,
numquid fer-
rez sunt car-
nes nostrae, ut
non contre-
mificant; vel
etiam adaman-
tius sensus
mollet, ut non
mollescat aut
etiam minime
evigilet ad illa
Dei verba, ite
maledicti in
ignem eter-
num?*

Matth. 25. 41.

** Quare non
dicimus cum
Jeremia Pro-
pheta: Quis
dabit capiti
meo aquam,
& oculis meis
fontem lachri-
marum, & pla-
ra die ac
nocte inter-
fectos filios
populi mei?*

Jerem. 9. 1.

*† Quis infir-
matur, & ego
non infirmor?*

2 Cor. 11. 29.

*Aug. Epistol.
ad quendam
comit. c. 55.*

** Qui etiam
proprio filio
non per-
petuit: sed
pro nobis om-
nibus tradidit
ipsum.*

Rom. 8. 34.

THE Zeal of thy House has Eaten me up, says the Royal Prophet, and the Reproaches of those that has upbraided thee, have fallen upon me. Behold here another means very efficacious, for the bringing forth Fruit in our Neighbour; and our Holy Founder places it amongst those, that most of all help, to the Conservation and Progress of our SOCIETY, and that most contributes to the End for which it was Instituted, which is the help of Souls. * One of these means, says he, is a sincere Zeal of Souls, beholding the Glory of him, who has Created and Redeem'd 'em, with an intire disengagement to all other things. † My dear Brother, says Saint Austin writing to Count Boniface, are our Hearts made of Iron that they do not tremble? Or have we lost all Sense, that we are not awaken'd at these terrible words? Go ye Cursed into Everlasting Fire. * Why do we not say with the Prophet Jeremy, who will give a Spring of Water to my Head, and a Fountain of Tears to my Eyes, that I may Weep Day and Night, for the Children of the Daughter of my People who are Destroy'd. There is sufficient subject to Weep continually, when we think of the Number of those that Dye every Day, not only the Temporal Death of the Body, but the Eternal Death of the Soul: For in what can we better employ our Tears, than to Weep with Saint Paul for so great a loss? † Who is there, says he, that is weak, whose weakness I do not feel? Wherefore let us learn of the Apostle, says Saint Austin upon these words, to have an ardent Zeal for the Salvation of Souls: Or rather let us learn of God himself, who has so tenderly lov'd 'em, that * He has not spar'd his own Son, but has Deliver'd him up for us all. These terms, for us all, shew that we ought to extend our Charity to the whole World, and not neglect the

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the Salvation of any one, because there is no one, who has not cost the Son of God, even the last drop of his Blood.

The Zeal for the Salvation of Souls, or to stile it better, the Zeal of the Glory and Honor of God, is a desire to see God so Lov'd, Honor'd and Serv'd, by all the World; that those who are Inflam'd by this Beautiful Fire, wou'd communicate it to the whole World; and employ themselves therein, as much as they are able, without ever ceasing; but if they perceive that God is Offended, without their being able to hinder it, then they Weep and Lament, and the Fervour of their Zeal even devours and consumes 'em within; 'twas such a Zeal as this, with which the Saints of the Old Law found themselves Inflam'd. † *I found my Heart, and my Bones*, says Saint Jeremy, *secretly inflam'd, as with a Fire, that even devour'd me: And I fell into a Sound, not being able to resist it; because I heard the Blasphemies of many People; * I was inflam'd with Zeal for the God of Armies*, says Ely, *because the Children of Israel have quitted their Covenant*. † *I fell into a sound*, says the Royal Prophet; *because Sinners had forsaken thy Law; and my Zeal dry'd me up; because my Enemies forgot thy Commandments*. These great Saints were thus afflicted, to see with what liberty, the Wicked violated the Law of God; and the sorrow of their Mind, past even into the humours of their Body, and into their Blood; making the whole Exterior Man sensible thereof. * *I beheld the Wicked*, says David, *and was dry'd up with Sorrow; because they minded not thy Commandments*. † *Mine Eyes became Fountains of Water; because they observ'd not thy Law*. As whatsoever is put in a Limbeck is resolv'd into Water by the Operation of Fire, so David dissolv'd into Tears, by the Violence of his Zeal; when he perceiv'd they offended the Infinite Majesty of God. We ought to have the like Zeal, so that on the one side, we shou'd make it our chief business, and the greatest joy we have, to see the Glory of God continually encrease; to see his Holy Will as perfectly fulfill'd on Earth, as it is in Heaven: And on the other side, that no greater grief cou'd happen to us, than to perceive the contrary. * *Behold what is a true Zeal*, says Saint Austin, *and this is truly to be Eaten up with the Zeal of God's House; For one to desire to be able to hinder all Evils that he sees committed, and is troubl'd extremely, and grieves very much when he is not able to do so*. 'Twas for this Motive, that

Samuel

† Et factus est in corde meo quasi ignis exarsit, usque in ossibus meis; & defecti, forte non sustinens: audiivi enim contumelias multorum.

Jerem. 20. 9. * Zelo zelatus sum pro Domino Deo exercituum, quia dereliquerunt pactum suum filii Israel.

3 Reg. 19. 10. † Defectio tenuit me pro peccatoribus delinquentibus legem tuam. Et tabescere me fecit zelus meus, quia obliti sunt verba tua inimici mei.

Psal. 118. 51. 139.

* Vidi pravificantes & tabescentem, quia eloquia tua non custodierunt. Ibid. 138. † Exitus aquarum deduxerunt oculi mei, quia non custodierunt legem tuam, id est, propter illud, quod non custodierunt legem tuam. Ibid. 136.

* Zelo domus Dei commeditur, qui omnia pervertit quae videri cupit emendare & quia non potest, tolerat & gemit. Aug. 121. Epist. 340.

† Verum tam-
men lugebat
Samuel Saū-
lem, quoniam
Dominum pæ-
nitebat quod
constitisset
eum in Regem
super Israël.
1 Reg. 15. 35.

* Nullum
quippe omni-
potenti Deo
tale est sacrifi-
cium, quale est
zelus anima-
rum. Greg.
Hom. 12. in
Exod.

† Nullum of-
ficium est Deo
charius.
Chrys. Hom. 76.

* Nihil sic
Deo placet si-
cut zelus &
lucrum ani-
marum.

Richard. sup.
Cant. c. 21.

† Major au-
tem horum est
charitas.

1 Cor. 13. 13.
Charitatem
habere quod
est, vinculum
perfectionis.
Colos. 3. 14.

Samuel Wept over Saul, after God had forsaken him. † Sa-
muels, says the Scripture, *wept over Saul, because the Lord
had repented, that he had establish'd him King of Israel,*

Moreover ther's nothing more pleasing to God, or at
least so acceptable, as the Zeal of his Glory, and the Sal-
vation of Souls: And 'tis after this manner, that the Saints
and Doctors of the Church speak of it, * *We cannot make
any Sacrifice to God,* says Saint Gregory, *which is equal to
that of the Zeal of Souls.* † *There's no service,* says Saint
Chrysostom, *more agreeable to him than this.* * *And there's
nothing,* says Richardus, *that pleases God so much, as the Zeal
and gaining of Souls.* The reason of this is; because there
is nothing so pleasing to God as Charity; because, as Saint
Paul says, † *Charity is the greatest of Vertues, and the
Bond of Perfection;* but the Zeal of which I speak is nothing
else, but an ardent Charity, which makes us not content only
to Love God with all our Heart, and to Serve him with
all our Power; but we wou'd have all the World Love
him and serve him after the same manner; and that his
Name shou'd be Glorifi'd throu'out the whole World; and
the Kingdom of God every where extended? 'Tis an ex-
tream Love of God, that makes us feel an inconceivable
joy, for whatsoever contributes to his glory; and that we
are penetrated with Sorrow, for all the Sins that are com-
mitted. Moreover as a Child of noble birth, takes nothing
more to Heart, than the glory and advancement of his Father;
whose only joy and comfort, is to see his Father advanc'd;
and all the offences also that are committed against his
Father, are very sensible to him, nay even touch him more, than
if they were committed against himself: So also those who
have a true Zeal for the Glory of God, do so ardently
wish to see him prais'd and Honor'd, by all the World,
that they place all their joy therein, and there's nothing that
gives 'em a greater grief, than the Contempt which they
daily behold is done to God; wherefore 'tis not to be doubted,
but that the Zeal I speak of, is a most perfect Act of the
Love of God.

This is one of the most excellent acts of love that we
can have for our Neighbour, for as the Love of God con-
sists, in rejoycing that all things turn to his Glory; and
in being afflicted for all things that offend him; so also
the Love of our Neighbour, consists in rejoycing at his good,
and being afflicted for any thing that is truly bad; as all

Sins

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Sins are, and to hinder 'em as much as we are able. Wherefore the Saints say, that to know whether we love our Neighbour, we must Examin our selves whither we are afflicted for his faults, and rejoyce at his good works and Spiritual advancement. Because in effect the true mark that you love your Brother, is, that you have as much joy, for his good, as for your own; and as great a sorrow for his evils and misfortunes, as those that happen to your self: This is truly to love our Neighbour as our selves, and 'twas this that the Apostle practis'd, when he sayd, † *Who is weak amongst yee and I am not weak with him? Who suffers amongst yee without my suffering also? Who is he, says the gloss in this place, that becomes feeble in Faith, or in any other Virtue, without my becoming feeble with him; that is to say, without my being afflicted for him, as I wou'd be for my self? And to whom do's there happen any bad fortune, or is scandaliz'd, or in any trouble, and I feel not my self burnt up with Tenderness and Compassion?* Saint Chrysostom says, that the zeal of the Salvation of Souls, is of so great a value, that if we shou'd give all our goods to the Poor, if we shou'd pass our whole Life in the exercise of all sorts of Austerities, this were nothing, in comparison of the zeal of Souls; for even as much as the Soul exceeds the Body, so much those who supply the necessities of the Soul by Confession, by Preaching, and by practising all other Spiritual works of Mercy, exceed those who assist the necessities of the Body by their Alms. Are not you very well pleas'd with your self, says this Father, when you have imploy'd great summs of Mony to ease the Miseries of an infinity of poor People? He who labours for the Salvation, of Souls, do's a great deal more; and the zeal of Souls is of far greater Merit in God's sight, than to work Miracles. For what Miracles and Prodigies did not *Moyse* do; when the Children of *Israel* went out of *Egypt*, yet all that was nothing in respect of that ardent zeal he testifi'd, when Interceding for 'em to God, he sayd, * *Either pardon 'em this their fault, or if thou wilt not do so, blot me out of thy Book of Life, which thou hast written.* Behold here, continues the sayd Doctor, the greatest of wonders that ever *Moyse* wrought.

† Quis infirmatur, & ego non infirmor? quis scandalizatur, & ego non uor? Sic autem fero glossa: Quis infirmatur in fide, vel in aliqua virtute, & ego non infirmor, id est, non doleo de eo sicut de meipso? Quis scandalizatur in aliqua molestia, & ego non uor in igne compassionis? 1 Cor. 11. 29. Chrys. Hom. 99. c. Item. 2. sup. Genes.

† Aut dimittetis hanc noxam, aut si non facis, dele me de libro tuo quem scripsisti. Exod. 32. 32.

Tom. III. I C H A P.

C H A P. XI.

That the zeal of Souls is a most proper means profitably to help our Neighbour.

THE zeal, of which I speak, is another very efficacious means, to produce Fruit in our Neighbour; first, because 'tis a fire, as I have before sayd; for as fire failes not to convert all things into it self, when the matter is well dispos'd; or else disposes it, when it is not; so also when we shall be well inflam'd with this fire, of the zeal of the Love of God, we shall not fail to communicate it to others, and to convert 'em in some measure into our selves; rendering 'em also as much inflam'd as we are; according to the words of the Apostle; † *I wish all that hear me this Day, may become like my self*; But if we find they have not as yet all the dispositions they ought to have, we must labour incessantly, to put 'em into them. Charity cannot be idle, 'tis a fire that is never in repose, but is in a continual activity, * *It works great effects wherever it is, and where it do's not work great ones, 'tis certain that it is not great.*

In the second place; this zeal is very profitable for the help of Souls; because it makes us very much apply our selves thereunto, and it is so far from making us to be drawn to it by force, which is a shameful thing, that it moves us of it self, to seek all occasions thereof with fervor. We are always ready for those that present themselves, and wou'd always be very glad to do mote than we perform, which is without doubt a very great point of Perfection; for 'tis certain, that when we have a great mind to do any thing, we perform it quite otherwise, and succeed far better than when we have not; zeal being that which animates us; for without zeal we do nothing else but languish; and therefore 'tis of great importance to have much of it.

† Opto omnes qui me audiunt hodie fieri tales, qualis & ego sum. *Act. 26. 29.*

* Charitas magna operatur, si est; si autem non operatur, magna non est. *Greg. Hom. 3. 18 Evang.*

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In the third place zeal, makes us seek, and even makes us find the means of helping Souls; for a good Will is very inventive, and succeeds extremely well in finding out means to obtain what it desires, † *Wherever this good Will is found,* says Saint Bonaventure, *the effects thereof necessarily follow, as far as opportunity permits:* Be not afraid that he who has an ardent zeal, will ever want matter or means for the Salvation of his Neighbour: If he finds not occasion in his Cell, he'll go and seek it abroad; and if he finds it not there where he seeks it: He'll go to the Hospitals, and Prisons, where he will not fail to find it. The zealous Labourers in the Vineyard of our Lord, find always something to do: Therefore the Holy Ghost calls 'em sometimes Hunters, as in these words; * *I will send 'em many Hunters who shall make 'em go out of the Mountains and out of all the Hills, and out of the hollow places of the Rocks;* and sometimes of Fishers, † *I will make yee Fishers of Men.* 'Tis because that neither Fishers nor Hunters expect till the Fish or the Game come to put themselves into their Hands, but they cast their Nets, lay their Snares, and Day and Night employ all sort of industry, to take them. The Devil labours continually for the loss of Souls; is it not therefore just, that we shou'd continually labour for their Salvation?

In the fourth place, when we have zeal, all things become easie, we surmount all kinds of difficulties, and we find no pain in any thing. It seems that Saint Denis wou'd attribute to this zeal, that firmness and constancy, with which our Saviour supported all the pains of his Passion; he says, that he was assisted in this Combat, by the aversion he had for Sin; and applies to this subject the words of the Prophet *Isay*, * *I have trod the Wine Press alone, and amongst all the Gentils, there was not so much as one Man with me. I have trod 'em under Foot in my Fury, I have broke them in pieces in my Anger, and my Indignation has assisted me.*

In the last place when we are througly penetrated with this zeal, we become also thereby far more fervent in Prayer; because then we leave it not off, till we have obtain'd of God what we beg of him. 'Tis after this manner, that many Saints have often put themselves between God and Men to appease his Wrath; and have not left off their intercession, till they had disarm'd him. We Read in the Life of Saint Ignatius, that he knowing that a Young Man of Paris entertain'd a sinful commerce with a Woman, and having very

I 2

often

† Ubi autem talis inest affectus, illic necessarium non deerit subventionis effectus, quantum patitur opportunitas. Ben. de processu Relig. c. 17.

* Metam ei multos venatores, & venabuntur eos de omni monte, & de omni colle, & de cavernis petrarum. Jerem. 16. 16. † Faciam vos piscatores hominum. Matth. 4. 19.

Dionys. Areop. c. 4. de Divina nomina.

* Torcular calcavi solus, & de gentibus non est vir mecum: calcavi eos in furore meo, & concalcavi eos in ira mea.... & indignatio mea, ipsa auxiliata est mihi. 1/a. 43. 3. 3.

2/a. 1. 1. 2. 7/a. 1/a.

often without success endeavour'd to withdraw him from it, he at last resolv'd one Day to go and expect him out of Town, in a place where the Young Man must necessarily pass to go to her, which was a great Pond of Water; the Saint put himself therein up to the Neck, in a very cold season; and as soon as he saw him pass he began to cry out with all his strength, go miserable wretch, go, and enjoy your unhappy Courtships, whilst I will here do Penance, to stop the Wrath of God, which is ready to fall upon you; God has already his Arm lifted up to strike you; Hell is open to devour you; do you not fear the chastisements that are there prepar'd for you? This so extraordinary an Example of Zeal and Charity, so surpris'd this Young Man, that he stopt on a sudden, and powerfully touch'd by God, full of Confusion and Astonishment he return'd back, and for ever renounc'd that infamous engagement, from which he cou'd not before free himself.

C H A P. XII.

Of three things that may very much contribute to give us a Zeal of Souls.

BESIDES what I have already sayd, there are chiefly three things which may raise in us the zeal of Souls, and move us to procure their Salvation with all our power. The first and chiefeſt is, to consider, that *'Tis for these* JESUS CHRIST Dy'd, and how much must he have lov'd 'em, since he gave his Blood and Life for their purchase. The Blood of the Son of God; shed upon the Earth, lets us see of how great a price a Soul is, what esteem God makes of it, and what a tenderness he has for it; behold here what ought to fill us with zeal and fervor in those employments that regard the Salvation of Souls; behold here what ought to make us seek out occasions, and with ardour to apply our selves herein, and after what manner *The Charity of* JESUS CHRIST

Propter quos
Christus
mortuus est,
1 Cor. 8. 11.

Charitas enim
Christi urget
nos. 2 Cor. 5. 14.

misit

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must needs urge and press us therunto. Can we make any difficulty in shedding our Blood for him, for whom the Son of God has shed his? And can we refuse to Sacrifice our Life for the Love of a God, who has Sacrific'd his for us? What! Shall I see a Soul ready to perish, shall I see it ready to fall into Hell, shall I think that God Dy'd to Redeem it, that 'tis in my power to save it, and shall I not do it, even with the loss of my Life? This is that, which Charity cannot permit me to do? The zeal of Souls cannot but ravish our Hearts every moment; this ought always to be our greatest care, as it was the sole care of the Apostle; who † *In his Labours, in his Chains and in his Sufferings, having Death often before his Eyes, he was less touch'd with the things without him, than with the care and sollicitude he always felt within, for the Churches under his care.*

Saint Austin writing upon this passage of Saint John, * *JESUS therefore being weary of his Journey sat down upon a Fountain*, brings also that other passage of Saint Matthew, † *How often would I have gather'd your Children together, as a Hen gathers her Chickens and yee would not*; and says, that the reason why our Saviour compares himself to a Hen that has Chickens; is because we cannot know when other Birds have little ones, but when they cover 'em upon their Nest. But when a Hen has Chickens she becomes so lean, having her wings hanging down and her feathers sticking up, and is insine so chang'd, that that alone lets us know that she is a Mother: This is a true Image, adds the Father, of the state our Saviour was in, when going to the conquest of Souls, and spent with Labour and Weariness, he sat down upon the Fountain of Jacob: And 'tis after this manner, that the zeal of Souls, and the earnest desire of bringing up Spiritual Children for Heaven, ought as 'twere to devour us, even to the extermination of our forces, and by making us forget even our own necessities; for tho' our Saviour was harass'd with the journey, and was very hungry, yet he refus'd to Eat, preferring the care of the Salvation of Souls, before that of his own nourishment; wherefore, when his Disciples would press him to Eat. He said to them, * *I have meat to Eat that yee know not of: Lift up your Eyes and behold the Country, which already grows white in expectation of the Harvest.* The meat of which our Saviour intended to speak, was that change he was going to make in the Heart of the

SAMARITANS;

† In laboribus plurimis, in carceribus abundantius, in plagis supermodum, in mortibus frequenter. Propter illa quæ extrinsecus sunt, instantia mea quotidiana, sollicitudo Ecclesiarum.
2 Cor. 11. 23.
Or. 18.

Aug. tract. 15. sup. Joan. in illud: * Jesus ergo fatigatus ex itinere, sedebat sic supra fontem.

Joan. 4. 6.
¶ Quoties volui congregare filios tuos, quemadmodum gallina congregat pullos suos sub alas suis, & nolui? Matth. 23. 37.

* Ego cibum habeo manducare quem vos nescitis. Levate oculos vestros, & videte regiones, quia alba sunt jam ad messendum. Joan. 4. 34. 35.

Samaritans; 'twas the Salvation and Conversion of Souls; and 'tis this we ought also to make our food.

Father *Avila* makes use of another consideration, which is also very proper, to excite in us a zeal for the Salvation of Souls, which is, that tho' generally speaking 'tis very true, that as to the Graces God bestows upon us, he gives 'em out of pure Love, and without desiring any retribution from us. Yet in another sense it may be sayd, he gives us nothing, for which he seems not to desire a return; not for himself; *Because he is Master of all things, and stands in need of nothing*, but for our Neighbour, who wants our compassion and assistance. God acts herein, says he, like a Man, that having render'd great services to another, and lent him a great sum of Mony, thou'd afterwards tell him, I do not desire that what I have lent you, shou'd redound to my own profit; for I am rich enough without it; but I transport the profit thereof, to such a Person who wants it, pay him what you ow me, and you shall thereby quit your debt to me. We have an infinity of obligations to God, he has Created us, he has Redeem'd us by his Blood, and has had the goodness not to punish us for our Sins; expecting we shou'd do Penance; he daily heaps his Graces upon us, and lastly 'tis to him we ow all things, but since he stands in need of nothing, he transfers the right he has to all we ow him, unto our Brethren; and gives us a full discharge thereof, upon condition that we serve 'em in all things possible for us to do, let us therefore consider them on the one side, as the Adoptive Children of God, and as Brethren of *JESUS CHRIST*, who has given the last drop of his Blood for them; and on the other side as Persons to whom God has conferr'd his own right, to all that we have, and hereby shews us how to discharge those many obligations and benefits, he has bestow'd upon us; whereby we shall feel our selves inflam'd with a zeal for our Neighbour.

Another thing which will contribute very much hereunto, is to consider that one of the best means we have to satisfy God for all the offences we have committed against him, is, to procure, that others also cease to offend him for the future, and serve him with all their Heart. This is the Doctrine of Saint *James*, who says, * *That he who makes a Sinner quit the errors of his Life, will save the Soul of the Sinner, and cover a multitude of his own Sins*. And Saint *Austin* also takes notice of this truth, upon occasion of the

Tu Dominus
universorum,
& nullius
indiges.
Mat. 23. 34. 35.

* Qui conver-
ti faciet pec-
catorem ab er-
rore vite sue,
salvabit ani-
mam ejus a
morte, & co-
periet multi-
tudinem pec-
catorem.
Jacob. 5. 20.

care

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care of the Poorest Person in the Gospel. The holy Text says, that this Man seeing himself cur'd, had a mind to follow JESUS CHRIST, in acknowledgment of the benefit he had receiv'd. But our Saviour not willing to permit him, sayd to him, † *Return home and recount the wonders that God has wrought in thee, and he went round about the Town Preaching the wonders, that JESUS had wrought in him.* That which God requires of you in acknowledgment of the Graces he has done you, to draw you out of the contagion of the World, and the occasions of Sin, is, that you help him to draw your Neighbour also out of Sin, and move him to serve God with all his Heart.

† Redi in domum tuam, & narra quanta tibi fecit Dominus: & abiit per universam civitatem, predicans quanta ille fecisset, Jesus.
Luc. 9. 39.

C H A P. XIII.

Of what zeal is pleasing, and what is displeasing to God.

THERE are false Vertues, as well as true ones: For the Wise Man tells us, that * *There are some who falsely humble themselves, and whose interior is full of deceit.* They appear humble and are not so; they wear poor clothes: They walk with their Heads and Eyes cast down, upon the Earth; they speak with a modest Voice, and sigh every moment; they call themselves Sinners and Miserable Creatures at every word; but say any thing to them that may give 'em the least pain, they are presently troubl'd, fall into a Passion, and discover, what they took so much care to hide; they make appear that this outside they put on, was a pure disguise, and perfect hypocrisy; but as there is a kind of Humility that appears good, but is not; there is also a sort of zeal that appears laudable, yet is not so; because 'tis indiscreet and not well order'd: And 'tis this of which the Apostle warns us, when he says, † *I bear witness that they have the zeal of God, but they have it not with discretion.* Such was the zeal which our Saviour condemn'd in Saint James and Saint John, who were in great indignation because the

* Est qui nequiter humiliat se, & interiora ejus plena sunt dolo.
Eccl. 19. 23.

† Testimoni um perhibeo illis, quod emulationem Dei habent, sed non secundum scientiam.
Rom. 10. 2.

* Domine, vis
dicamus ut ignis
descendat de caelis,
& consumat illos?
Nefestis
cujus spiritus
estis. Filius
hominis non
venit animas
perdere, sed
salvare.
Luc. 9. 54. 55.
© 56.

Dion. Areop.
Ep. 8. ad De-
mos. de mansuet.
& benign.

† Ambulabant
ut ceci, quia
Domino peccaverunt.
Sophon. 1. 17.

the *Samaritans* would not receive him; which also carry'd 'em so far, as to tell our Saviour, * *Lord shall we beg that fire may descend from Heaven to Consume 'em?* Who Answers 'em, *Ye know not what Spirit inspires yee; the Son of God came not to destroy Souls, but to save them.* Since there is therefore a good and a bad zeal, and that 'tis dangerous, lest the resemblance they have one with another, thou'd cause us to confound 'em, 'twill not be amiss here to take notice, which is that good zeal that is pleasing to God, and which is the bad zeal, that wants Prudence and Discretion; that when we know them both very well, we may imbrace the one with fervor, and with care avoid the other.

Saint *Denis* treating upon this subject, says, we must deal with Sinners as we do with those that are Blind, we treat not ill one that is Blind for going where he thou'd not; because he knows not whether he go's, and we are never angry with him, but on the contrary have a great compassion of him, and even lead him by the Hand into his way. Sinners are truly Blind according to the words of *Sophonias*, † *They shall walk like Blind Men, because they have sinn'd against our Lord.* Wherefore we ought not presently to be angry with 'em, or to desire their Punishment or Destruction, but to have a great compassion of 'em. And conduct them with charity and tenderness according to the Example of the good Pastor, who went to seek after his stray'd Sheep, call'd it to him, and when he found it, took it upon his Shoulders and carry'd it back after this manner to the Fould: Imitate also the Example of the Father of a Family, who receiv'd his Prodigal Child with the Bowels of a true Father. Behold a good zeal and according to God. But the zeal that moves us to anger against Sinners is not a good zeal nor do's it please God; because 'tis not conformable to his Infinite Goodness.

The same Saint reports a thing to our purpose, that happen'd to Saint *Carpus*, whom God favor'd with a great many Revelations, who never offer'd the Sacrifice of the Altar, without being beforehand warn'd to do so by a particular Revelation; and takes notice also, that 'twas Saint *Carpus* himself who told him this Story; A new Christian permitting himself to be perverted by an Infidel, Saint *Carpus* was so afflicted hereat, that the same Day he heard of it, he fell Sick upon this account. Notwithstanding his Sickness hinder'd him not from rising, as he was wont, at midnight to make his

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his Prayer, the indignation that he had against this Infidel, who had seduc'd the new Christian, and against the new Christian who had abandon'd JESUS CHRIST, transported him in such a manner, that he made a lively complaint of it to God; saying, 'tis not just O Lord, that the wicked shou'd live; how long will you suffer 'em to do so? Why do you not send fire from Heaven to devour 'em? And as soon as he had ended these words, it seem'd to him upon a sudden, that the House in which he was, trembl'd and split asunder; and that out of the middle of the clift, that was made in it, there ris a prodigious fire, which ascended even to Heaven; in the top of which, just over the fire, he saw JESUS CHRIST sitting upon his Throne of Glory, and incompass'd with an infinity of Angels; and casting afterwards his Eyes down upon the Earth, he perceiv'd a precipice, which went even to the bottom of Hell, which gave him a great horror to behold. The two Men, against whom he had conceiv'd an indignation, were upon the brink of this precipice, who trembl'd for fear; and from time to time there ris out from the bottom of this Abyffe, Serpents and Dragons, who sometimes frighted 'em with their hissing; sometimes by winding themselves about their leg's, and pricking 'em, endeavour'd to make 'em fall in. There also came black Men out, who endeavour'd to do the same either, by drawing 'em to them, or pushing 'em from 'em; it seem'd to the Saint as if he found himself not only pleas'd, to see these two Men in this danger; but even displeas'd, that they did not effectively fall in. And was almost ready to go to thrust 'em in himself: In this thought he lifted up his Eyes to Heaven, as it were to beg of God, that he wou'd make an end of destroying 'em; and then he saw that JESUS CHRIST, taking compassion of 'em, descended from his Throne into this Abyffe, and drew them out of the danger in which they were, placing 'em among the Angels; and then turning himself towards him he sayd, *Now stretch forth thy Hand to strike me; for I am ready to suffer again for Sinners.* Do you not think it better to be in my Company, and in that of Angels, than in the Company of Serpents and Devils? Afterwards the Vision disappear'd, from which the Man of God drew this Fruit, that he corrected the indignation to which his zeal had mov'd him; comprehending, as we also ought to do, that this kind of zeal was not pleasing to God. God will not the Death of Sinners; because they have cost him very dear,

Tom. III.

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they

Extentâ iam
manu percutere,
me, quia iterum
paratus sum pro peccatoribus pati.

Ben-oni, id est,
filius dolentis.
Gen. 35. 18.

they are his *Benjamins*, His Sons of Sorrow, which he has brought forth upon the Cross, and which have cost him the last drop of his Blood; wherefore he desires that they shou'd not perish; but only desires that they wou'd convert themselves; and that they shou'd live Eternally.

The Prophet *Jonas*, had denounc'd to the *Ninivites*, on God's part, that their City shou'd be destroy'd in three Days; and afterwards perceiving that his Predictions had no effect: He took it very impatiently, that God did not destroy it, as he had threaten'd to do. In this condition he leaves the City, and having made himself a seat in the open Sun, he rested himself upon the ground; and then God caus'd an Ivy Tree to grow up upon a sudden, which raising it self above the Head of the Prophet, gave him shade, and defended him from the scorching Sun: But the next Day the Ivy by God's order wither'd, and when the Prophet, scorch'd by the Sun which shin'd upon his Head, lamented the loss of the Ivy, * *Thinkest thou*, says the Lord, *that thou hast reason to be afflicted? Thou art angry that the Ivy is Dead, yet thou didst neither plant it nor dress or cause it to grow; and yet thou wou'dst not have me pardon, so great a City as Nineve, in which there are sixty thousand Children, who are not yet come to the use of Reason.* 'Tis a thing very remarkable and very much to our purpose, what the Emperour *Constantin* sayd, in the Council of *Nice*, to a Bishop call'd *Acacius*, who wou'd not have those that had err'd to be receiv'd to Penance, that came to abjure their Error in the Council. O *Acacius*, says he, pray take a Ladder and thereby if you can ascend alone to Heaven? A holy Person, in a like occasion, sayd to another, who testifi'd too great severity; if that Sheep you will not receive into your Fould, had cost you as much Blood, as it has cost *JESUS CHRIST*, you wou'd bring it back on your shoulders, and not leave it abroad with hazard of it's being devour'd by Wolves.

The Holy Scripture, in the Person of *Moyse*s, gives us an admirable model of that zeal, which the Servants of God ought to have; and Saint *Austin* marks very well in his Questions upon *Exodus*; that *Moyse*s being ascended up to the top of the Mountain of *Sinai*, to receive the Law, which God had a mind to give to his People. He receiv'd it in two Tables of Stone, which God had made; and which he had engrav'd on both sides with his own Hand, and having found at his return, that the *Israelites* ador'd a

Golden

* Putasne bene irasceris tu? . . . Tu dolens super hederam, in qua non laborasti, neque fecisti ut cresceret. Et ego non parcam Ninive civitati magne, in qua sunt plusquam centum viginti millia hominum, qui nesciunt quid sit inter dexteram & sinistram suam. *Joan. 4. 10.*
* 11.

Aug. sup. Exod.
p.

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Golden Calf which they had made, he fell into so great an indignation, that he cast down the Tables he carry'd, and broke them in pieces. Consider, says Saint *Austin*, how great the indignation of *Moses* must needs be against this Sin of the People; because he broke the Tables of the Law, which he had a little before receiv'd from God, and which were written by God's own Hand, and were given him with so much Pomp and Magnificence, after having been forty Days and forty Nights Fasting, and Conversing with God Face to Face. But how great soever his Anger was, he return'd presently to God, and Pray'd with instance for the Children of *Israel*, and begg'd of him to pardon 'em, or to blot him out of the Book of Life; behold here, says this Father, what ought to be the zeal of the true Ministers of God: They ought on the one side to be so zealous for God's Glory, that the offences committed against him shou'd even pierce their Hearts, and fill 'em with indignation against Sin: And on the other, they ought to have so great a compassion and tenderness for Sinners, that they shou'd presently go and interceed to God for 'em, to appease his Wrath and to obtain their Pardon as *Moses* did.

Saint *Paul* gives us in himself the like Example, when he says in his Epistle to the *Romans*, * *I assure you in JESUS CHRIST that what I say is true, and that I lye not, and my own Conscience and the Holy Ghost are my witnesses, that I have an extream sadness and a continual affliction of Heart; for I even wish'd to be my self anathema, or separated from JESUS CHRIST, for the sake of my Brethren the Israelites, my Kinsmen according to the Flesh.* The Apostle was on the one side sensibly afflicted for the Sins of those of his Nation; because he had a very great horror for Sin; and on the other he had so great a love and compassion for 'em, that he desir'd to be lost himself, to save them. Many different explications are given of what I have now sayd, both of *Moses* and the Apostle. Saint *Hierom* says, that it ought to be understood of a Corporal Death; and that what he desir'd was, that he might Die in time, to save his Brethren for Eternity; and for this effect he proves that the word *Anathema* is often taken in Scripture, only for the separation of the Soul from the Body; but laying aside at present many other explications, that are given of these two passages, I will speak only of that which Saint *Bernard* gives, and which is both very just and moving. He says, that *Moses*

* Veritatem dico in Christo Jesu: non mentior, testimonium mihi perhibente conscientia mea in Spiritu sancto; quoniam mihi tristitia magna est, & continuus dolor cordi meo. Optabam enim ego ipse anathema esse à Christo pro fratribus meis, qui sunt cognati mei secundum carnem, qui sunt Israelitæ. Rom. 9. 1. 2. & 3.

Hieron. Epist. ad Algishan. q. 9. & sup. Joan. 2. 1.

Bern. serm. 12. sup. Cant.

in that place I now spoke of, speaks to God with the Love of a Father, or rather with the Bowels of a Mother; and that nothing was able to give him any comfort, if his Children were excluded from having part with him. Suppose, says he for example, that a Rich Man shou'd invite a Mother to a Feast, and say to her; you shall come to my House to make good cheer; but as for your sucking Child, you carry in your Armes, you shall leave him behind you; because he'll do nothing but cry and trouble us. Can you believe that this Woman wou'd purchase his Feast at so dear a rate? Or wou'd she not rather fast, than forsake her Infant after this manner? And wou'd she not answer him who invited her, either I'll have none of your Feast, or else I'll bring my Son with me: Behold here, pursues the Saint, just that Spirit with which *Moyse* spoke to God: He wou'd not enter into the Joy of his Lord, if the Children of *Israël*, whom he lov'd with a tenderness of a Mother, were excluded from it.

But this tenderness of a Mother and these Bowels full of Charity and Compassion for Souls, who are under the Tyranny of the Devil, is what is very pleasing in God's sight; 'tis this he requires of our zeal, and this which most of all belongs to a workman of our Lord; and 'tis for this reason that Saint *Paul* exhorts us, † *To put on the Bowels of Mercy, as the Elect and Favourite of God.* The Apostle wou'd hereby render us conformable and like unto God, who is all goodness and mercy; and to this high Priest, of whom he says, * *For our parts, we have not a Priest that cannot have compassion on our Infirmities;* And he wou'd have us, in Imitation of our Master, to compassionate the weakness of our Neighbour. Saint *Ambrose* in his second Book of Penance, ask'd nothing else of God, but this charitable and tender compassion, for the Sins of his Neighbour; and he obtain'd it to so great a degree, that *Paulinus* says of him in his Life, that he wept with those that Confess'd to him; and even discover'd to them the bad state of his Conscience, to move 'em to do the like. Penitents are sooner by this means drawn to God, than by indiscreet zeal, full of rigour and harshness: For as nothing moves us more to Love, than to see our selves belov'd; so the affection which a Confessor shews his Penitent, by a Charitable compassion of his weakness, gains his Heart; and then whatsoever is sayd to him in this condition, makes a deep impression upon him, and whatsoever correction is given him, he receives it with submission, and

† Induite vos ergo sicut electi Dei, sancti, & dilecti, viscera misericordie.
Coloss. 3. 12.

* Non enim habemus Pontificem, qui non possit compati infirmitatibus nostris.
Heb. 4. 15.
Ambr. l. 2. de Gen.

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as coming from a Father. Wherefore Saint *Basil* wou'd have all the Actions of Priests, to be full of tenderness; * *Like a Nurse that cherishes her tender Infant in her Bosom.* And to deal with them after such a manner, that those whom we reprehend may be persuaded, that all we say comes from a pure motion of Charity, and a desire of their obtaining everlasting happiness. this is to be able to know how *To pour Wine and Oyl into Wounds*, as that *Samaritan* in the Gospel did, and as those do, who thus mix sweetness and compassion, with Reprehension, which is of it self displeasing; and thereby better cure the Wounds of the Soul, than by treating Sinners rudely and harshly. For ordinarily speaking, you'll gain very little upon 'em by this means, but will rather render 'em more obdurate and less capable of Council; and you'll not only cause 'em to fly from your self, but make 'em also thun all those of your Order; because they'll suppose, all of 'em to have the same Spirit of harshness and severity, that you shew towards 'em. Saint *Bernard* speaking of this proceeding, that some us'd in their Reprehensions, alledges the example of *Joseph*, † *Who cou'd not forbear weeping*, at the same time that he reproach'd his Brethren; whereby he shew'd, that 'twas not with anger and indignation that he did it, but that 'twas with a Heart full of tenderness and affection.

Another reason which may very much help us to obtain this compassion for the Sins of our Neighbour, and hinder us from falling into anger against 'em, is that which Father *Avila* proposes. The Sins of our Neighbour, says he, may be look'd upon two different ways; either as an offence committed against God, and upon that account we ought to have indignation against 'em, and to wish they may be punish'd; or else as an Evil against our Neighbour, and then we ought to be so far from being angry with 'em, that we ought to have pity on 'em. For Sin being the greatest of all Evils that can happen to Men, there is consequently nothing more proper to excite us to compassion, than when we consider it after this manner; and even the more a Man has Sinn'd, the more he ought to move us to compassion; because his Evil is so much the greater; and therefore he has more reason to complain. And as the injuries and extravagancies of a Mad-man, cause rather Compassion than Anger; because we look upon his words, rather as an effect of his Distemper, than any offence that he gives us; so our Sins do rather

excite

Basil. in regul. brev. interreg. 124.

* *Tanquam si nutrix foveat filios suos. 1 Thess. 2. 7.*

Infundere oleum & vinum. Luc. 10. 34.

† *Non se poterat ultra continere Joseph. Gen. 43. 1.*

St. Avila. c. 27. sup. Audi filia.

excite the Compassion than the Anger of God, since he is pleas'd to look upon 'em rather as an effect of the corruption of our Nature, than as an offence against himself. Wherefore behold here, what we ought to do in regard of the Sins of our Neighbour; we ought to look upon 'em as a distemper, behold 'em rather with Compassion than Indignation; and lastly, look upon 'em as we wou'd desire that God shou'd look upon ours, and this will be a zeal according to Gods own Heart, whose Bowels are full of Mercy.

C H A P. XIV.

*Of another means how to acquit our selves well
of our Functions, which is only to regard
what purely belongs to the Soul, without
letting our selves be carry'd away with
outward appearances.*

ONE of the chief Instructions, which the Saints and Masters of Spirit, give to those who are employ'd for the Salvation of their Neighbour, is, to regard only what purely belongs to the Soul; without concerning themselves in what belongs not thereunto. There are some, says Saint Bernard, who look upon exterior advantages, either of Nature or Fortune, and love only to treat with such as possess these. But those who have pure Eyes, look only upon the Soul, which is not more beautiful in a handsom, than in an ugly Body; but only when 'tis more holy; but 'tis more beautiful in the one, than in the other, when 'tis not defill'd with Sin; and infine, 'tis more or less beautiful, the more or less 'tis exempt and free from Sin, or the more or less 'tis enrich'd with Graces and Vertues. The apparent beauty of the Body is to be esteem'd as nothing, if it be not joyn'd with the invisible beauty of the Soul: The one is common with Beasts and with Inanimate things; but the other is particular to the Angels; wherefore, says Saint Bernard,

*De ord. vite &
mor. inst. p. m. 5.*

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Bernard, we ought only to apply our selves to that which is within. We ought only to look upon the Soul, which God has Created after his own Image; we ought to consider it as the living Temple of the Holy Ghost; as a Member of **JESUS CHRIST**; as all bath'd in the Blood of the Son of God; and as Redeem'd by his Death: And if we perceive that Sin has render'd it ugly and deform'd, and that hereby the infinite price, which it has cost our Saviour is lost; we ought sensibly to be afflicted, and conceive a sorrow for it. As to what regards the Body, we ought on the contrary to withdraw our Eyes from it as much as we can, and make no more account of it, than of a Sack of Dirt, than of a Dunghil cover'd with Snow, or of a Sepulcher, only whited over on the outside; because in effect 'tis nothing else. *He also who labours for the Salvation of Souls*, as *Gerson* says, *ought not only not to regard different Faces; but neither different Sexes*. He ought not only to regard whether the Persons he treats withal for the interest of their Salvation be handsom or ugly; but to make no reflection also whither they be Men or Women. He ought to have his sight fixt upon their Souls, and their inward necessities, and to abstract from all other things; putting himself in pain for nothing else; because there is no difference at all to be found in Souls.

Non solum
non attendat
discretionem
formarum, sed
neque discre-
tionem sexu-
um.
*Gers. l. de parv.
ad Chr. trah.*

This advertisement is of very great importance; first, because when we shall act in this manner, our Love for our Neighbour will be truly the Love of Charity; 'twill be entirely founded in God, and will have no other motive nor end but God himself; and so we shall be secure from the dangerous illusions of Carnal Love. Secondly; because those who are employ'd in the Functions of Charity, may learn hereby, to quit themselves of 'em as they ought; exercising 'em as willingly, no less towards one, than towards another; and as well towards the Poor, as towards the Rich; because the Soul of one that is poor, and is in want of all things, cost God no less, than the Soul of the richest and the most powerful Person in the World. Saint *Ambrose* alledges to our subject, the example of our Saviour, who refus'd to enter into the House of a great Prince, that came to beg of him to go thither for to cure his Son; for fear, says this Father, that in the person of the Son of a great Prince, he might seem to have any respect or deference for Riches; but he went to the House of the *Centurion* to heal his
Servant

Ne in reguli
filio videretur
magis divitiis
detulisse.
*Amb. l. 5 sup.
Luc.
Greg. in Evang.
Hom. 18. de
Sanctis.*

Servant that was Sick, tho' the *Centurion* came not himself to ask it, but only sent one to him to beg his cure; because he wou'd not have 'em believe, he neglected to go thither by reason the Sick Person was a Man of a mean rank; and because he wou'd teach us at the same time, that in the Offices of Charity, we ought only to look upon Souls, and have no regard for the quality or condition of Persons. Souls alone ought after such a manner to draw our Eyes and Heart; that we shou'd as willingly take care of the Salvation of a Clown, as of a Lord; because as the Apostle say, *† The Servant and the Master, the Slave, and he who is free, are all alike in God's sight.*

But if the love of our Neighbour be truly such as it ought to be, we shall rather choose to exercise our Functions of Charity towards the Poor, than towards the Rich; and towards People of mean Extraction, than to Persons of Quality and Condition; and this for divers reasons. First, to follow the Example, that **JESUS CHRIST** has given us hereof: And Secondly; because the Poor do better represent the Person of our Saviour; * *Who being infinitely Rich, wou'd become Poor for Love of us, that we might become Rich by his Poverty.* Thirdly; because we are hereby more assur'd, that 'tis God alone whom we seek in our Functions; and 'tis purely for him that we labour. For when our Functions carry us to treat with the great ones of the World, oftentimes there is a great deal of human respect therein; and 'tis often that we therein seek our selves, and act for our own satisfaction and reputation in the World. In fine, there is no traffick or commerce that is so pure and free from dust and straw, as that which we have with poor and simple People; for many times, that which appears to us to be zeal, is nothing else but vanity and Self-love. Fourthly; because by this means 'twill be more easie to keep our selves in Humility: And lastly; because experience teaches us, that ordinarily more fruit is produc'd in the Souls of the Poor, than in those of the Rich. Do we not see also that the Poor are those who more apply themselves to follow **JESUS CHRIST**, and make greater profit by his Doctrine? And has not he himself told us, *† That the Gospel is denounc'd as well to the Poor, as to the Rich?* There are so few that follow him, that the Holy Text speaking of one of the chief amongst the Jews who imbrac'd his Doctrine, takes notice that not daring openly to declare himself, * *He came to JESUS by Night,* moreover

† Non est servus, neque liber; nō est masculus, neque femina. Omnes enim vos unum estis in Christo Jesu.
Gal. 3. 28.

* Seitis enim gratiam Domini nostri Jesu Christi, quoniam propter vos egenus factus est, cum esset dives, ut illius inopia vos divites efficeret.
2 Cor. 8. 9.

† Pauperes evangelizantur.
Matth. 23. 5.

* Hic venit ad Jesum nocte.
Joan. 3. 2.

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moreover we freely discover truth to the poor, and reprehend 'em without any difficulty, who receive in good part whatsoever is sayd to them; and lastly 'tis easier for a Confessor to deal with 'em: But 'tis not the same with the rich and great Persons of the World, we are often puzzled what to do with 'em: For a Confessor dares not take all that liberty he ought, and is afraid to tell 'em what he thinks; and afterwards he is troubl'd with Scruples and Remorses, for neglecting it, and that he did not speak his mind freely to them, and also that he had too great a facility and condescendence for them. Besides all this, since we must take such times as the great ones please to give us, we necessarily lose a great deal of our own time with 'em, without producing any, or at least very little fruit: Whereas with the poor, we advance much in a short time; because with them, one may presently come to the matter, and to the most essential point; wherefore those that are truly disabus'd of the World, and have a mind to make a great progress in Vertue, and to produce great fruit in Souls, do avoid as much as they can, the meddling with great Persons, and look upon 'em as a burden too heavy for them; according to the words of the Wise Man, * *He shall take upon him a burden, who treats with one more honourable than himself.* Do we not also perceive, that those amongst us, who apply themselves to hear the Confessions of Servants and Poor People, are very much esteem'd for it, and with a great deal of reason; for you may be assur'd, that the Rich will never want Confessors; and if at any time you shou'd judge, that there were any one amongst 'em, to take care of; the care of whom wou'd be a very important service to God, believe, if you are humble, that another will do it better than your self, and with less danger to his own Conscience. In the mean time take care of this poor Man that has several times presented himself to Confess to you, and has been forc'd to return without Confession.

* Pondus super se tollet, qui honestiori se communicat.
Eccl. 11. 2.

Tom. III. L CHAP.

C H A P. XV.

Of another means to produce Fruit in Souls, which is not to confide in our selves, but to put our whole confidence in God.

† Habe fiduciam in Domino ex toto corde tuo, & ne innitaris prudentiæ tuæ. *Prov.* 3. 5.

* Diffidens suis viribus, & Divinis fretus. *In Bull. Julij* 111.

† Fiduciam autem talem habemus per Christum ad Deum: Non quod sufficientes simus cogitare aliquid à nobis, quasi ex nobis, sed sufficientia nostra ex Deo est, qui & idoneos nos fecit ministros novi testamenti. *2 Cor.* 3. 4. & seq. *Tract.* 7. / *sup.* *Joan.* in illud. * Ecce verè Israëlita, in quo dolus non est. *Joan.* 1. 47.

HAVE Confidence in God with your whole Heart, and rely not upon your own Prudence, the following this Councel of the Wise Man, is another means that may extreemly help and assist us, in obtaining what we aim at; and is also proposed to us both by our Holy Founder, and by the Bull of our Institution, in these short but Pathetick words. * *Diffiding in his own strength, and relying upon the power of God.* Would you know how you may produce very much Fruit in Souls, 'tis by diffiding in your self, in your own strength, in your own heights, in your own abilities, and infine in all sorts of human means; and in placing all your confidence in God. In knowing that of your self you are fit for nothing, and therefore put all your Confidence in God alone; this is the best means we can take to advance the work of God in Souls; and the best disposition that the work-men of our Saviour can have to execute great things; because 'tis ordinarily such as are of these sentiments, which he chooses to be Instruments of the wonders he designs to work; and 'tis this the Apostle takes notice of when he tells us, † *But we have this Confidence in God by means of Jesus CHRIST, not that we are able of our selves, even to think what is good, but all our sufficiency com's from God, who has render'd us capable of being Ministers of the new Testament.*

Saint Austin upon these words of our Saviour in favor of Nathanaël, * *Behold a true Israelite in whom there is no guile*; it seems, says he, that a Man, of whom the Son of God had given so advantageous a testimony, ought to have been the first that was call'd to the Apostleship, and yet he was not call'd at all thereunto. Would you, says this Father know why? 'Twas because Nathanaël was a very Learned Man, and

and very knowing in the Law; and that our Saviour wou'd not choose learn'd and able Men, for the Preaching of the Gospel, and for the Conversion of the World; but only poor Fisher-men, simple and ignorant People, who had no Knowledge at all.

Saint Gregory applys to our subject, what the Holy Scripture reports of *David*, when he Defeated the *Amalecites*, who after having Burnt *Siceleg*, and led all the Inhabitants into Captivity. One of the *Amalecites* who retir'd with the rest, had left behind him upon the way, an *Egyptian* Servant, who was not able to follow; because he was Sick. *David* met him when he was already half Dead; because he had been there three Days and three Nights, without Eating or Drinking any thing: He made him take something, which made him recover his strength, and taking him afterwards for his Guide, he pursu'd the *Amalecites* and surpriz'd 'em, they then, thinking no one had pursu'd 'em, and thought of nothing else but making good chear and recreating themselves, whereby he cut 'em in pieces, and recover'd all the Prisoners and Booty they had taken: Behold here, says Saint Gregory, that which the Son of God do's, who is the true *David*; he makes choice of those that the World forsakes, and fortifying 'em with the food of his Word, he afterwards makes 'em his guides against the *Amalecites*; that is to say, he makes of 'em Preachers of his Gospel, against the People of the World, who give themselves up to Mirth and Pleasures. But how comes it to pass that God do's thus, in choosing such weak Instruments for so high employments? Wou'd you, says he, know why? 'Tis to take from Man, all subject of confiding in himself, and all occasion of attributing any thing whatsoever to himself; and 'tis to reach him to place all his Confidence in God, and to ascribe the Glory of all, to him alone. And moreover this sentiment is so pleasing to God, that the better to imprint it in our Hearts, he wou'd have us see by an infinity of Examples, that he pleases himself in choosing weak Instruments, to execute the greatest Actions: 'Tis hereby that we better come to know, that 'tis God who do's all, and not Men: † *Tis thus, that he makes appear the Riches of his Glory*, and herein the greatness of his Omnipotency most of all appears: When God led his People out of *Egypt*, he wrought many Miracles by means of *Moyse*, but there was none of these that made so great an impression

L. 1. Met. c. 29.

† Ut offende

ret divitas

gloriz suz.

Rom. 9. 23.

upon the *Egyptians*, as when *Moses* striking the Dust with his Rod, he chang'd it into Gnats, with which all the Country was fill'd in an instant. For at the same time the Magicians of *Pharao*, having unprofitably imploy'd all sorts of Charms and Inchantments to do the like, were constrain'd to acknowledge God's Power whereby *Moses* acted, and to say, * *The Finger of God is here.* We Read in Ecclesiastical History, that *Sapores* King of *Persia*, having declar'd War against the *Romans*, and besieging *Nisabis* a City of *Mesopotamia* with a powerful Army; the Inhabitants, who had no other hope but in God's assistance, begg'd of the Bishop to Curse the Enemies Army; and for this end, they caus'd him to go up into a high Tower, where he might intirely discover it: But all the Malediction that this Holy Man gave to the Infidels, and all the Prayer he made to God against 'em, was to beg, that he wou'd be pleas'd to send so great a number of Fleas and Gnats amongst 'em, that they shou'd be constrain'd to raise the Siege, and to acknowledge that this Plague came from God; his Prayer was scarce ended, when there fell upon the Army of the *Persians* a Cloud of Fleas and Gnats, which after such a manner fill'd the Trunks of the Elephants, and the Ears and Nostrials of the Horses and other Beasts in the Camp, that they being not able to suffer their biting, ran about in such a fury, that they cast down those that were upon 'em, trampil'd under foot those that endeavour'd to stop 'em, and broke the Ranks and Files of all their Troops. At last the disorder they caus'd was so great, that *Sapores* knowing that it was an effect of Gods Power, and of the care he takes of his Servants, was constrain'd to raise the Siege, and shamefully to return into his own Country. God is able to make War against all the Princes of the World with Fleas and Gnats; and is pleas'd thus to make use of such weak instruments as these, in the execution of the greatest exploits; the better to let us know, that 'tis he only who Acts; hereby to draw a greater Glory to himself. Wherefore 'tis for the same reason, that he very often makes choice also of weak Instruments, to work the greatest Conversions; and 'tis of this that Ecclesiastical History furnishes us with very great proofs; wherein we find that an infinite number of famous Sinners, Hereticks and Infidels, have been Convinc'd and Converted by simple and ignorant Persons; after having a long time resisted the Eloquence and Doctrine of many

¶ Digitts Dei
hic est. Exod.
3. 19. Theod. in
Hist. Eccl. p. 2.
l. 3. c. 6.

Hist. Eccl. &
tripart. p. 1. l.
10. c. 2. &
p. 2. c. 3.

many learned Men; and even the authority of general Councils; where the greatest Men of the whole Church were assembl'd.

We ought moreover to draw three Instructions from hence; the first is, not at all to be discourag'd at the sight of our weakness, and at the small Talents we have for so sublime an end, and so elevated an employment as our Institution calls us unto; but from hence to take occasion, rather to encourage our selves the more, and to have a greater confidence in God, who is ordinarily pleas'd to make use of weak Instruments, to execute his greatest designs: According to the answer Saint Francis made to his ordinary Companion Brother *Macius*, who knowing very well how pleas'd the Saint was to receive any Humiliation, and being desirous to make trial of his Humility, went to him one Day, and propos'd these questions to him. How comes it to pass, says he, that all the World runs after you? That they desire to see you, to hear you, and to follow you? Notwithstanding you have neither Birth, nor any taking exterior; nor any Learning or Eloquence? How comes it then to pass, that they come from all parts to you? Wou'd you know Dear Brother, answers the Saint, with his accustom'd Humility, from whence this comes? 'Tis from the Infinite Bounty of God, who has vouchsafed to cast his Eyes upon me, tho' I be the greatest Sinner, and the most contemptible Creature in the World, † *For God has chosen the Weakest and most Simple in the World, to confound the Strong and Great ones, that no Creature may have subject to Glory in himself, but he that wou'd Glory, let him Glory in our Lord, to whom be Honor and Glory World without End.* Behold a most holy answer, which ought to give us a great deal of comfort and confidence.

The Second Instruction we ought to draw from hence, is, that what Fruit soever God works in Souls by our means; how great Conversions soever he works by us; and if he shou'd make use of us even to work Miracles, this ought not to be unto us any subject of Pride, but on the contrary ought always to confirm us in the knowledge of our Baseness and Nothing; and confirm us in this truth, that we have done nothing at all; because in effect we do nothing of our selves, and are only Instruments that God is pleas'd to make use of. O how perfect a knowledge had the Royal Prophet of this truth, and how are his sentiments and words conformable to his knowledge? * *Lord, says he, we have heard with our*

Ears,

P. 1. l. 2.
c. 65.

† Infirma mundi elegit Deus, ut confundat fortia; & ea quæ non sunt, ut ea quæ sunt destrueret, ut non gloriatur omnis caro in conspectu eius... ut quemadmodum scriptum est, Qui gloriatur, in Domino gloriatur. 1 Cor. 1. 28. 19. Cui honor & gloria in sæcula sæculorum. Rom. 16. 27.

* Deus aures nostras auditivimus: Pa-

res nostri annuntiauerunt nobis, opus quod operatus es in diebus spem, & in diebus antiquis. Manus tua gentes disperdit, & plantasti eos, attixisti populos, & expulisti eos. Nec enim in gladio suo posuerunt terram, & brachium eorum non saluavit eos. Sed dextera tua, & brachium tuum, & illuminatio vultus tui, quoniam complacuiisti in eis.

Ps. 43. 1. & seq.

† Praceptor, per totam noctem laborans, nihil cepimus; in verbo autem tuo laxabo rete. Et cum hoc fecissent, concluserunt piscium multitudine copiosam: rumpebatur autem rete, & annuerunt socijs, qui erant in alia navi, ut adjuvant; & venerunt, & impleverunt ambas naviculas, ita ut perire mererentur. Quod cum videret Simon Petrus, prope dixit ad genua Iesu, dicens: Exi a me, quia homo peccator sum; Domine. Stupor enim circumdederat eum, & eos qui cum eo erant, in captura piscium, quam sperant.

Luce. 5. & seq.

Ears, and our Fathers have told us, what thou didst in their times, and in those times long before 'em, thou didst disperse the Nations before 'em, and didst establish 'em in their place; thou didst afflict the People, whose Land thou wouldest give to them, casting 'em out of it, for 'twas not by their Weapons that they Conquer'd 'em, nor was it their own Hands that sav'd 'em, 'twas thy Hand and Arm, O Lord, and the brightness of thy Countenance that preserv'd 'em; because thou wert pleas'd with 'em: Their Merits had no share therein 'twas a pure effect of thy Bounty and Mercy.

When God therefore performs great things by means of us, we have no reason at all, hereby to become Proud; but on the contrary, the more things he works by us, and the greater they are, the more humble we ought to be, and the more to debase our selves; perceiving that he makes choice of such weak and miserable Instruments, for the execution of so great wonders, as he is pleas'd to work by us. We must do in this occasion as Saint Peter did, when our Saviour caus'd him to take so great a quantity of Fish; as is recounted in the Gospel. The Son of God having order'd him to cast out his Nets to fish, Saint Peter answer'd him: *Master we have labour'd all Night, and have taken nothing, notwithstanding in Obedience to thy Command, I will again cast out my Nets.* And afterwards he took so great a quantity of Fish, that the Net broke, and they were oblig'd to call their Companions, who were in another little Boat, to come and assist 'em to draw it out. At last they fill'd both their Boats only with one draught of the Net; and then Saint Peter seeing the Boat so very full, that 'twas even ready to sink, cast himself at the Feet of Jesus, and said to him *retire from me O Lord; because I am a Sinner: For he was fear'd upon with a great astonishment, and not he alone, but all that were with him, to see the quantity of Fish they had taken.* Saint Peter was surpris'd, to see that after he had labour'd all Night in vain, he obtain'd so copious a fishing, as soon as he cast out his Nets in the Name of JESUS CHRIST; and from hence takes occasion to humble and debase himself. Let us enter with him into these sentiments of astonishment, and humility; and into the knowledge of our own baseness, when ever it shall please God, by our means to execute any great thing. See how far Saint Peter was from applauding himself for having taken such a number of Fish, do you also take care not to permit your self to be carry'd

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carry'd away with Vanity, when God shall have made use of you for the execution of any thing; and know that 'tis a work purely his own, and intirely above your forces; and by this means, you will at length come to expect nothing from your self, but regard all effects as purely his; and as intirely above your forces; and by this means you'll come at length, to expect nothing from your self, but all from God; to attribute nothing to your self but that Weakness and Ministry that belongs to you; and to God, that Praise and Glory which is due to him. Consider what Saint Peter did, when in his own Name he cast out his Nets; and you'll see herein what you can do of your self, and what help you may expect from your own ability, care and labour; and then consider what he did, when he cast 'em out in the Name of Jesus Christ; and hereby you'll know, what you are able to do by Grace, and Gods Assistance. The sight of the one, will teach you to have no confidence at all in your self; and the sight of the other, will give you all confidence in God; making you expect all from him: And by this means, neither the consideration of those great things, which it shall please God to execute by your help, will not inspire any vanity into you; nor the consideration of your own weakness, will at all diminish your courage.

Saint Hierom proposes a Question to our purpose; and says, let us see a little, which of the two did better, either *Moses* who excus'd his Incapacity, when God desir'd to send him to lead his People out of *Egypt*, and who begg'd of God rather to send another, who might better be able to acquit himself then he; or *Isay*, who without being call'd, offer'd himself to denounce the word of God, and sayd, * *Be-hold here I am, send me?* To which this Doctor answers, that what he has to say, is, that 'tis a very good thing to have Humility, and such a knowledge of our selves, that lets us see we are good for nothing; and that 'tis also a very good thing, to have a prompt disposition of mind to serve our Neighbour: But if we wou'd apply our selves, adds the Doctor, to that which is best for us, we must learn of *Moses* Humility, by considering our own Weakness, and learn Zeal and Fervor of *Isay*, by putting our confidence in God; who to reward him for his good Will, purifi'd his Lipes, and render'd him capable of the Ministry, to which he had offer'd himself. Humility is no Enemy of Confidence, nor any obstacle unto it; but on the contrary it helps

Exod. 3.

* Ecce ego, mitte me. *Isai*. 6. 8.

helps and fortifies it; because it causes us to place our whole confidence in God; in whom we are assur'd we can do all things.

The third lesson we are to learn from hence, is, that tho' 'tis very true, that we ought not to confide in our selves, nor to rely upon our own forces; notwithstanding we must always perform what we are able to do for the Salvation of our Neighbour: Otherwise to pretend that God shou'd doall, without our doing any thing, is to desire and expect Miracles; and even to tempt God. He will help us in the Conversion of Souls; and 'tis upon this account that Saint Paul calls us, * *Assistants and Ministers of God*: And that our Saviour Commanded Saint Peter to cast his Nets; for he wou'd not have bestow'd upon him so plentiful a fishing, without his having himself contributed something thereunto; and wou'd hereby also teach us, that we ought not with folded Armes to stand idle. To the end notwithstanding, that on the other side we shou'd not attribute, the good success of the Conversion of Souls, to our own care and industry, he permitted that Saint Peter shou'd work all Night unprofitably, and cast his Nets without being able to catch any thing: So that we ought on the one side to imploy all our care, endeavours, and whatsoever else depends upon us, as if these were sufficient, to effect the affairs we have in hand; and on the other side, we ought to have no more confidence therein, than if we had done nothing; nor expect any thing but from God alone: 'Tis this that CHRIST himself teaches us in his own words, † *When yee have done all that is Commanded you, say, that yee are unprofitable Servants, we have done only what we were oblig'd to do*, take notice here that he says: not, *when yee have done all that yee were commanded to do*, but *when yee have done all that yee were commanded to do*: To make us comprehend, that in whatsoever we are able to do, we ought never to confide; but ought to put our whole confidence in God, and attribute to him the Glory of all: Which in the Opinion of Holy Men, is the Supreme and highest degree of Humility.

When Saint Peter and Saint John cur'd the Lame Man, that begg'd Almshouses at the Gate of the Temple, Saint Peter perceiving that all the World were astonish'd at the Miracle, and look'd upon them with admiration, he cry'd out to them, * *Yee Men of Israël, why do yee wonder at this, and why do yee look upon us, as if by our own Vertue and Power we have made this Man to walk? The God of our Fathers;*

has

* Dei enim
sumus adjuto-
res.
1 Cor. 3. 9.

† Cum feceritis omnia quae praecepta sunt vobis, dicite: Servi inutiliter sumus; quod debimus facere, fecimus.
Luc. 17. 10.

* Viri Israël-
ae, quid mira-
mini in hoc,
aut nos quid
intuemini,
quasi nostra
virtute, aut
potestate fe-
cerimus haec.

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has glorify'd his Son JESUS, whom yee indeed betray'd and deny'd before Pilat's Face, he judging it fit to dismiss him; this Man whom yee see and know, has confirm'd the Name and Faith of JESUS who has fortify'd him, and 'tis this Faith which he had in him, that has thus, in the presence of yee all, intirely Cur'd him. Saint Paul and Saint Barnabas perceiving the People of Lystris, ready to adore them upon the like Miracle; and that they had already prepar'd Crowns and Victims, to Sacrifice to them as God's; rent their Cloaths in pieces crying out, * *Yee Men what's this yee are about to do? We are Mortals as you are, and Men like your selves.* 'Tis not we that act in this we do: 'Tis God that acts by us, and 'tis to him alone that the Glory of all is to be given. Thus we see that these great Saints, after they had wrought many Miracles, remain'd in as profound an Humility as if they had done nothing. 'Tis after this manner we must carry our selves, when we have done all we can for the Salvation of Souls, we must keep our selves in Humility, and in the knowledge of our own Baseness.

ambulare? Deus Patrum nostrorum glorificavit nomen suum Jesum, quem vos quidem tradidistis, & negastis, ante faciem Pilati, judicante illo dimitti. ... Hunc quem vos vidistis & nostis, confirmavit nomen ejus, & fides, quæ per eum est, dedit illi integram sanitatem istam in conspectu omnium vestrum. *Act. 3. 12. 13. seq.*

* Viri, quid hæc facitis? & nos mortales, sumus sicut vobis homines. *Act. 14. 14.*

CHAP. XVI.

That Confidence in God, is another very efficacious means to obtain Favors from him.

SAINTE Cyprian explicating these words of God to the Children of Israël, † *All places where yee have set footing shall be yours,* says, * *By the Foot we ought to understand hope, and the greater our hope is, the more things it will obtain:* Saint Bernard says the same, you'll possess all things, says he, as far as you extend your hope: If you have a great hope and confidence in God, 'twill do much for you. But if your hope be small, 'twill do but very little. We have many Examples of this in the Gospel; hearken how the Prince of the Synagogue, who had lost his Daughter, speaks to JESUS CHRIST; † *Lord,* says he, *my Daughter is just now Dead, but come and impose your Hand upon her, and she shall live.* He had without doubt some Faith and confidence; because he be-

† Omnis locus quem calcavit pes vester, vester erit.

Matth. 11. 24.

* Pes vester urique, spes vestra est. Et quantumcumque illa processerit, obtinebit. *Cyp. in eund. loc.*

Et Bern.

serm. 15. sup.

27. Qui habitat.

† Domine, filia mea modo defuncta est: sed veni, impone manum tuam super eam, & vivet. *Matth. 9. 18.*

Tom. III.

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liev'd

liev'd that JESUS CHRIST cou'd Raife his Daughter to Life; but he had very little of them; because he believ'd it necessary that our Saviour shou'd go to the place whete she was, and lay his Hand upon her: Wherefore our Saviour conforming himself, to the Faith of her Father, go's to his Daughter, and having found her Dead; he takes her by the Hand, and raises her to Life. The Woman in the Gospel, who had been Sick of a Bloody Flux for twelve Years, and had spent to no purpose all she had, to be treated by Physicians, approach'd the Son of God with a little more Faith,

† Diebat enim intra se: Si tetigero tantulum vestimentum ejus, salva ero. *Matth. 9. 11.*

* Domine, non sum dignus, ut intres sub tectum meum, sed tantum dic verbo, & sanabitur puer meus. Audiens autem Jesus, miratus est, & sequentibus se dixit: Amen dico vobis, non inveni tantam fidem in Israël. Et dixit Jesus Centurioni: Vade, & sicut credidisti, fiat tibi. *Matth. 8. 3. 10. 13.*
† Fiat misericordia tua, Domine, super nos, quem admodum speravimus in te. *Psal. 32. 22.*

† For she sayd, within her self, so that I can but touch, only the Hem of his Garment, I shall be heal'd. She gets throu' the press of the People, approaches him, touches the Hem of his Garment, and behold she is cur'd in the same instant; God acting conformably to the extent of her Faith and confidence. But the Centurian, had a great deal more; he came to find out our Saviour, and to beseech him to cure his Servant who was Sick; but he did not beg of him for this end, either to go to his House, or that he wou'd vouchsafe to permit his Servant to touch his Cloaths. * Lord, says he, I am not Worthy thou shou'd'st enter under my Roof, say but only the Word, and my Servant shall be Heal'd; he also Merited that our Saviour shou'd admire his Faith, by saying to those that follow'd him, Verily I say unto yee, I have not found so great a Faith in Israël. And turning himself to the Centurian, he sayd, Go and be it done unto thee according to thy Faith. He had a firm confidence, that JESUS CHRIST needed only to speak, to cure his Servant; and JESUS CHRIST conforming himself to his Faith, cur'd him only by his bare word. This shews that God is pleas'd to treat and deal with us according to the confidence that we have in him. † Let thy Mercy O Lord, says David, extend it self towards us, according to the hope that we have in thee: According to the depth of the Vessel of our confidence, says Saint Cyprian, such shall be the quantity of Heavenly Waters, that God shall pour into it.

When JESUS CHRIST commanded Saint Peter to come to him upon the Waves, Saint Peter walk'd upon 'em as if he had gone upon the Earth, so far he was from being affraid, but he began no sooner to lose his confidence, perceiving the Wind to rise, but he presently began to sink; wherefore our Saviour reprehended him for this his fear, saying

* Modicum fidei, quare dubitasti? *Matth. 14. 31.*

* Man of little Faith why do'st thou doubt? Whereby he wou'd

would give him to understand, that he sunk only for want of confidence: 'Tis also very often, that the Waves of Temptations seem ready to swallow us up, by reason of our want of Faith; whereby we are not able to resist the storm's that rise against us; for if we had a firm Confidence in God, he would not fail to take us out of all sorts of dangers, and to replenish us with his Graces.

The *Moabites* and *Amonites* having joyn'd their forces together, to make War against *Josaphat* King of *Juda*; this Prince perceiving himself too weak to resist 'em, was seas'd with a panick fear; but because in this extremity, he and all his People had recourse to God, God told him by the Prophet, * *Fear nothing, nor be at all affraid of the multitude that is assembl'd against thee; because 'tis not thine but God's War, 'tis not thou that shalt fight; have but a firm confidence in God, and thou shalt see the succours that God will give thee.* The effect of which succours they soon experienc'd: For without their doing any thing, God destroy'd their Enemies; permitting that they shoud turn their Armes one against another, and hereby destroy themselves; wherefore here let us consider how little God requires of us, to procure his assistance, and to obtain the Victory against our Enemies. He only requires of us that we shoud have a confidence in him: And in the ninetyeth Psalm he himself gives no other reason for those succours he promises the afflicted, than their hope in him: † *Because he hop'd in me I will deliver him; I will protect him because he has known my Name.* O wonderful liberality of God, cry's out Saint Bernard upon these words, *Who never fails to assist those that hope in him?* * *Our Fathers*, says the Royal Prophet, *have hop'd in thee; they hop'd in thee O Lord, and thou hast deliver'd 'em, they cry'd out unto thee, and thou hast sav'd 'em, they hop'd in thee and were not Confounded.* Who has ever had recourse to God, or had an intire confidence in him, without being heard and succour'd? † *Cast thy Eyes upon all the Nations of the Earth*, says the Wise Man, *and know that never any one hop'd in God and was Confounded: For who has ever Invok'd him, and was dispis'd?* There's still another reason, that ought particularly to ingage us to put our whole confidence in God; but having spoken hereof more at large in another place; I shall only in passing here touch upon it; 'tis this that when dissiding in our selves, we put our whole confidence in God alone; we put all upon him and charge him with all things; so that this ingages him to

M 2

take

* Nolite time-
re, neque pa-
veatis hanc
multitudinem:
non est enim
vestra pugna,
sed Dei. Non
enim eritis vos
qui dimicabi-
tis, sed tantum
modo confi-
denter stare.
& videbitis au-
xilium Domi-
ni super vos.
2 Paral. 20. 15.
et 17.

† Quoniam in
me speravi
liberabo eum;
propterea cum
quoniam cum
novit nomen
meum.

Psal. 90. 14.
O dulcissima li-
beralitas! Quae
in se speranti-
bus non desit.
Bern. serm. in
Ps. 15. Qui ha-
bitat.

* In te spera-
verunt Patres
nostri; spera-
verunt, & libe-
rasti eos: ad
te clamave-
runt, & salvi
facti sunt: in te
speraverunt,
& non sunt
confusi.

Psal. 4. 5.
et 6.

† Respice
filii nationes
hominum:
& scitote
quod nullus
speravit in
Domino, &
confusus est.
Quis invoca-
vit eum, &
despexit illum?
Eccl. 3. 11. et 12.
Psal. 2. Traité
3. c. 28. et
Traité 4. c. 15.

take care of our Interest, as of his own Glory. The Conversion of Souls, is your affair O Lord, and not ours; for what are we able to do herein, if you touch not their Hearts? Do you therefore work and give your particular assistance hereunto.

The words which *Jesue* sayd to God, to turn his Anger from the People of *Israel*, who had turn'd their backs to their Enemies, are very proper for this subject, † *What will become of the Glory of thy Name?* Humble us O Lord, if it be your good Will and Pleasure, and deliver us up to our Enemies, as we have deserv'd: But what will they say of your Name? What will the Nations say, when they shall behold the Destruction and Captivity of your People? They'll say that you cou'd not conduct 'em into the Land that you had promis'd 'em. * *Give no glory therefore to us, O Lord, but to thy Name.* † *Do Justice to thy self O Lord, but charge us with Confusion*, as you shall think fit. Lastly, let it be taken after what manner it will, 'tis always a very good means to obtain all sorts of favors from God, to have a great confidence in him, * *For our Lord beholds those that fear him, with a pleasing Countenance, and such as hope in his Mercy.*

But above all Religious Persons have particular reason to promise themselves God's Assistance of in all their Functions; because being ingag'd therein by Obedience, they are ingag'd by God's Order, who consequently will not fail to give them force and necessary helps, to acquit themselves therein as they ought: When God Commanded *Moses* to make for him the Tabernacle; the Ark of the Covenant; the Propitiatory, which ought to be above it; and the Altar and Table, upon which the Loaves of Propitiation were plac'd; and lastly all the Vessels, which were for the Service of the Tabernacle; he did not only content himself to mark down the measures, and proportions of each one, but that his Orders might be well executed, † *He chose Beseleel and Oliab to whom he gave such an Ability and Understanding as was necessary, to know how perfectly to work in Gold, Silver, Precious Stones, Copper, Marble and all sorts of Wood.* But if God having chosen Workmen to make a material Tabernacle, had care to Inspire them, with all necessary knowledge, they shou'd stand in need of, what will he not do, in regard of those Workmen and Ministers of the Gospel, whom he has chosen to make the Spiritual Tabernacle of Souls, and to raise the Living Temple of the Holy Ghost, to extend his Kingdom

† Et quid facies magno nomen tuo?
Jes. 7. 9.

* Non nobis, Domine, non nobis, sed nomini tuo da gloriam.
Psal. 113. 9.
† Domino Deo nostro iustitia, nobis autem confusio faciei nostrae.
Ezech. 1. 6.
* Beneplacitum est Domino, super timentes eum, & in eis qui sperant super misericordia eius.
Psal. 146. 11.

† Ecce vocavi Beseleel, & implevi eum Spiritu Dei, sapientia, & intelligentia, & scientia in omni opere, ad excogitandum quidquid fabricari potest, ex auro, & argento, & ære, & marmore, & gemmis, & diversitate lignorum: dedi que ei socium Oliab... ut faciant cuncta que præcepi tibi. Exod. 31. 2. & seq.

Kingdom in the Hearts of Men? Have we not great Subject to hope, that according to that proportion, wherewith Spiritual things surmount Material, so according to the same proportion, he will give us all that is necessary to acquit our selves well of our Functions. He has so well assur'd us of his help in these sorts of occasions, that he wou'd not have us put our selves to any pain, for what we have to say. * When, says he, *ye shall appear before Governours of Provinces and before Kings upon my account, think not what ye are to say, nor how ye ought to speak; for then God will put words into your Mouth: For ye do not speak, but 'tis the Spirit of your Father that speaks in ye.* He promises infinite such a Victorious Eloquence, as nothing shall be able to resist. † *I will give ye, says he, that power of Speech and such a Wisdom, as your Adversaries shall not be able to resist nor contradict.* And in effect do we not Read in the Acts of the Apostles, that those that disputed against Saint Stephen, * *Were not able to resist his Wisdom and the Spirit that spoke in him.*

* Ad præfides & ad reges du-
cimini prop-
ter me . . .
Cum autem
tradent vos,
molite cogitare
quomodo, aut
quid loquami-
ni; dabitur enim
vobis in
illa hora, quid
loquamini.
Non enim vos
estis qui loqui-
mini, sed ip-
situs Patris
vestri, qui lo-
quitur in vo-
bis. Matth. 10.
18. 19. & 20.
† Ego enim
dabo vobis os,
& sapientiam,
cui non pote-
runt resistere.
& contradice-
re adversarij
vestri.
Luc. 21. 15.
* Et non po-
terant resistere
sapientie, &
spiritui qui
loquebatur.
Act. 6. 10.

CHAP. XVII.

*How much the want of Confidence, is displeasing
to God.*

AS there is nothing more pleasing to God nor more proper to draw down his Graces upon us than the confidence we have in him, so nothing displeases him more, nor is more capable to provoke his Indignation against us, than the want of confidence. He looks upon it as an Offence and Injury done to his Honor; and we see in effect, that one of the subjects that most of all mov'd him to Anger against the Children of Israel, and for which he most severely punish'd 'em, was this. When *Moses* sent to discover the Land of Promise, the greatest part of those he sent reported at their return, that they had seen very strong Citties, and such Giants, that they themselves were but Ants in comparison of them;

them; and this caus'd so great a consternation amongst the People, that despairing of being able to become Masters of the Land that had been promis'd 'em, they already spoke of making choice of a Head or Captain, to return with 'em into *Egypt*: Nay, they even went so far, as that they wou'd have Ston'd *Caleb* and *Josue*, who endeavour'd to diswade 'em from this design: And then the glory of God, appearing upon the Tabernacle, he sayd to *Moyſes*; † *How long will this People Blaspheme against me? How long will they refuse to believe me, after so many prodigies as I have wrought in their sight? Wherefore I will strike them with the Plague and destroy them.* Notwithstanding *Moyſes* interceded to God for the People, and God then pardon'd 'em. Indeed he told 'em notwithstanding. * *All those who have seen my Glory and the Prodigies I have wrought in Egypt, and in the Desert; and have frequently Rise and Rebell'd against me, not having Obey'd my Voice, they shall never see the Land, that I have sworn to their Fathers to give them; nor any of those who have Blasphem'd against me shall ever behold it.* In effect, of more than six hundred thousand Men that went out of *Egypt*, there was not one of 'em who saw the Land of Promise, besides *Caleb* and *Josue*, who endeavour'd to encourage the People. All the rest dy'd in the Desert, receiving this punishment for the little confidence they had in God; and as to their Children, who they sayd wou'd become a Prey to their Enemies, these were those, that God made choice of, to take Possession of this Land. Even *Moyſes* and *Aaron*, to shew how disagreeable to God their want of confidence was, were also chastis'd after the same manner; because when they struck the Rock, as God had Commanded 'em, 'twas with a kind of doubt, whither Water cou'd come out of it. † *Because yee have not believ'd me,* says our Lord, *and have not maintain'd my Glory, before the Children of Israel, yee shall not lead this People, into the Land that I will give them.* He gave *Moyſes* indeed a sight of it from a high Mountain, but told him at the same time; * *Thou hast seen it with thy Eyes, but thou shall not enter into it;* as if he wou'd have sayd, behold the Land, of which I promis'd to give you Possession; but to punish you for your little confidence, you shall never enjoy it. This want of confidence is an offence, committed against God's Honor, as I have already sayd; and therefore behold why he punishes it so severely.

† Utrunque
detraxit mihi
populus iste?
Quouique
non credent
mihi, in om-
nibus signis
quæ feci co-
ram eis? Feri-
am igitur eos
pestilentia,
atque consu-
mam.

Num. 14. 11. &
12.

* Attamen
omnes homi-
nes qui vide-
runt majesta-
tem meam, &
signa quæ feci
in Egypto, &
in solitudine,
& tentaverunt
me jam per
decem vices,
nec obedie-
runt voci
meæ, non vi-
debunt Terram
pro qua juravi
patribus eo-
rum, nec quic-
quam ex illis
qui detraxit
mihi, intuebi-
tur eam.

Num. 14. 22. 23.

† Quis non
credidistis mi-
hi, ut sanctifi-
caretis me, co-
ram filiis Is-
rael, non in-
troducetis hos
populos in
Terram, quam
dabo eis.

Num. 20. 12.

* Vidisti eam
oculis tuis, &
non transibis
ad illam.

Deut. 34. 4.

Part. 3. Of the End of the Socy of Jesus. 95

We may draw from hence two things for our Instruction, the first, that the discouragement into which we permit our selves to fall, either in Temptations, or in our own Advancement in Vertue, or lastly in those Functions, wherein Obedience has plac'd us; is a very bad thing in it self, and very displeasing to God. One wou'd say, if we look'd only upon outward appearance, that 'tis a sentiment that springs from Humility; when in reality it proceeds only from our looking upon our selves, as if it were by our own forces that we must gain help in our necessities; which indeed is a kind of Pride, very much to be condemn'd. The second Instruction we may draw from hence, is, that in all our necessities and in all our afflictions, the first thing we ought to do, is to have recourse to God; we must not begin, by putting in Practice what belongs to us, and afterwards having recourse to God; for this is one of the great abuses, the People in the World are guilty of, who presently put all things in practice, and set all engin's on work, to compass their designs, without thinking at all upon God; and have only recourse to him, when they have to no purpose try'd all other ways, and when their affairs seem to be in a desperate condition. God also often permits that all those Human means, in which they plac'd the greatest confidence, become unprofitable, and even turn to their own confusion; * *Because thou hast had confidence in the King of Syria, says he to Asa by the Mouth of his Prophet, and not in the Lord thy God, therefore the Army of the King of Syria has escap'd thy Hands.* God is offended that we shou'd search any other help but his: 'Tis to him therefore, we must first of all have recourse; and for this effect, one of the chief things we have to do in Prayer, is there to establish in our Hearts, an intire confidence in God. For since the establishment of Vertue in our Heart, is what we ought chiefly to propose to our selves in Prayer; 'tis fit that we shou'd employ our selves therein; to gain a Vertue so necessary and of so great importance. But moreover to do this well we ought to labour herein without ceasing, till we find a habit thereof well fix'd in our Heart, and till we come to have recourse to God in all things, and to put our confidence in nothing but in him: We ought continually to have the words of *Iosaphat King of Iuda* in our thoughts, † *Lord in the Ignorance we are in, what ought we to do? But only to raise our Eyes to thee O God.* And then

* Quia habuisti fiducia in Rege Syriæ, & non in Domino Deo tuo, idcirco evasit Syriæ Regis exercitus de manu tua.
2 Paralip. 16. 7.

† Cum ignoremus quid agere debeamus, hoc solum habemus residui, ut oculos nostros dirigamus ad te.
2 Paral. 10. 12.

WC

† Beatus vir,
cujus est no-
men Domini
spes ejus.
Isai. 39. 5.

we shall not only be able to do all things with God, but we shall also begin to be happy with him; since the Royal Prophet teaches us: That † *Blessed is the Man whose confidence is in the name of the Lord.*

C H A P. XVIII.

That we ought not to be discourag'd, tho' we perceive we produce very little or no Fruit in Souls.

* Vix mihi,
quia factus
sum sicut qui
colligit in au-
tumno race-
mos vinde-
miz: non est
horruis ad co-
medendum.

Mich. 7. 1.
† Relicta est
in urbe solitu-
do, & calami-
tas opprimit
portas: quia
hæc erunt in
medio popu-
lorum: quo-
modo si paucæ
olivæ, quæ re-
manferunt,
excitantur ex
olea: & race-
micum fuerit
finita vinde-
mia.
Isai. 24. 12.
Eccl. 13.

* **W**O be to me, says the Prophet *Micheas*, complaining of the little Fruit he wrought amongst the People of *Israel*, *I am become like a Man who go's to gather Grapes after the Vintage is made, and finds not so much as one bunch to Eat.* The Prophet *Isay* makes the like complaint of the same thing. † *The City*, says he, *will become a frightful Solitude; Desolation, with cast down her Gates; because the same shall happen in the midst of the Earth, and in the midst of the People, which happens when they shake down those few Olives that are left upon the Tree, after the others have been gather'd; and when they gather together, those few bunches of Grapes, which were left upon the Vines after the Vintage.* Lastly, one of the things that is wont most of all to discourage those, that labour for the Salvation of Souls, is, to see how little Fruit they produce, by all their Sermons, and notwithstanding all those other means they make use of; yet how few People are Converted thereby, how few there are that give themselves to Vertue, and how few also do persevere therein. Wherefore since 'tis a common complaint, which produces so bad effects, I will here apply a remedy thereunto, and perhaps what I shall say, will serve to encourage us the more to exercise Charitable Offices.

Saint

Part. 3. Of the End of the Socy of JESUS. 97

Saint *Austin* treats this matter perfectly well; answering this complaint by the Example of our Saviour. Perhaps, says he, the Son of God Preach'd only to his Disciples, and to those that wou'd believe in him: But do we not see, that he Preach'd also to his enemies, and to those that endeavour'd to catch at his words to destroy him? Or perhaps he Preach'd not, but when there was a great crowd of People to hear him: But do we not see that he Preach'd also to one single Woman of *Samaria*, and that with her he handel'd the famous Question, whether they ought to adore only in *Jerusalem*, or whether they might also adore in other places? But you will say, our Saviour knew she wou'd believe in him, and make profit of all he shou'd say to her: 'Tis true, answers the Father, he knew it very well; but what will yee say of his Sermons to the Pharisees, Saducees, and those others who wou'd not only not believe in him, but wou'd even put him to Death? Sometimes he ask'd 'em Questions that he might convince them by their own Answers; and sometimes he Answers their Questions, which they propos'd only to tempt him; * *And yet we do not read, that any of 'em was Converted, by the force of his Doctrine*; yet he knew very well what wou'd happen: But what knowledge soever he had, that his Sermons wou'd not convert 'em, but on the contrary wou'd serve to confirm 'em in their hardness of heart, yet he neglected not to Preach to them; to the end that we who are ignorant, whether any will be converted or no by our means, shou'd learn by his example never to relent in our Functions, and never to be discourag'd for the little fruit we think we have wrought. Perhaps there is one of his Elect whose Salvation he design'd shou'd be wrought by your Sermons, perhaps he will touch his heart the very moment you speak; or if this Conversion be not then wrought, perhaps he will work it afterwards, and the seed of the word of God, which you cast into his heart, will then produce the fruits of Justice and Salvation: Wherefore let what will happen, we ought never to neglect any thing for the help of Souls, that depends upon us.

Gerfon, in a Treatise he made of the means to draw Children to JESUS CHRIST, speaks very severely against those that refuse to hear the Confessions of certain Sinners, because they presently return to commit the same Sins; and that all they do to Convert 'em, is but labour lost, and as

Tom. III.

N

if

Aug. l. 1. contr. Cresc. gram. cap. 8.

* Quod cum faceret, nullum ex his legitur ad eum sequendum fuisse conversum. *Aug. ubi sup.*

Gerf. lib. de conversione peccatorum ad Christum.

if they cast Water into a Sive. In the same place also he exhorts Confessours to apply themselves to hear the Confessions of Children, from whom he says, there may be great fruit hop'd for; because they are between two ways, and in a condition to follow that of the two, into which we shall direct 'em; they will be for him, say's he, who shall get their good Will and upperhand over 'em; if they are gain'd by the Devil they'll be for him, so 'tis of great consequence to lead 'em betimes into the way of Vertue, and conduct 'em therein at first, because ordinarily they remain in that, in which they are first plac'd. Afterwards he answers to the Objections that some Confessours make, who say, 'tis but lost time to Confess Children; because they have not as yet a sufficient capacity of understanding and profiting by what is sayd to them, and therefore they return to the same things after Confession, from which they came to it; and begin again to play, to quarrel with their companions, and even to fight with 'em as if nothing had been sayd to them. But, says *Gerson*, if because they return presently to their bad habits, you'll not Confess 'em, you ought not for the same reason to Confess those that are advanc'd in years; for they also return to their Vomits, as soon as they go from Confession; and their Sins are far greater than those of Children, which ordinarily are only Venial. 'Twou'd, without doubt, be a very strange thing shou'd we send away our Penitents, or refuse to Confess 'em, because they presently fall back into the same Sins. Wherefore, adds he, we ought neither to refuse to hear the Confessions of the one nor the other, so long as they make a true resolution of amendment; and he applys to this subject comparisons that agree very well with it. * *So long as a Ship leaks, do they leave Pumping, because there enters as much Water in, as the Pump takes out?* And do we leave off wathing our hands, because they daily grow dirty? We must have our hand continually upon the Pump, tho' we perceive there enters as much Water as we take out; because otherwise the Vessel wou'd sink, which this hinders it from doing. † *We must oftentimes wash our hands, tho' they presently grow dirty again; because the dirt at least sticks not so fast, nor have we so much pain to get 'em clean.* Wherefore let us not neglect to Confess such as are Penitent, and help 'em to get up again, tho' they presently fall back; for otherwise they will quite lose themselves, and this at least hinders 'em from

* Numquid sentinam navis exhaustiens, ideoq̃ deserit opus, quia redit tantumdem aquæ, quantum ex-pulerit?

† Si quotidie manus fordiantur, non minus ablui-mus illas: quia etiã re-deant sordes, non eã tenacitate cohz-reſcunt.

Gros. ubi sup.

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from quite abandoning themselves to their disorders; and after all, there is always place to hope for their Salvation.

The example of our holy Founder, may serve us herein for a Rule. We Read of him, that amongst other works of Charity he continually practis'd, he imploy'd all his power to withdraw bad Women from their Debaucheries; for this end he obtain'd the establishing a House for them at *Rome*, for those that wou'd quit their disorders; for tho' there was at that time at *Rome*, a Monastery of Penitents, yet they receiv'd none therein, but such as took the Vail; and many of these sort of Women, how great a desire soever they had to get out of this their unhappy state, either wou'd not imbrace a Religious Life, because they found themselves not call'd thereunto; or cou'd not, because of their ingagement in Marriage. To the end therefore, that the one and the other might find a place of Retreat, he caus'd a House to be built for 'em, under the name of the Monastery of Saint *Martha*: And because no body wou'd begin so holy a work, tho' several offer'd to contribute to it, he was the first that led the way, giving for this end a hundred Ducats, which he got for some Jewels that were sold by his order, and given him in a time when he was in great want for the affairs of the SOCIETY. His Office of General hinder'd him not from taking this affair so to heart, that when there were any Courtisans that quitted their bad Life, he himself accompany'd 'em throu' the Streets of *Rome*, and conducted 'em to this Monastery of Saint *Martha*; or to some other honest House to which they retir'd. Some took upon 'em to tell him that he lost his time in labouring to Convert such Creatures as these, whose long and vicious habits, wou'd easily draw them back into their former disorders: To whom he answer'd, that if he cou'd only obtain that any one of 'em shou'd pass one Day without offending God; he thought he had imploy'd his time and care very well, tho' he shou'd even be assur'd that presently after, she wou'd lead the same kind of Life as before. So therefore tho' we shou'd know that a Penitent wou'd not fail presently to commit again the same Sin, we ought not but to think our pains well imploy'd, tho' he shou'd remain only one hour without offending God, or shou'd commit but one Mortal Sin less; and this is to have a true zeal of the

*His Life l. 5.
cap. 9.*

Honor and Glory of God. He that digs for a Treasure, takes a great deal of pains to dig a long time, and to take out a great deal of Earth, before he can find any thing; and for a little Gold, he afterwards finds, he thinks he has well employ'd all the pains he has taken.

But let us go a little farther, and put the case, that no one shou'd be Converted, nor even that we shou'd not be able to obtain, that any one for an hour only shou'd abstain from offending God: I say, that notwithstanding all this, we ought not to leave off Preaching, nor of doing whatsoever depends upon us, for the help of Souls, Saint Bernard treats this matter very well, in a Letter he writes to Pope *Eugenius*, who had been both his Disciple, and one of his Religious. He exhorts him to reform the People and Court of *Rome*; and having long insisted here-upon he makes this Objection, and tells him, but perhaps you are not of my Opinion, and you'll tell me, 'tis to no purpose to undertake to reform the *Romans*, who are a proud kind of People, untractable, seditious, incapable of living in peace, or of submitting to their duty, but only when they want power to resist; and lastly from whom nothing is to be expected; and therefore 'twou'd be to labour in vain. * *Notwithstanding do not diffide*, continues the Saint, *you'll not perhaps cure 'em, but you'll labour to do so*; by applying convenient remedies to their Indisposition; and this is what God requires of you. † *You have been establish'd for their Governour*, says the Wise Man, *take care of 'em*; and take notice that he says not, *cure 'em*, for he who is put to govern others, is not oblig'd to cure all their defects; because that is not in his power, and God requires no more of us than we are able to do. Wherefore one sayd very well; * *Tis not always in the Physicians power to give help to the Sick*; and in effect, 'tis not in this, that the Duty of his Profession consists; but that he fails not in any thing that is in his power to cure him. But laying aside these Authorities which I have alledg'd, I'll propose another, that is more formal and more exprefs. Hearken to the Apostle, who says: † *I have labour'd more than all the rest*. He says not, *I made more progress and produc'd more fruit in Souls than all the rest*: For being instructed by God himself, * *He knew very well, that every one shou'd one Day receive his Recompence according to his labours*, and not according to the success he had in 'em; and therefore he

ought

Bern. li. 4. de
conf. ad Eugen.

* Noli diffidere: curam
exigeris, non
curationem,
ubi sup.

† Rectorem te
posuerunt....
Curam illor-
um habe.
Eccl. 32. 1.
et 2.

* Non est in
medico sem-
per, ut rele-
vetur aeger.

† At melius
propono de
tuis tibi: Pau-
lus loquitur:
Abundantius
illis omnibus
laboravi.

2 Cor. 15. 10.
Non ait:
Plus omnibus
profui, aut
plus omnibus
fructificavi.

Bern. ubi sup.
* Unusquisque
autem propi-
am mercedem
accipiet secun-
dum suum la-
borem.

1 Cor. 3. 8.

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ought only to glory in his labours. Imitate him by labouring on your side, in doing what you are able; Plant, Water, Cultivate the Vineyard of our Lord, and hereby you'll satisfie and perform the duty of your charge; the increase and fruit belongs not unto you, 'tis God that is to take care thereof, which he will do when he thinks fit, but tho' he shou'd not do it, you will never lose any thing thereby, because the holy Scripture assures us, that * *He renders to the Just the Recompence of their Labours*, and measures 'em not according to the success. † *O secure Labour: whose Recompence depends not upon the success!* Tho' no body shou'd be Converted, tho' no one shou'd mend himself, yet your Recompence will be as great as if you had produc'd great Fruit, and as if you had been the cause of many Conversions. Notwithstanding I must needs here tell you, add's the Saint, without pretending to give bounds to the Bounty and Omnipotency of God, that shou'd the People of Rome be more harden'd then they are, and tho' they shou'd have Hearts of Stone; * *God can of these Stones raise Children to Abraham* † *And who knows but that our Lord may permit himself to be overcome, and pardon 'em, and pour also his Blessings upon 'em?* But we do not here examin what God will do, for it belongs not unto us to penetrate his Judgments: All that I propose to my self, is to make appear to those whose duty it is, to Labour in the Salvation of Souls; that the consideration of the little Fruit they produce therein, ought not to cause 'em to relent, because the Merit as well as the Recompence depends not upon the success, but only upon the manner that they acquit themselves of their duty.

There is yet one thing more, which is, that even tho' we shou'd know we shou'd be able to produce no Fruit at all in Souls, yet we ought not to neglect to persevere always in our Functions, as if we made great progress therein; and this for two reasons; the one of which is drawn from it's conducing to the greatness of God's Mercy, and the other to that of his Justice. Fountains continue to run without ceasing, says Saint *Chrysostom*, tho' no body go's to draw Water; and it is what conduces to the beauty and greatness of a City, to have Water in it in great abundance; to disperse and lose it self in divers places thereof. The same thing ought to be in Preachers, by whom as Channels the Water of Evangelical Doctrine, Communicates

* Reddidit iustis mercedem laborum suorum.
Sap. 10. 17.
† Securus labor quem nullus valet evacuare defessus.
Bern. ubi sup.

* Potens est Deus de lapidibus istis suscitare filios Abraham.
Matth. 3. 9.
† Quis scit convertatur, & ignoret Deus, & relinquat post se benedictionem?
Joel. 2. 14.

municates it's self to the whole World; they ought never to cease pouring forth these wholesom Waters of the Word of God, whether fewer or more drink of 'em. 'Tis in this that the Magnificence of God's Mercy makes a greater appearance, that he shou'd vouchsafe to let his Waters run continually without ceasing, for those that were thirsty and had a desire to drink of 'em: † *Come to these Waters you that are thirsty; and that have no Money make hast, buy and eat; come and buy Wine and Milk without Money and without giving any thing in exchange for it.* Secondly, this conduct belongs to the Justice of God; because in case so many advertisements and Sermons are not able to Convert Men, they will serve at least, * *That God may be justifi'd in his words, and that he gains his cause, when they go about to Judge him.* God wou'd justifie his cause towards Sinners and let 'em see, that 'twas their own fault if they were not sav'd; to the end that they considering the means which he had given 'em, they might know, that they had no excuse left, and that they had no reason to complain but of themselves. † *What was there that I ought to do for my Vineyard which I have not done;* says our Saviour in the Prophet *Isay*? Thereby to give account of his kind conduct towards his People. I have Planted it, I have Hedg'd it about, I have Built a Tower; and put a Wine-press in the midst thereof, * *And I expected that it shou'd bring forth good Grapes and it has brought forth only sour ones fit only for Verjuice: Wherefore judge now yee People of Jerusalem and Judæa between me and my Vineyard,* and see who was in fault that it produc'd not what it shou'd have done; but 'tis not a small matter, that at least you may be able to defend God's Cause at the Day of Judgment against Sinners; for these Sermons, these Admonitions, of which they make at present so little profit, will be that which will then convict and reduce 'em to such a non-plus, as they will not know what to answer. So that on which side soever the matter is taken, we must always imploy our selves with all our power in the help of Souls whether we succeed or not in our endeavours.

Saint *Austin* explicating the Parable of those who being invited to the Marriage Feast wou'd not go, and speaking of the Servants that the Master had sent to invite them, do you believe, says he, that these Servants

ought

† Omnes sitientes venite ad aquas: & qui non habent argentum, propere emite, & comedite: venite, emite absque argento, & abique ulla commutatione vinum & lac.

Isai. 55. 1.
* Ut iustificeris in sermonibus tuis, & vincas cum iudicaris, *Psal.* 50. 6.

† Quid est quod debui ultra facere vineæ meæ, & non feci? *Isai.* 5. 4.

* Et expectavit, ut faceret vinas, & fecit labruscas. Nunc ergo habitatores Ierusalem, & viri Judæ, iudicate inter me & vineam meam. *Isai.* 5. 2. 3.

Lib. de fide & operib. cap. 17. Matth. 22. Luc. 14. 16.

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ought to be accus'd of negligence, because those that they invited to the Wedding came not to it? Without doubt not at all. They shall on the contrary be look'd upon as careful and faithful Servants; because they did what was Commanded 'em. They had invited those that they were charg'd to invite; they did what they were able, to oblige them to come to the Feast; the guests that wou'd not come to it shall be punish'd; but as to the Servants, they shall have the same recompence as if those they invited had come; because 'twas none of their fault that they did not. The account that God will require of us at the Day of Judgment, is, whether we have done all that we were able, and that we ought to do for the help of Souls. For tho' they shou'd not be Converted, and tho' their Conversion be certainly a good, we ought to desire and to rejoyce at extremly when it happens, as we read that our Saviour *Rejoyc'd in Spirit*; for the Fruit that his Disciples had brought forth in their Mission; yet after all we shall not be accountable for it, but they only to whom we have Preach'd the word of God; so that as each one ought to give an account of what regards himself, so we shall only be accountable whether we have well acquitted our selves of our Functions or not, and they whether they have profited by the Instructions they have receiv'd from us: Wherefore neither our Merit, nor the Goodness and Perfection of our Actions depend upon the effect they produce in others; nay on the contrary, I may here add one thing that cannot but be a comfort to all that do not succeed in their endeavours. Which is, that not only their Recompence nor their Merit depends upon what they do, but that in some measure they Merit more when they produce no Fruit, than when they produce a great deal; as we Merit more to persever in Prayer notwithstanding all Distractions and Dryness, then when we persever amidst Sweetness and Consolations. For as Saint Gregory says very well. 'Tis what gives a Preacher a great deal of satisfaction, courage and force, to see himself follow'd by all the World; and to know that he produces great Fruit by his Sermons, and on the contrary 'tis a thing that of it self brings a great deal of sorrow and affliction along with it, not to see himself follow'd, nor to produce any Fruit. Wherefore not to be hereby dejected, but still to continue to Preach the Word of God,

Exultavit in
Spiritu
Sancto.
Luc. 10. 21.

Greg. 1. Moral.
23. c. 4. & 5.

as if we were follow'd by all the World, and as if we caus'd great progress in Souls; this is to have great purity of zeal, and is a true mark that we labour purely for God.

'Tis with this purity of zeal, and this disingagement from our selves, with which we ought to exercise our Functions, proposing therein for our chief end and aim, not only to produce Fruit thereby, but faithfully to acquire our selves therein, and to accomplish the Will of God; for this is that which he precisely wou'd have us do, and hereby neither the pains we take will hinder us, nor the ill success or little Fruit will make us lose Courage, or deprive us of Peace of Mind, as it daily happens to those who chiefly aim at the success alone.



T H E

THE SECOND TREATISE OF

Of the three principal Vows
of Religion, and of the many
advantages of a Religious
State.

C H A P. I.

That the Perfection of a Religious Person, consists in an exact observance, of the Vows of Poverty, Chastity, and Obedience.

BEFORE I begin to speak of each one of these three Vows in particular, I shall touch something of 'em all in general; and in the first place, I say that they are the chief and principal means, we have in a Religious State, to arrive to Perfection. Saint *Thomas* says, that a Religious Person is in the State of Perfection; and this Doctrine is taken out of Saint *Denis*, and is Universally receiv'd by all Divines. 'Tis nor, that as soon, as we are Religious, we are Perfect; but that then,

Tom. III. © we

we make Profession to aspire to Perfection. Wherefore the State of a Religious Life is not like the State of Episcopacy: For we consider the Perfection of a Bishop, as a thing already acquir'd, but we consider it in a Religious Person as a thing he is oblig'd to obtain. The one ought already to be Perfect; and 'tis sufficient for the other, to endeavour to become so: The same Saint Thomas examines the difference between these two States, upon occasion of our Saviours words; taking notice that in the Counsel that JESUS CHRIST gives of Voluntary Poverty, which marks a Vocation to a Religious Life: † He do's not suppose that he, to whom he gives it, is already Perfect, but that he will become so, if he practises the Counsel he gives. For he says not *if thou art Perfect, go and sell what thou hast*, but only, *if thou wilt be Perfect*. But he acted after another manner when he made Saint Peter a Bishop; for he ask'd him thrice, not only if he Lov'd him; but if he Lov'd him more than others did; and this he did, to let us see, what Charity and what Perfection the State of Episcopacy requires, in those that are elevated thereunto. So then, the State of a Religious Life, and the State of Episcopacy are two States of Perfection, but after a different manner; because the one supposes it already, and do's not give it; and the other do's not suppose it, but gives it. The very moment that you become Religious, you are not oblig'd to be Perfect, but you are oblig'd to aspire to Perfection. Wherefore Saint Hierom says that, * 'Tis a Prevarication or Apostacy in a Religious Person, not to desire to be Perfect. And Saint Ensebius tells us, † That as 'tis the way to Sanctity and Perfection to retire into the Desert; so 'tis in like manner the way to Damnation, not to live Piously therein. Saint Thomas also tells us, that a Religious Person who aspires not after Perfection, and uses not all his endeavour to become Perfect, is not truly Religious; because he do's not perform that, for which alone he ought to have imbrac'd a Religious Life. * Our Life ought to be conformable to our Name, and our Profession ought also to be known by our Actions.

Now the chief means we have in Religion to acquire Perfection, consists in the three Vows we make, of Poverty, Chastity and Obedience; which is perfectly well explicated by Saint Thomas. The State of a Religious Life, says he, may be three ways consider'd; either as an Exercise that leads

† Non quasi
proficientes
seiplos per-
fectos, sed
proficientes se
ad perfectionem
tendere.
S. Thom. 2. 2.
q. 184. art. 1.

Si vis perfec-
tus esse.
Matth. 19. 21.

* Monachum,
perfectum esse
nolle, delin-
quere est.
Hier. Ep. 1. ad
Heliod.

† Venire ad
extremum sum-
ma perfectio
est. Non per-
fecti in ere-
mo vivere,
summa dam-
natio est.
Euseb. Emis.
Hom. 9 ad
Monach.

* Concordet
vita cum no-
mine; profes-
sio sentiat in
opere.
S. Thom. 2. 2.
q. 86. art. 7.

leads to Perfection; for we shall find that it destroys in us, all those obstacles that oppose the Love of God in our Hearts, in which sovereign Perfection consists; and which are of three kinds. The first obstacle is Covetousness of Temporal Goods, which is destroy'd by the Vow of Poverty; the second is Concupiscence, or the desire of Carnal Pleasures, which is destroy'd by the Vow of Chastity; and the third is the Irregularity or Disorder of our own Will, which is destroy'd by the Vow of Obedience. But if we look upon it as a State, that frees us from all kind of care, according to the words of the Apostle, * *I wou'd have yee to be without all care or solicitude*, we shall see that these three Vows which we make, intirely free us from three sorts, of the chiefest cares, wherewith those of the World are molested: For the Vow of Poverty delivers us from the first, which is the care of Riches; that the Vow of Chastity delivers us from the second, which is the care of governing a Family; and the bringing up of Children; and the Vow of Obedience, by which we intirely abandon our selves to the conduct of our Superiour, delivers us from the third; which is the care how to carry our selves in, and how well to conduct our selves throu' the different occurrences of this Life: Lastly, if we consider it as a Sacrifice, which we make of our selves to God, we shall find that this Sacrifice becomes Intire and Perfect, by means of the same Vows. For all the Goods that Men Possess are reduc'd to three; to those of Fortune, which regard Riches; to those of the Body, which regard Pleasures; and to those of the Soul, which regards it's Will and Desires. We intirely Sacrifice the first, by the Vow of Poverty; we intirely Sacrifice the second, by the Vow of Chastity; and we intirely Sacrifice the third by the Vow of Obedience; whereby a Religious Man renounces his own Will, and puts himself into the Hands of his Superiour, whom he beholds and takes in place of God: So that which way soever we look upon this State, we shall always find that the three Vows we make in it, are the principal means we have therein, to arrive to Perfection.

'Tis reported in the Chronicles of the Order of Saint Francis, that JESUS CHRIST once appearing to this Saint, and having commanded him to make three Offerings; you know O Lord, answer'd the Saint, that I have already Offer'd you all I have; and that I am all yours, and that

* Volo autem
vos sine solli-
citudine esse.
1 Cor 7. 32.

HiB. Ord. S.
Franc. 2. p. lxx.
cap. 83.

I have nothing left but this Habit and Cord, which in like manner are also yours; what therefore can I offer you? If with I had for this end another Heart and Soul; but since I have nothing which I have not already given you, bestow O Lord something new upon me, that I may make an Offering of it unto you, and that thereby I may Obey you. Then our Saviour commanded him to put his Hand into his Breast, and to Offer him what he shou'd find there. And the Saint having Obey'd him; he drew out a great piece of Gold, which he presently Offer'd him; our Saviour gave him the same command twice more, and the Saint having drawn out each time the like piece of Gold, he in like manner still Offer'd it to him, to whom our Saviour then declar'd, that the three pieces of Gold, signifi'd his three Vows of Obedience, Poverty, and Chastity; of which this great Saint had made so Perfect an Offering to God, that his Conscience, as he sayd, never reproach'd him for having broken 'em in any thing. Let us endeavour to Imitate him in this kind of Offering, that our Conscience may never be able to reproach us for any thing; and that we may truly say with Job: † *My Heart has reproach'd me of nothing throu'out my whole Life.*

† Neque enim
reprehendit
me cor meum
in omni vita
mea.
Job. 27. 6.

C H A P. II.

Why we oblige our selves by Vow to these three Vertues.

BUT some may say, why do you oblige your self by Vow to keep Poverty, Chastity and Obedience: Since they may be observ'd without such ties or engagements as this? All Divines answer hereupon with Saint Thomas, that Vows are necessary; because a Religious Life essentially consists in 'em, and that without Vows it cannot be a State of Perfection. The reason of this is, because the State of Perfection necessarily supposes a perpetual obligation to Perfection: For when we say 'tis a State, 'tis the same as to say that 'tis a stable

S. Thom. 2. 2.
q. 184. art. 5.
q. 166. art. 6.

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a stable and permanent thing: So that Religion, not being a State of Perfection without a perpetual obligation to Perfection, it consequently cannot subsist without Vows, whereby it contracts this obligation: That which causes Bishops, says Saint Thomas, to be in a State of Perfection, which Pastors or Curates are not, is, because Curates are not always oblig'd to the care of Souls; but may discharge themselves from it, whensoever they please; but the Pastoral care and solicitude of Bishops, carries along with it a perpetual obligation, with which the Authority of the Pope only, is able to dispence. The same difference also is found, between, the Perfection of a Secular and a Religious Person; for tho' it may happen that a Secular may be more Perfect than a Religious Man is, yet 'tis true that the Secular is not in a State of Perfection, and that the Religious Man is in one; because the Perfection of a Secular not being confirm'd by Vows, as that of a Religious Man is, it consequently has not that constancy and stability in good, which that of a Religious Man has; so far forth as Perfection regards the State of the one and the other. A Secular Person leads a very Pure and Holy Life to Day, and to Morrow he relents; but a Religious Man is always in a State of Perfection altho' he be not Perfect; because he is oblig'd to Perfection by those Vows, which always ingage him, and from which 'tis not in his power to disingage himself. Wherefore a Holy Man being ask'd whether 'twere possible to gain Christian Perfection in the World, he answer'd that it was possible, but that he had rather have one degree of Grace in Religion, than two in the World; because that in Religion, where we are separated from the World, which is a Capital Enemy of Grace, we are continually excited to Vertue by good Examples; whereby Grace is easily conserv'd and augmented: Whereas in the World 'tis very easily lost and is very hard to be conserv'd. Wherefore he concluded that in Religion, a less Grace with such secure gaurds to conserve it, and with so many helps to augment it, was to be preferr'd before a far greater, surrounded with all those dangers that are in the World.

We may hence learn how great is the error of some Novices, who imagine that if they were in the World, they shou'd live with so great Piety and Retirement as that they wou'd very much Edify their Neighbour by their Example, this is an Illusion of the Devil, who only seeks under
this

*Idem. 2. 1. 9.
124. art. 6.*

*B. Gilles.
See in the Hist.
of the Order of
S. Francis 1. 2.
lib. 6. cap. 10.*

this pretence, to deprive 'em of that inestimable good they possess, and to draw them out of Religion. For in the World perhaps they might have in the beginning the same Fervor; they might go every Week to Confession; they might make their Prayer, and far withdraw themselves from the occasions of Sin: But as they are not any more under the conduct of any one, they are oblig'd to do nothing under a perpetual obligation; and as every moment, they will find new obstacles, so they'll one Day quit their Prayer: The next Day dispense with themselves from going to Confession: The Day after expose, and distract themselves in Company, and at length unhappily come to lose themselves. 'Tis not the same in Religion; for a Religious Person, has not the liberty to dispence with himself in his Spiritual Exercises, nor to disengage himself from the obligation, he has contracted by his Vows, which is that, † *Triple Cord*, of which the Wise Man speaks, that is *very hardly broke*.

† Funiculus
triplex difficile
rumpitur.
Ecc. 4. 12.

Aug. l. 14. de
Civ. Dei c. 6.
S. Thom. 2. 2.
q. 88. art. 4 ad
3. & Uvalden-
satis ex Dion. de
Eccles. Hierar.
cap. 6.

Thus we see then, that they are properly the Vows, which constitute this kind of Life, to which they oblige; which is a Religious State, and a State of Perfection. Many Saints also hold, that the Apostles are the Authors thereof, and that when they quitted all things to follow JESUS CHRIST, they layd within themselves, the Foundation of this State, Confirming by Vow the Offer they made to him, and that from thence, the Catholic Church took up the Practice of Consecrating it's Members to God, by means of these Vows.

CHAP.

C H A P. III.

Of other advantages drawn from the Obligation of Vows.

THAT which is still very beneficial in Vows, besides what I have already sayd, is, that what is perform'd by Vow, is more laudable and meritorious in the sight of God, than what is voluntarily done, without being oblig'd to it after this manner by Vow; Saint *Thomas* gives three good Reasons for what I say; and the first of 'em is, that Religion being the most excellent of all Moral Vertues, and a Vow being an Act of Religion, it hence follows, that it augments the price of those Acts of Vertue that accompany it; making 'em become Acts of Religion, that is to say, what is Holy, and what is already Sacrific'd and Consecrated to God. 'Tis after this manner that it makes a Fast, which is an Act of Temperance, become an Act of Religion, and more Meritorious. First for it self, as an Act of Temperance; and secondly by the Vow, as an Act of Religion. So that generally speaking in all things we do by Obedience, we gain thereby a double Merit; that of the thing perform'd, and of Obedience also, for which we perform it. So that we Merit more when we Act by Obedience, than when we perform a thing, out of our own pure Inclination, and without being oblig'd to it by Obedience or Vow. This will better be comprehended by the contrary, as a Religious Person who Sins against the sixth Commandment that he breaks, Sins also against his Vow which he has made, which is still worse; because 'tis a Sacrilege he commits: So a Religious Man, who faithfully keeps the Vow of Chastity, has two sorts of Merit, that of observing God's Commandment, and that of fulfilling his Vow he has made to God; and this last, as being a pure Act of Religion, is, of far greater price and value than the other.

*S. Thom. 2. 2.
q. 88. art. 6.*

Secondly

Secondly, that which makes a Vow give new Merit to our Actions, is, that in those which we perform by Vow, we give much more to God, than in those we perform without one; because we do not only offer what is done, but we offer him also, that impossibility, in which we have put our selves, of doing otherwise: And we offer him our own Liberty, which is the greatest Oblation and Sacrifice that we can make to him: 'Tis good to deprive our selves of all things for JESUS CHRIST, but by the Vow of Poverty, we not only spoil our selves of what we possess, but which is far more, we take from our selves the Power of ever possessing any thing: And lastly, that I may make use of the comparison of Saint *Anselm* and Saint *Thomas*, we give to God the Tree, together with the Fruit; so that, as the Saints say, he who gives the Fruit and Tree together, gives more than he that gives only the Fruit, keeping the Tree to himself; so Religious Persons offer far more to God, than those of the World do. For Worldlings, at most, give only the Fruit of the Tree, that is to say, their good Works; but they keep the Tree to themselves, that is to say, they always reserve the Liberty of disposing of themselves, and give not themselves intirely to God; whereas Religious Persons giving themselves intirely into his Hands, they give him both the Tree and the Fruit, they give him their Actions, their Words, their Thoughts, their Will, their Liberty; infine, they give him all things; so that they keep nothing for themselves, and that there's nothing more left for 'em to bestow. Saint *Bonaventure* makes use of another comparison upon this Subject, and says, that as he who gives the property and use of a thing, gives more, than he who only gives barely the use; so a Religious Man who by Vow gives and Consecrates himself to God, gives him more than a Secular Person who do's not Consecrate himself in this manner to him, because the Secular Person, as I may say, gives only the use of himself to God, whereas a Religious Man giving his Will and Liberty as well as all other Actions, gives himself intirely in propriety to God.

The third reason why those Actions that are accompany'd by Vow are more Meritorious than others, is, that the goodness of all exterior Actions, chiefly comes from the Will: So that the more Perfect the Will is, the more Perfect also are the Works it produces. But 'tis very certain, that

*S. Thom. 2. 2.
q. 88. art. 6.
Anselm lib. de
similitud.*

*Bonav. in Apo-
log. pauper.*

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that the more firm and constant the Will is, 'tis also the more perfect; because 'tis farther remov'd from the defect, which the Wise Man reprehends in Tepid Persons, when he says, † *The Slothful Man Will's and Will's not*; and becomes also more fit, * *To work with this unshaken Constancy*, which Philosophers look upon as one of the chief conditions of Vertue, which is infallibly acquir'd by the Vows. Divines tell us, that as he who is harden'd in Sin, offends more grievously, than he who Sins out of frailty or sudden passion; because he Sins by a Will determin'd to Evil, which they say is to Sin against the Holy Ghost; so also those good Actions that proceed from a firm and determinate Will to what is good, are without doubt of greater Merit, and of far greater Perfection, than all others can be.

We must add to all this, that on the one side if we consider our frailty and weakness, and on the other the obstinacy of the Devil to Tempt us, we shall find that there is not a better remedy both to fortifie our selves, and to shut and secure all the avenues against the Devil, than to tye our selves to God by the Vows which we make; for as a Man that Courts a Young Woman in order to Marriage, loses his hopes and leaves off his pursuit, when he sees her Marry'd to another, so when the Devil perceives, that a Soul has taken JESUS CHRIST for her Spouse, by means of these Vows, he ordinarily loses all hopes of reingageing her any more to the World, and oftentimes quite leaves off Tempting her: Lest his Temptation shou'd serve only to augment her Crown; and that instead of gaining upon her; he shou'd gain thereby only shame and confusion to himself.

† Vult & non
vult piger.
Prov. 13. 4.
* Ut firmiter,
& immobiliter
operetur.
Arist. 2. Ethic.
cap. 4.

C H A P. IV.

Why the Gift we make of our selves to God in Religion, by means of Vows, is styld by the Saints a second Baptism and Martyrdom.

*S. Thom. 2. 2.
q. ult. art. 3.
addit. 3.
Hier. sup. Exec.
Cyp. exher.
mart. Bern.
serm. 30. sup.
Cant. Paulus
V. in Bulla seu
Const. ann. 1601.
S. Th. ubi sup.*

THE giving of our selves intirely to God by the help of Religious Vows, is of so great a Value and Merit in his Sight, that Saint *Hierom* Saint *Cyprian* and Saint *Bernard*, call it a second Baptism; and Divines also hold, that thereby an intire Remission of all Sins is obtain'd: So that if we shou'd happen presently to Dye, we shou'd not pass throu' the Fire of Purgatory, but go straight to Heaven, as they do, who Dye as soon as they have receiv'd Baptism, but this is not to be understood, as if 'twere sayd upon account of those Indulgences, that may be annex'd to a Profession of Vows; because there is a Plenary Indulgence also given to Novices upon the Day they take their Habit; but 'tis to be understood, as simply expressing the very Merit of the Vows, which is so great and excellent, that without the help of any Indulgence, 'tis capable of satisfying the Justice of God, for the Punishment due to our Sins. This truth is very well grounded in it self, and is also confirm'd by Saint *Athanasius*, in the Life of Saint *Anthony*. This great Saint had once a Vision, wherein it seem'd as if the Angels carry'd him up to Heaven, and the Devils meeting 'em, endeavour'd to hinder 'em, accusing him of several Sins he had committed in the World; but the Angels answer'd 'em; if you have any thing to accuse him of since he was Religious, you may do it, but as to the Sins he committed in the World, they are already Pardon'd, and 'tis a Debt he has intirely satisfy'd, by Consecrating himself to God in Religion.

** Peccata tua
elemosinis
redime.
Dan. 4. 24.*

** Redeem your Sins by Almes, sayd Daniel to Nabuchodonazar: If by Almes which are only a distribution of some part*

part of those goods we possess, we may satisfy for our Sins; after what manner ought we to believe we satisfy for them, by an intire Donation of all that we have? * *'Tis good to give Almes to the Poor, distributing Charitably these goods to them, as if we were only the distributors of 'em: But 'tis also much better to give away all things at once, to follow JESUS CHRIST, and to deliver our selves from the cares and turmoiles of Riches, to become Poor with him.* Saint Hierom proves this Proposition against *Vigilantius* the Heretick, by the Testimony of our Saviour himself, who says in the Gospel; † *If thou wilt be Perfect, go, Sell what thou hast, and give it to the Poor, and thou shalt have a Treasure in Heaven, and come and Follow me:* Saint Gregory, upon *Ezechiel*, says, that Worldlings in distributing part of their goods to the Poor, offer a Sacrifice to God of their goods; but Religious Persons by intirely spoiling themselves of their goods for the Love of God, offer to him an Holocaust, which is a thing far more excellent, than that of a Sacrifice. But if the leaving only of Riches is a thing of so great Merit, how great is the intire abandoning of our selves, the abandoning our Body by the Vow of Chastity, and the abandoning our Will and Liberty, by the Vow of Obedience? What will it be, continually to Renounce our selves, and to Mortifie our selves for the Love of God without ceasing? For the Life of a Religious Person is, * *Continually to carry in his Body the Marks of the Sufferings of JESUS CHRIST.*

That which still shews the excellency of this intire Oblation of our selves to God, by means of the three Vows made in Religion, is what all the Canonists hold for certain, that a Man who shou'd have made a Vow, for Example to go to *Rome*, or *Jerusalem*, to distribute all he shou'd get to the Poor, to serve all his Life time in an Hospital, Daily to Discipline himself, to Fast every Day with Bread and Water, to wear a continual Hair-shirt, and lastly what other kind of Vow soever he shou'd make, he wou'd intirely be freed from it, by making himself Religious; all the obligations he shou'd have contracted by any precedent Vow, being included therein, and chang'd into that of a Religious Life; as into a thing more Perfect, and more pleasing to God.

But there's yet more, this abandoning our selves intirely into the Hands of God by the three Vows, as we have sayd, is a thing so heroical and excellent, that the

* Bonum est facultates cum dispensatione pauperibus erogare, sed melius est pro intentione sequendi dominum, intinul donare, & absolutus sollicitudine egere cum Christo. Lib. 2. de Eccl. dogm. c. 71. Hier. in Vigil.

† Si vis perfectus esse, vende omnia quæ habes, & da pauperibus, & habebis thesaurum in cælo, & veni, sequere me. Matth. 19. 21. Greg. in Ezech. Hom. 20. S. Th. 2. 2. q. 86. art. 6.

* Semper mortificationem Jesu in corpore nostro circumferentes. 2 Cor. 4. 10.

Capitul. Scripturæ. De voto & voti redemptione.

Thom. à Kemp.
serm. 2. ad nov.
Clem. Alex. l. 4.
Strom.
Aug. l. 13. de
Civ. Dei. c. 8.
Hiermes. discip.
3. Paul. l. 3.
Pastor. simil. 9.
Cap. Cum Mar-
tyr. de cele-
bras. Miss.
** Illo quidem*
quo membra
caduntur fer-
ro, hore
quidem mitius
sed diuturnita-
te molestius.
Bern. serm. 3.
sup. Cant.
† Quoniam
propter te
mortificamur
totā die, zeli-
mat sumus fi-
cut oves occi-
sionis.
Psalm. 43. 22.

** Majorem*
hac dilectio-
nem nemo ha-
bet, quam ut
animam suam
ponat quis pro
amicis suis.
Jean. 15. 13.

Injuriam facit
martyri, qui
orat pro eo.

Saints compare the State of a Religious Life, to that of Martyrdom; and in effect 'tis a continual Martyrdom, which as Saint Bernard says, has something indeed less terrible than that of the Body rent and disfigur'd with Torments; but 'tis also more troublesome, by reason it lasts longer. * *That which Tyrants inflicted upon the Fairhful was ended by the blow of a Sword, but that of a Religious, Person is not ended by one blow, 'tis a long sufferance which is Daily reviv'd in us*, sometimes by debasing our Pride, sometimes by annulling our own Will, and our Lights after such a manner, that we may say with the Psalmist: † *For thy sake O Lord we are Daily Mortify'd or put to Death, and are look'd upon as Sheep led to the Slaughter.* Notwithstanding our submission ought to be such in this State, that as the Martyrs chose not, by what kind of Death they wou'd Dye, but were always ready to receive that which shou'd be inflicted upon 'em; so a Religious Person, ought always to be dispos'd, to undergo all those Mortifications that shall be given him.

To conclude, Martyrdom is so heroical an Act of Love, that a more excellent one is not to be imagin'd, * *No body can have a greater Love*, as our Saviour says, *than to lay down his Life for his Friends.* And as for this reason, the Saints hold that Martyrdom absolutely blots out Sin, so that he who Dyes for the Faith go's straight to Heaven without passing by Purgatory; *so that it wou'd be an injury to him, to Pray for him*: They in like manner also hold, that nothing can be beyond the intire oblation of our selves; because we have nothing left to give, after we have intirely given our selves: This oblation which also a Religious Man makes to God, by means of his Vows, do's in like manner obtain for him, both an intire Remission of his Sins, and of the Pain also, that wou'd be due for them; behold here the reason why they compare it with Baptism and Martyrdom.

C H A P. V.

That the Obligation we contract by the Vows of Religion, do's not at all diminish our Liberty, but on the contrary renders it more Perfect.

ONE may object and say, that he sees very well all these advantages I have spoken of, which are found in that Sacrifice we make of our selves to God by means of these Vows; but the inconveniency of 'em is this, that they deprive a Man of his Liberty, *Which is of an inestimable Price.* You are mistaken, answers Saint Thomas, it rather perfects, than destroys Liberty; for the effect of these Vows, is to confirm and strengthen the Will in that which is good, and to hinder it from letting it self be drawn to that which is evil: But this no more destroys Liberty in us, than the perfect Liberty, which God and the Saints enjoy in Heaven, is destroy'd in them, by the impossibility of their committing Sin. The Apostles cou'd Sin no more, after they were confirm'd in Grace, yet this Grace did not destroy their Liberty, but on the contrary it perfect'd it; because it help'd to confirm them in that good, for which they were Created. Do not believe it a small Advantage for your free Will, says our Holy Founder in his Letter of Obedience; that 'tis able to restore it self again intirely into his Hands, who gave it; for by this means yee do not lose it, but render it far more Perfect, by conforming it to the sovereign Rule of all Perfection, which is God, whose Interpreter and Substitute your Superiour is. This agrees very well with what Saint Anselm says, * *That Liberty consists not in being able to Sin; and that the power of Sinning is no power at all, but rather a mark of Weakness and Misery, than any Perfection.* † *Would you clearly see this, says Saint Austin? He that can do all things cannot Sin, he cannot Lye: 'Tis to be*

Non bene pro-
toto libertas
venditur orbe.

* Peccare non
est libertas,
nec pars liber-
tatis. Peccare
est potius non
posse, quam
posse. Qui-
cumque enim
facit quod sibi
non expedit,
quanto magis
hoc potest,
tanto magis
adversitas &
perversitas
possunt in illū.
Ansel. c. 9. de
verit. & Albert
Mag. l. de vir.
† Hoc unum
non potest
Omnipotens,
mentiri non
potest.
Aug. Epist. 41.
ad Armes. &
Paul.

be

be under the power of Sin, to have the power of Sinning; and the power of Sin in regard of Man, is more or less great, according as the power of Man, in regard of Sin, is lesser or greater: So that the more we diminish in us the power of Sinning, by determining our Will to good; the more we perfect it: And 'tis precisely this, which the Vows perform, by which we oblige our selves to the practise of Perfection. * *O happy necessity, says Saint Austin, that continually forces us, to do that which is best! Wherefore do not repent your self for being ty'd by your Vows: But on the contrary rejoyce; because hereby, you are depriv'd of a Liberty, which you could not make use of, without a prejudice to your self.* If any one saw you go towards a Precipice, would they not do you a very good turn, so to stop the passage, that when you would destroy your self you could not be able to do it? But if you have a mind to destroy your self 'tis by the way of your own proper Will; † *For if there were no Self-will, says Saint Bernard, there would be no Hell; and consequently, the more this way is stopp'd by hindering you of making a bad use of your Liberty, the greater good is done you.* So then 'tis not to lose our Liberty, to subject our Will, to that of our Superiour, by the Vow of Obedience; but on the contrary 'tis more to strengthen and perfect it, thus to curb, and as it were hinder it by the Exercise of Obedience, and by submitting it to the Will of God.

A famous Doctor add's one thing more, which is, worthy to be taken notice of. The Vows, says he are so far from lessening our Liberty, that on the contrary, he who obliges himself to God by them, and submits himself to the Yoke of Obedience, enjoys a more true and perfect Liberty, than any one else. For true Liberty consists in being Master of our selves; and he who is thus bound and united to God; is without doubt more his own Master, than he who is not thus bound: But to shew this more clearly by some instances: That which engages you, for example, to make the Vow of Chastity, is, because you hope that by the Grace of God, you shall become so much Master over your self, as to keep and preserve this Vertue; and that which hinders another from making this Vow, is, because he do's not believe, he is so sufficiently Master of himself, as to be able to keep it: Thus you see, that you are the Person that have the greatest power over your self to do what you have a mind to, and to do what you believe you ought to perform.

But

* Felix necessitas, quæ in meliora compellit: non te novisse poenitet: Imò, gaude jam tibi non sic licere, quod cum tuo detrimento licuisset.
ubi sup.

† Cesse voluntas propria, & infernus non erit.
Bern. serm. 3. de Resurr.

Soto. l. 7. de just. & iure, q. 2. art. 5. ad 1.

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But 'tis properly in this that Liberty do's consist; for the Liberty which the other keeps to himself, is not a true Liberty, but a Subjection, nay 'tis a Slavery; because in effect, like a Slave, he Obeys his Appetite; which has got the Mastery over him, and makes him fall into Sin. He is a Slave to his Appetite, * Which leads him Captive to the Law of Sin: † For he who is overcome, is a Slave to him who overcame him: * And whosoever Sins is a Slave to Sin. 'Tis not the same in Obedience: That which mov'd you to make the Vow of Obedience; was because you believ'd by the assistance of God's Grace, you shou'd have so much the more power over your self, as always to follow the Will of your Superior, and always Mortify your own: And that which hinders another from making the same Vow; is, because he finds he has not so much power over himself, to be able to renounce after this manner his own Will, and to submit it to that of another; and consequently you see that we cannot but have more power, and a truer Liberty by submitting our selves thereunto. Nay, there is even a kind of Greatness and Nobility in carrying this Yoke; for 'tis to carry a Yoke of this nature, to which the Wise Man Exhorts us, when he says, † Thrust your Feet into the Shackles, and your Neck into the Collar, submit your Shoulders to bear his Yoke, and be not afraid of his Chains. Happy Chains, Happy Fetters, that rather give Liberty, than restrain it, to those that bear 'em? These are not the Chains of a Slave and the marks of Captivity; but they are the Ornaments that belong only to Free Men, they are marks of Greatness and Dignity. 'Tis moreover of very great Importance, and for our Comfort and Happiness to consider things very seriously after this manner: * For the Yoke of JESUS CHRIST, as Saint Ambrose says very well, is sweet and easy to carry, when 'tis consider'd as an Ornament, and not as a Burden.

* Captivantem illum in lege peccati.

Rom. 7. 23.

† A quo enim quis liberatus est, hujus & servus est.

2 Pet. 2. 19.

* Omnis qui facit peccatum, servus est peccati.

Joan. 8. 34.

† Injice pedem tuum in compedes illius & in torques illius colum tuum: subice humerum tuum, & porta illam, & ne accideris vinculis ejus. Eccl. 6. 25. & 26.

* Jugum Christi suave est, si ornamenta putas civicis tux esse, non onera. Amb. lib. de invitand.

CHAP.

C H A P. VI.

*Of the great Advantages of Religion, and of the
Obligation we have to God for having call'd
us thereunto.*

* Fidelis Deus,
per quem vo-
cati estis in so-
cietatem filij
ejus Jesu
Christi Do-
mini nostri.
2 Cor. 1. 9.

GOD is Faithful, says the Apostle, Bless him for ever, because 'tis by him that yee have been call'd to the SOCIETY of his Son JESUS CHRIST our Lord. When God led the Children of *Israel* out of the Bondage of *Egypt*, he so expressly recommended to them, to remember the Day upon which he did 'em this favor, that the better to conserve a memory thereof, he wou'd have 'em Celebrate it as a Feast for Eight Days together; and that on the seventh Day, they shou'd Offer, and Eat a Lamb with the self same Ceremonies, as they did upon the Day of their Deliverance: If he wou'd have 'em keep with so great Solemnity, the memory of the Day upon which he led 'em out of the Captivity of *Egypt*, to bring 'em into the Land of Promise, which was only a Temporal favor, the effects of which, had no Influence upon their Souls; what ought we not to do, to Celebrate the Memory of a Day, upon which an all powerful Hand, has drawn our Souls out of the Bondage of the Devil, to lead 'em into the way of Heaven? 'Tis reported of Saint *Arsenius*, that he was wont every Year to Celebrate and Solemnise that Day, upon which God did him the Grace to bring him out of the World: And his manner of Celebrating it, was to Communicate, to give Almes to the Poor, to Eat a few boyld hearbs, and to leave his Cell open, that those Hermits that wou'd, might come to visit him.

Saint *Austin* apply's to this subject of retiring out of the World, the Answer that *Moyse*s made to *Pharao*; who refus'd to let the Children of *Israel* go into the Desert to Offer there a Sacrifice, but wou'd oblige 'em to
Offer

In ejus Vita.

Offer it in *Egypt* it self. * *That cannot be*, answer'd God's holy Law-giver, *because thereby we shall Offer the Abominations of the Egyptians to our God*, that is to say, those very Creatures which they Adore as Gods; *for if we shou'd Kill in their presence what they Adore, they will Stone us, wherefore we will go three Days journey into the Desert, there to Sacrifice to the Lord our God as he has Commanded us*: Those whom God call's to the Perfection of Evangelical Counsels, find the same difficulties. They must Sacrifice the Abominations of the World, that is to say, the things which the World Adores, Riches, Honors, Pleasures, Love of our selves, and of our own Will; and because we shou'd be expos'd to the obloquies and mockeries of Worldly People, if we made this Sacrifice in the World: Therefore we ought to go out of it, and retire to the solitude of Religion, there to Sacrifice to God in peace. We are in this state; and God by his Infinite Mercy, has drawn us out of the servitude of the World; and has led us into the solitude of Religion, that by means of our three Vows, we may Sacrifice to him the Gods of the World, and that we may do this with the fewer obstacles; because Glory and Honor in Religion, consists in Sacrificing 'em, and he who makes a more perfect Sacrifice of 'em, 'tis he also that is of greatest esteem in Religion.

But to make you the better understand, what thanksgiving we ought to make for this favor, I shall here set down, what the Saints say, of the excellency and advantages of so great a benefit. Saint Hierom explicating these words of the Royal Prophet, † *That going out of Egypt, he heard a Language he knew not, and cast off his Shoulders the Burden he was wont to bear*, says, they are to be understood of the Mercy, God has done us in drawing us out of the World; and representing to us the miserable servitude we liv'd in, under the Tyranny of the Devil; and to let us see the liberty, to which the Children of God are call'd. God, says he, has deliver'd me from a great yoke and burden that was very heavy: We were Slaves of Pharao, * *And the Lord by his All-powerful Hand, has drawn us out of the Land of Egypt, and out of the Hands of Servitude.* † *When we were in Egypt we wrought in Pharaos Buildings: We carry'd Brick and Morter, and all our care was to seek Straw, and gather it together; we had then no Corn, we had not the Celestial Bread which was given us from on high,*

Tom. III.

Q

and

Aug. 1. 2. 99.
100. Exod. 9.
101. in illud:

* Non potest
ita fieri: abomi-
nationes
enim Egypti-
orum immola-
bimus Domi-
no Deo nos-
tro. Quod si
machaverimus
ea quæ colunt
Egyptij eorum
est, lapidibus
nos obruent:
viam trium-
phierum perge-
mus in silitu-
dinem, & sa-
crificabimus
Deo nostro,
sicut præcepit
nobis.

Exod. 8. 16. 27.

Hier. sup. p. 780.

† Cum exiret
de terra Egypti,
linguam
quam non no-
verat, audivit,
divertit ab o-
veribus dor-
sum ejus.

p. 780. 6. & 7.

* In manu
forti eduxit
nos Dominus
de terra Egypti,
de domo
servitutis.

Exod. 13. 14.

† Quando in
Egypto era-
mus, extrue-
bamus civita-
tes Pharaoni,
lutum & lutu-
m portaba-
mus, & tota
anima nostra
quererebat pa-
ucas, Non ha-

bebamus ce-
lestem panem,
& quide celo
venit: nondum
acceperamus
Manna de cae-
lo: quam gran-
dia antea ha-
bebamus
onera!
Hier ubi sup.

* Divertit ab
oncribus dor-
sum ejus.
Ubi sup.
Yugum enim
meum suave
est, & onus
meum leve,
Matth. 11. 30.

† Qui sine
uxore est, so-
licitus est quæ
Domini sunt,
quomodo pla-
ceat Deo. Qui
autem cum
uxore est, soli-
citus est quæ
sunt mundi,
quomodo pla-
ceat uxori, &
divisus est. Et
mulier innup-
ta, & virgo,
cogitat quæ
Domini sunt,
ut sit sancta
corpore, &
spiritu. Quæ
autem nupta
est, cogitat
quæ sunt
mundi, quo-
modo placeat
viro.
*1 Cor. 7. 32.
33. 34.*

*Lib. 26 de Civ.
Dei, cap. 24.*

Aves autem
non divisit.
Gen. 15. 10.

and Manna had not yet fallen down from Heaven upon us. How heavy were the burdens we carry'd? In effect how heavy are the burdens of Worldly People? What care, what pain only to subsist, or at most to obtain some honorable im-
ployment? What difficulty afterwards in maintaining our-
selves therein, or in advancing our selves thereby? What
stratagems, what hardships, what courtships, what constraints!
Lastly, how hard and how many subjections are to be un-
dergone? The misery of which we know not, till we come to
experience 'em. Certainly the yoke which Worldly People
carry, is a yoke of Iron, a very heavy and insupportable
yoke, * But God by his Grace has discharg'd us of it, and
has impos'd his own yoke upon us, which *Is easie and light*,
and has call'd us to a state, where we have nothing else
to do, but to Love and Serve him.

The Apostle speaking of the difference, of those that are
ingag'd in the state of Marriage, and those that are not,
† He who has no Wife, says he, *is imploy'd in the affairs
of our Lord, and is solicitous to please God, but he who has
a Wife is taken up, with the things of the World, and with
the care how to please his Wife, and is divided, between
God and the World: A Woman who is not Marry'd and
a Virgin, thinks always of what belongs to our Lord, and
of the means how to become holy, both in Body and Mind;
but she who is Marry'd, thinks of the things of the World,
and of the means how to please her Husband: But if, as the
Apostle says, that all the care of those, that live in the World
in the state of Chastity, ought to be to please God,
and to Sanctifie themselves in Body and Mind; what ought
to be the obligation of Religious Persons? Whom God has
discharg'd from all the cares of the World, and even from
that of getting themselves a livelyhood, that they might
have no other care, but daily to render themselves more
pleasing in his sight, and daily to increase in Sanctity.
Saint Austin says, that the difference of these two states, is
figur'd by what Abraham perform'd, in Sacrificing those
Victims that God had Commanded him; which were a
Cow, a Goat, a Ram, a Turtle and a Pigeon: For the Scrip-
ture takes notice that having cut the three first Victims
in two, He divided not the Birds, but Offer'd 'em whole
and intire. By the Terrestrial Beasts, says this Father, are to
be understood Carnal Men, and the People of the World,
whose Mind and Heart is continually divided, by divers cares;
and*

and by the Birds are to be understood Spiritual Men, who whether they remain in Retirement as the Turtle, or live in Commerce and Conversation with Men as the Pigeon, are never divided; but Offer themselves intirely to God, and only imploy themselves in his Service. Wherefore 'tis one advantage of Religious Persons; to be able to Sacrifice themselves intirely to God, without any division, and to have nothing to do, but to please him. 'Tis for this reason that we make the Vow of Chastity; whereby being disingag'd from the care of pleasing a Wife, and of governing a Family, we apply our selves to nothing else, but to render our selves more holy and more perfect. 'Tis for this end that we make the Vow of Poverty, and Renounce to Riches; that being also freed from the disquiets they occasion, which are like Thornes that choke the good Seed, we may endeavour to cause it to bring forth an abundant increase in our Hearts, and there gather together the Treasures of Grace. And lastly 'tis for this design, that we make the Vow of Obedience, and that we Renounce our selves and our own Will; to the end that having nothing more, to put our selves in pain about concerning our own conduct; and having intirely put the care thereof into the hands of our Superior, who is charg'd with it, we think of nothing else, but that which regards our Spiritual advancement. Saint Hierom writing upon these Words of the Psalmist; * *Bless yee the Lord, yee his Servants, who dwell in his House, in the Courts of our God*, says, that as a great Lord has many Servants, of which some are near his Person, and others look after his Lands in the Country, † *So God has many Servants, of which some, as I may say, are as it were ty'd to wait upon his Person, and others are imploy'd abroad*. Religious Persons are like Household and Menial Servants, who never leave their Master, but are always speaking and conversing with him; and Worldly Persons, are like those Servants who are sent abroad to take care of their Masters Lands and to cultivate 'em: But, as continues the holy Doctor, when those who serve abroad, wou'd obtain some favor of their Master, they imploy the others that are commonly with him to obtain it, so when there happens any particular affair to Worldly Persons, and when they wou'd obtain any favor of God, they ordinarily address themselves to Religious; who have a more free and better access to God than themselves; and are more favor'd by

Q 2

him.

* Ecce nunc b-dicite, Dominum omnes servi Domini. Qui statis in domo Domini, in atrijs domus Dei nostri.
Psal. 133. 1. 2.
† Sic Deus habet multam familiam. Habet quasi ad faciem suam qui sibi ministrant: habet alios in agris, Hieronym.

him. Moreover as those Servants who are employ'd in taking care of cultivating his Lands, are they which have all the trouble and pain, whilst the others enjoy a quiet and easie Life at home with their Master; so People of the World, are those who have the pain and care of all, whilst Religious Persons have nothing else to do, but to live in quiet and repose, and to entertain themselves with God. Saint *Gregory* says, that the difference of these two states, is also figur'd to us by the different kinds of Life, which *Jacob* and *Esau* imbrac'd:

*Greg. l. Mor. 5.
cap. 8.*

* Factus est
Esau vir gna-
rus venandi, &
homo agrico-
la: Jacob au-
tem vir sim-
plex habitabat
in tabernacu-
lis, vel habita-
bat domi.
Gen. 25. 27.

* *Esau was a hunter who lov'd the Country, Jacob was a plain honest Country Man, who lov'd to remain at home, by Esau, who was given to hunting, is to be understood, says this Father, the People of the World, who continually employ themselves in the cares of Earthly things; and by Jacob a plain honest Country Man who liv'd at home, are to be understood, Religious Persons, who live in a continual Recollection of Mind, and a constant application to that which regards the advancement of their Souls; and are for this reason the favorites and beloved Children of God, as Jacob was the beloved Child and favorite of his Mother. But let us here consider a little, how great a favor our Sovereign Master has done us, to raise us so far above the People of the World, who are like Servants employ'd in mean and painful Offices in the Country, whilst we are like Menial Servants, who never quit his Person; so that we may very well say to him, what the Queen of *Saba* sayd to *Solamon*, after she had seen the Magnificence, and excellent order which was kept in his Palace. † *Happy are thy People, and happy are thy Servants, who are always in thy Presence, and who hear thy Wisdom!* Happy are the Religious whom God has made choice of, to remain in his House, there always to enjoy his Presence, and the Treasures of his infinite Wisdom.*

† Beati viri
tui, & beati
servi tui, qui
stant coram te
semper, & au-
diunt sapienti-
am tuam.
3 Reg. 10. 8.

By all this that I have sayd, 'tis easie to Judge how great the blindness is of those, who think they have done much for God by quitting the World; and that pretend that God is very much beholding to them for it. You deceive your selves; 'tis God on the contrary, that has bestow'd upon you a very great favor, in drawing you out of the World, to place you in Religion, and to Elevate you to so high a state; 'tis you that are beholding to him, and are oblig'd anew, to render him greater service, and a more thankful acknowledgment, for so great a benefit. If a King,

thoud

shou'd cause a Gentleman, to come to him, to give him one of the chief employments at Court. This Gentleman wou'd be far from believing, that he had done a great deal in quitting his House; and that the King were oblig'd to him for it: On the contrary he wou'd believe, that the King in calling him to be near his Person in this employment, had added a new favor, to those he had already bestow'd upon him; and wou'd endeavour to merit, and thankfully acknowledge it by new Services. Behold here what we ought to do; for we have not chosen God, but 'tis God who has made choice of us, and has done us the favor to call us, not only without having merited it, but even having render'd our selves unworthy thereof.

Alas! O Lord what cou'd you perceive in me, to choose me rather than my Brethren, which you have left in the World? And what was there in me that cou'd be pleasing to you? Yet there must needs be something which you saw that was pleasing to you; because you have chosen me before them: But take heed, some may say, you go not too far; because 'all Divines hold, that there is nothing in us, that can contribute to the cause of our Predestination. Saint *Austin* explicates this very well by a pat Compariſon. A Carver, says he, passes throu' a Wood, he beholds the Trunk of a Tree, he stops, he considers it, he likes it, and resolves to make something of it. But what was there therein, that cou'd please him? * *He saw in it, what he cou'd be able to work upon it by means of his art; and he lov'd it, not for what it was then, but for what he propos'd to make of it afterwards, he lov'd in it that piece of Work he had a design to make of it.* Behold here, after what manner God has lov'd us, even when we were Sinners, he did not love the state in which we were in; he did not love us, to the end he might leave us in it, and that we might remain like the Trunk of a Tree, but he look'd upon us, as an excellent Workman looks upon a piece of Wood cut down in a Forrest, and thought only of the piece of Work he wou'd make of it. Behold in this, what has pleas'd God in us, not that which we were then, for then we were unhew'd and unprofitable pieces of Wood; but that which he had a design to make of us. This admirable Workman who made Heaven and Earth, † *Wou'd that those whom he had Predestinated to be conformable to the Image of his Son, shou'd be such as he foresaw he wou'd make 'em.* He resolv'd to make

† In arte vidit quod futurum est, & amavit quod inde facturus est, non illud quod est. Sic nos & Deus amavit peccatores. Quasi lignum de silva vidit nos faber, & cogitavit ædificium quod facturum est. Aug. in ps. 8. sup. 1. Ep. Joan. Quasi lignum de silva vidit nos faber, & cogitavit ædificium quod inde facturus est. Ibid.

† Quos præscivit & prædestinavit conformes fieri imagini filij sui. Rom. 8. 29.

† Non vos me
elegistis, sed
ego vos elegi,
& posui vos ut
earis, & fruc-
tum afferatis
& fructus
vestri maneat.
Joan. 15. 16.

an Image of you, which thou'd be perfect, and thou'd re-
semble himself; and this was that which pleas'd him in you,
and which mov'd him to make choice of you, † *For 'tis
not you, says our Saviour, who have chosen me; but 'tis
I that have chosen you, and establish'd you, that you might
go and bring forth Fruit, and that your Fruit might last for
ever.* Consider what Image God wou'd make of you, and
how like he wou'd make you, to his only Son; because
he has chosen you for the same employment, for which he
sent his Son into the World, the Salvation of Souls.

Aug. in illud.
* Super flu-
mina Babylo-
nis, illic sedi-
mus, & flevi-
mus, dum re-
cordaremur
tui Sion.
Psal. 136. 1

The same Saint, explicating this Verse of the hundred
and thirty sixth Psalm, * *Upon the Banks of the Rivers of
Babylon, there we sat and Wept at the remembrance of thee
O Sion.* Gives it a sense which serves very well to our
purpose. The Rivers of *Babylon* are, says he, the transitory
things of this World, and there's this difference, says he,
between the Children of *Babylon* and the Children of *Jeru-
salem*, that those remain in the midst of the Rivers of
Babylon, where they are continually expos'd to Tempests;
that is, they plunge themselves in Pleasures, where they
are continually afraid to be surpris'd by Death; whereas
these, * *Who perceive the misfortune of the others, keep them-
selves upon the Banks of the Rivers, and bath themselves in
Tears.* But why do they Weep, and why do they sit upon
the Banks of the Rivers? First, says this Father, they bemoan
their Banishment: The sight of those Stormes that continual-
ly rise upon the Rivers of *Babylon*, and the remembrance
of their Heavenly Country, which is at so great a distance,
draws these Tears from them, and makes 'em cry out with
Sighs.

* Vident hæc,
& non se mit-
tunt in flumi-
na Babylonis,
sed sedent su-
per flumina
Babylonis, &
fient super flu-
mina Babylo-
nis. Aug. ubi.
super.

† O sancta Si-
on, ubi torum
stat, & nihil
mutat: quis nos
ita precipita-
vit? quare di-
mimus con-
ditorum,
& societatem
tuam?
Aug. ibid.

† *O holy Sion, where all things are permanent, and
where nothing passes, who has cast us headlong into this Mi-
sery? Why are we separated from him, who has built us,
and from the company of thy Inhabitants.* When shall we be
deliver'd from these dangers that incompass us? When shall
we be call'd out of this our Banishment? When shall we
have nothing more to fear, and when shall we be-
hold you within your Walls? In the second place those
Weep, who let themselves be carry'd away with the Tor-
rent of the Rivers of *Babylon*; they bemoan their Brethren
whom Glory, Ambition, Love, Hatred and Envy have drag'd
into this Precipice; into which, they daily fall by thousands.
A great Saint one Day in a Vision saw Souls fall as thick
into Hell, as flakes of Snow fall in the Winter time upon the
Earth.

Earth. Who wou'd not lament, this loss? And who can behold these miserable Souls, without feeling his Bowels torn in pieces with tender compassion. Lastly, they sat upon the Banks of the Rivers of *Babylon*, to help their Brethren, who were in danger of being lost; to stretch out their Hands to them, and to see whether they cou'd not be able to save some of 'em. Behold here what ought to be the employment of all Religious Persons, who are here describ'd as Children of *Jerusalem*, and what ought chiefly to be ours.

* *For God has particularly call'd us, to make us become Fishers of Men.* And he has plac'd us as it were upon the Rivers of *Babylon*, that we may do our duty to save those, who are daily Ship-wrack'd; and that we may reach out our hands to those Souls, who are upon the point of being lost. Let us now consider on the one side, how great a favor God has bestow'd upon us, above those who are in the World, by having plac'd us upon the Bank, whilst he leaves them in the middle of the Water, where they are every moment in danger of being lost; and on the other, how great strength, skill and ability is requir'd, to help those that are drowning, without exposing our selves to the danger of being drown'd with 'em. It being very common, that he who is drowning, takes hold and dragg's him in with him, who wou'd save him. It requires therefore a great deal of skill in the gaining Souls to God. A great Vertue and Sanctity, is requir'd to draw others out of danger, without exposing our selves to the same.

'Tis Recounted of Saint *Anselm*, that being one Day ravish'd in an Extasie, he saw a great River, into which they cast all the Dirt and Filth of the World, with which the Waters became so Muddy and Stinking, that nothing cou'd be imagin'd like it, and the Torrent was also so Rapid and Violent, that it carry'd away whatsoever it met, Men or Women, Rich or Poor, and carry'd 'em presently to the bottom, now casting 'em up again, and then casting them down, without letting 'em rest one moment. The Saint astonish'd at this Vision, and surpris'd to see, that those who were in the River were still alive; ask'd how it was possible they cou'd live there? And how they were nourish'd? to whom answer was made, that they were nourish'd by the Filth of those Muddy Waters, into which they were plung'd. And yet after all this, which was more to be wonder'd at, they were contented to live therein. Afterwards
this

* Venite pos-
me, & faciam
vos fieri pisca-
tores homi-
num.
Matth. 4. 19.

Habetur in eius
operib. & refert
sur in ejus vita
21. April.
Tilman. Braun-
denbrach. Cal-
lar. 8. c. 34.

this Vision was explicated to him, and 'twas told him that this Rapid River was the World, where Men plung'd in Vice, and drawn and drag'd along by their Passions, live in so strange a blindness, that tho' the continual agitation they are in, permits 'em not to suffer the least repose, yet still they believe themselves Happy. After this he was again Ravish'd in Spirit, into a very spacious Park, which was inclos'd by Walls cover'd with Plates of Silver, which cast a very great reflection, in the midst of which there was a great Meadow, the Herbs of which were all of Gold, but so soft and fresh, that they easily yielded when any one sat down upon 'em, without the least appearance of withering, and return'd to their first state, as soon as one rise up. The Air of that place was sweet and pure, and lastly all things in it were so pleasant and delightful, that it seem'd a Terrestrial Paradise, so that nothing was wanting therein, to render it a Sovereign Felicity. And 'twas also told the Saint, that this was a lively, representation of the state of a Religious Life.

C H A P. VII.

A continuation of the same Subject.

SAINTE Bernard desirous to comprehend in a few words the advantages of a Religious Life, says, that * *The Sanctity and Purity of Religion, causes him who is engag'd in it, to live more purely, to fall seldom, to arise sooner, to walk with greater precaution, to be refresh'd more frequently with Heavenly comforts, to repose with greater security, to Dye with greater confidence, to be sooner purified from his defects, and to be more gloriously recompens'd.* † *Your Profession, says he speaking in another place to Religious, is most sublime, 'tis higher than the Heavens, 'tis equal to the Angels, it resembles Angelical Purity; because you have Vow'd not only all kind of Sanctity, but also the Perfection of all kind of Sanctity. Even the highest Perfection. 'Tis for others to serve God,*
but

* Nonne hæc est religio sancta, pura, & immaculata, in qua homo vivit purius, cadit rarius, surgit velocius, incedit cautius, irroratur frequenter, quiescit securius, moritur eductius, purgatur citius, præmiatur copiosius?
Bern. serm. sup.
† Simile est regnum celorum, &c. Altissima est perfectio vestra: callos transt,

but for yee to be united to him; what Name therefore shall I give yee, adds the Father, that is worthy of yee? Shall I call yee Heavenly Men or Earthly Angels? For tho' yee live upon Earth, your conversation and your thoughts are in Heaven. * For yee are no longer Strangers and Pilgrims upon Earth, but yee are fellow Citizens of the Saints, and the Domesticks of God. Yee are like to the blessed Spirits whom God gives us, to be our guard, and who for exercise themselves in their employments, That they never lose the sight of God. Behold here the Life of a true Religious Man; his Heart is in Heaven, whilst his Body is upon Earth. All his entertainment, all his conversation, is either of God, or of things belonging to God; and he may truly say with the Apostle. † CHRIST is my Life. And as in the World 'tis sayd of him who loves hunting extreamly, that hunting is his whole Life; and of him that very much loves his study, that study is his Life; so the Apostle says here of himself, That JESUS CHRIST, is his whole Life; because he gave himself to nothing else but to JESUS CHRIST, and was intirely Consecrated to him. A Religious Man also is Consecrated to him after the same manner, and consequently may say the self same thing.

The same Saint Bernard apply's to a Religious Life these words of the Canticles; † My Bed is all cover'd with Flowers. And says, that amongst the things of the World, there is nothing conduces more to repose then a Bed; so in the Church of God, there is nothing more proper for the tranquillity of Mind, than Religion; and that 'tis a kind of Bed, where the Soul disingag'd from all the cares and disquiets of the World, repotes continually in God. We daily experience in the SOCIETY, the advantage it has pleas'd God to give us herein; Superiours having such a particular care to provide us all things, that are necessary for Life for Clothing, for Studies, for Journies, for Sicknes and for our Health; so that we want not at all, the help of our Parents, nor need to think of 'em any more than to commend 'em to God. For whether they be Dead or alive, whether they be Rich or Poor, the SOCIETY, and those Superiours it gives us, is to us in place of Father and Mother, who with a tendernes which even exceeds that of a Father and Mother, provide for all our necessities, so that being out of pain for all Temporal things, we may think of nothing else, but of the end for which we came to Re-

Tom. III.

R

ligion,

par Angelis
est, angelice
similis purita-
ti; non enim
solum omnem
vovistis san-
ctitatem, sed
omnis sancti-
tatis perfecti-
onem, & om-
nis consum-
mationis fi-
nem. Aliorum
est servire
Deo, vestrum
adhætere.
quos quo no-
mine dignus
appellem neci-
cio: homines
cælestes, an
Angelos tes-
tifies degen-
tes in terris,
sed conversati-
onem habent-
es in cælis
Idem ep. ad fra.
de monte Dei.
* Non estis
hospites & ad-
venæ, sed
estis, cives
sanctorum, &
domestici Dei.
Ephes. 2. 19.
† Mihi vivere
Christus est.
Philipp. 1. 21.

Bern. sup. Cant.
in illud: † Lec-
tulus noster
floridus.
Cant. 1. 16.

ligion, which is to labour for our own Spiritual Advancement, and for that of our Neighbour: *Clement of Alexandria* says, that God having put Man in the Terrestrial Paradise, deliver'd up the Possession of all things into his Hands; to the end that there being nothing more he could desire upon Earth, he might raise his Thoughts and Desires to Heaven. The SOCIETY uses the like method with us, it takes care of all things we stand in need of, thus being freed from the care of Earthly things, we may continually raise our Thoughts towards Heaven, and Heavenly things.

C H A P.

C H A P. VIII.

Of the Renewing of Vows, which is a custom practis'd amongst us; and of the Fruit, that may be gather'd from thence.

IN the Year one thousand five hundred thirty four; upon the Feast of the Assumption of our Blessed Virgin, the first Fathers of the SOCIETY, being Assembl'd at *Paris* with Saint Ignatius, went from thence to *Mont-Martyr*, into the Church there Dedicated to the Blessed Virgin, where having Confess'd and Communicated, they Solemnly promis'd to God, that upon the day then specifi'd, they wou'd quit all they had, without reserving any thing to themselves, but what shou'd be absolutely necessary for their Journey to *Venice*: They also Vow'd to imploy themselves in the Spiritual Advancement of their Neighbour, and to go in Pilgrimage to *Jerusalem*, yet with this condition, that they wou'd expect a whole Year at *Venice*, for an occasion to pass into the Holy Land; and if within the Year, they found one; they wou'd go to *Jerusalem*, and use all their endeavours to remain there all their Lives in those Holy Places; but if within a Year they found no convenient Passage, or if after having visited those Holy Places, they found it impossible to establish themselves there, then they wou'd go to *Rome*, to prostrate themselves at the Popes Feet, and make an offer of themselves to him, to dispose of 'em as he pleas'd, for the good and Salvation of Souls. They renew'd these Vows two Years together upon the same Day, in the same Church, and with the same Solemnity; and from hence the Renovation of Vows, which is practis'd in the SOCIETY before Profession, had it's beginning.

Our Holy Founder speaking of this Renovation of Vows, says, * *That to Renew these Vows, is not to engage our selves anew to God, but so call to mind the engagement we*

*Lib. 1. cap. 4.
Vita S. Ignat.
Mons Martyrum.*

* Vota sua
renovare, non
est obligatio-
ne nova se
obligare,

sed ejus quā
obstricti sunt
in Domino,
recordari, at-
que eandem
confirmare.
§. p. consil. c. 4.
§. 4.

have made to him, and to confirm the same. 'Tis to renew what we made before, and to confirm it with Joy, to shew we have no regret for having made it, but on the contrary, that we give thanks to God for having accepted the Offering which we have made; that we wou'd Offer it anew, if it were still to make; that had we a thousand Worlds to forsake, we wou'd leave 'em all for Love of him; and if we had a thousand Wills, and a thousand Hearts to Sacrifice to him, that we wou'd Sacrifice 'em all with Joy. 'Tis after this manner that Renovation of Vows ought to be made, and when we make 'em thus, we may assure our selves they are of very great Merit: For as the Joy and Satisfaction which we take in Sin, is a new Sin, and a new subject of Punishment; so the Joy and Satisfaction we take in a good Action, is a thing very Pleasing to God, and a new matter of Recompence: For the Joy of a good Action is Meritorious, proportionable to the goodness of the Action.

4. part. consil. c. 4. §. 5.

* Ad devotionis augmentū.

† Ad excitandam, qua Deo obstricti sunt, obligationis memoriam.

* Ad majorem studentium in sua vocatione confirmationem.

This Renovation of Vows, says he afterwards, to descend more to particulars, is made for three Reasons. The first, * *To increase Devotion in our Hearts.* For in effect it do's not a little increase it in the Heart of those, who prepare themselves as they ought, to do it well: The second, † *To awaken in us a memory of the Obligation we have contracted with God;* and thereby to excite us Faithfully to acquit our selves of our Promise, by Daily endeavouring to render our selves more Perfect. And the third, * *To confirm us more strongly in our Vocation.* For as, 'tis a great remedy to Temptations to produce Acts of Vertue, contrary to the Vice to which one is Tempted, because contraries are cur'd by contraries; so to renew the Vows we have already made, is a great remedy against the interior troubles, and disgusts which the Devil endeavours to give us upon occasions: Whereby the Enemy becomes weaker, perceiving us thus to fortifie our selves in our holy Resolutions; and loses Courage to attack us with the like Temptations; and if we have been failing out of some negligence; 'tis repair'd with Interest by the new strength we gain hereby.

Vertue and Perfection, is a thing very hard to our corrupt Nature: For the Misery and Weakness we have contracted by Sin, is so great, and the inclination we have to Evil so Violent, that tho' we shou'd sometimes begin our

Part. 3. Of the three Religious Vows. 133

our Spiritual Exercises with Fervor; yet we permit our selves by little and little to Relent, and soon return to our Weakness and Tepidity. We are like the Weights of a Clock, which continually draw downwards. Our Flesh, which is Earth, still draws us towards the Earth; and therefore we need so much help, that if we come to fall, we may presently be able to get up again. 'Tis for this reason that as the Church has establish'd *Advent* and *Lent*, that there might be two several times in a Year, in which it's Children might gather new forces; to begin again to serve God with new Fervor. So our Holy Founder wou'd have us twice a Year, to call to mind the Vows we have made to God, that this memory of 'em, might kindle again in us our first Fervor, and give us new forces to acquit our selves well in the duties of our Vocation; behold here, that which chiefly mov'd him to Institute in the SOCIETY this Solemn Renovation of Vows, and what the Fruit is we ought to endeavour to gather from thence.

Saint *Francis Xavierius* sayd, that we ought to Renew them, not only at these times appointed for it, but in Imitation of the holy Abbot *Paphnucius*, we ought to Renew them every Day, and as he knew no better Armes than these, for a Religious Man to use against all sorts of Temptations. So he Counsel'd us to arm our selves with 'em every Night, and every Morning after Prayer, against the Enemies of our Salvation: But if we have not sufficient Fervor to imbrace this practice, yet 'tis good at least, to follow that which some perform, which is to Renew their Vows as often as they Communicate, and to exact of themselves an account of the manner how they observe 'em, and carefully Examen themselves whether their Conscience reproaches 'em of nothing, that is contrary to the Fidelity of their Promise.

The better to obtain the end, we ought to propose to our selves in this Solemn Renovation of Vows, 'tis the Custom of the SOCIETY; that besides the Austerities and Corporal Mortifications that are Practis'd in the times appointed for this Renovation; we shou'd Practice three things to prepare our selves for it. The first is, to keep our selves in Recollection and Retirement for three Days; during which time we abstain from all sorts of employments, to give our selves more quietly to Prayer and Spiritual Exercises.

*Liv. 6. c. 13.
Ch. 15. in his
Life, Coll. 3.
Abb. Paph. in
triplici renunt.
Monach.*

*Congreg. 6. dect.
41. Can. 8.*

ercises. The second is, to give an account of Conscience to our Superiour, which ought to be given from the last six Months, and ought to be made more exactly, than at other times of the Year; This therefore, which is one of the most essential obligations, shall hereafter be the Subject of a particular Treatise. The third is to Confess all the Sins we have committed for the last six Months, addressing our selves to one of those Confessours, that shall be appointed for this end, according to the Ancient Custom of the SOCIETY; and according to the Rule, that obliges us to it: But all these means are most proper for the end we here propose: Because in taking a review of all our Faults, and comparing the six last Months with the precedent, we may easily guess whether we have made more Progress in the one, than in the other; and whether we have advanced or gone back in the way of God: So that when we find we have gone back instead of advancing, we may come thereby to have a great Confusion, to see our selves so far off from that Perfection, to which we are call'd; and find our selves excited to use new endeavours to obtain it: Moreover, when a Man sees all his Faults together and in cold Blood, he judges by seeing those into which he has ofteneft fallen, what Passion most of all reigns in him, and which of 'em makes the rudest War against him; and then carries himself with more Fervor, to apply convenient remedies; making this Passion, the Subject of his particular Examen. There is still another advantage, which is, that as we make the review of our Faults in the time of Renovation of Vows, so 'tis the time also in which we take a review of all those Favors we have receiv'd from God; and particularly of that of his having call'd us to Religion; 'tis impossible that considering on the one side, so many Graces receiv'd; and on the other, so many Faults committed; we shoud not come to Humble our selves before God, and to make a firm resolution of amendment, and of serving him better than we have hitherto done. *The things which are opposite to one another, appear greater, by the approaching the one to the other: So Black and White; plac'd over against one another, appear better; wherefore at present compare that which God has done for you, with that which you have done against him; consider what obligations you have to him, and after what manner*

Opposita juxta se posita
magis elucescunt.

manner you have corresponded with 'em; and you'll see how great a Subject you have to be Confounded, and to Debase your self before him. What have you gain'd by frequenting the Sacraments? What have you got by so many Mortifications, Austerities and Prayers? By so many Examinations, Exhortations and Spiritual Readings? Into what an Abyss are all these fallen? What Fruit and Profit have you receiv'd from 'em? 'Tis after this manner we ought to Examine our selves, when we are to give an account of Conscience to our Superiour, or to make our General Confession; but above all, we ought to endeavour to discover which way the Waters of so many Graces have run out and been lost; to the end that having discover'd it, we may hereafter apply a remedy thereunto.

CHAP. IX.

A Continuation of the same Subject.

THE Renovation of Vows is moreover Instituted amongst us, for an acknowledgment of the Grace that God has done us, in drawing us out of the World, and calling us to Religion; and 'tis properly a Feast which we Celebrate, in memory of so great a benefit, which is the source or rise of all our Happiness, and a great mark of our Predestination. And as the Church Yearly Celebrates the Feast of the Dedication of Material Temples, so 'tis very just also, that we should Celebrate the Feast of the Dedication of our Souls, which are the Living Temples of the Lord: But the better to Celebrate 'em, and to render our thanks more pleasing to God, we must testify our thanksgiving by effects, which are the best marks of it: We must renew our selves, in Renewing our Vows. We must fortifie our selves after such a manner in the observance of all our Duties, that thereby for the future, we may come
to

to acquit our selves of 'em with greater Exactitude and Fidelity, than ever we have done before. 'Tis to this Renovation of our selves, says Saint Gregory, to which the Apostle Exhorts us by these words: * *Be yee Renew'd in Spirit*. For this Exterior Renovation that we make by our Mouths, to what can it serve, if it be not accompany'd with the Interior Renovation of our Souls? When the Colours of a Picture are so worn out, and so defac'd with Time; that one can scarce distinguish the Strokes and Figures thereof, we refresh, or go it over with new Colours, and it becomes again as Beautiful as if it had been but newly made. The Colours of Vertue are so soon worn out and defac'd in us by time; because we are drawn by our deprav'd Nature, which carries us to Corruption and Disorder, † *And this Corruption of the Body, renders the Soul heavy and unease*: Wherefore there is need from time to time to apply new Colours, and to touch or move our selves again, by Renewing those holy Resolutions we have already made, and strengthening our selves more and more in them. * *If we desire not to relent in Vertue*, says Saint Gregory: 'Tis very necessary to imagine every Day that we only now begin, as when first we came to Religion. Now therefore begin again anew with the same Courage and Fervor you did then, and by this means you will renew your self. This will be to give to God a pleasing mark of that thankful acknowledgment, which you have for all his Benefits.

Cassian Recounts a short and solid Exhortation which the Abbot Paphnucius made, in the Presence of all his Religious, to a Novice he Receiv'd; and each one may apply it to himself, as a means that may very much help to dispose him to the Renovation of Vows. You come to give your self to God, says the Saint, and to renounce all things of the World, † *Take care you take nothing back again that you have quitted by this Renunciation*. You have renounc'd Riches by the Vow of Poverty; take care not to tie your self to the Possession of the least thing in Religion; for it will signifie nothing to you to deprive your self of what you Possess in the World; if in Religion you adhere to the Possessing of any thing. You have renounc'd your own Will and Judgment, by the Vow of Obedience; have a care of taking 'em back again, but say with the Spouse, * *I have quitted my Coat, how shall I Clothe my self with it again?* I have quitted my own Sentiments,

Greg. l. 12. Mor.
c. 2. in illud.
* Renovamini
in spiritu men-
tis vestre.
Eph. 4. 23.

† Corpus quod
corruptur,
aggravat ani-
mam.
Sap. 9. 15.

* Si lassescere
ab inchoatis
bonis nolu-
mus, valde ne-
cessarium est,
ut inchoare
nos quotidie
credamus.
Greg. l. 1. Mor.
22. cap. 2.

† Cave ne
quid aliquando
eorum resu-
mas que re-
nuntians ab-
jecisti.
Cass. l. 4. de
Inst. remitt. cap.
36. Et Coll. 1.
Abb. Moys.

* Expoliavi
me tunica mea
quomodo induar
illa?
Cant. 5. 2.

Sentiments, God preserve you from ever making use of 'em any more: You have renounc'd all the pleasures and vain entertainments of the World, take great care never to admit 'em again into your Heart. You have trampled under foot, Pride, Vanity, and the Opinion of the World. Take care not to permit 'em to take new root in you, when you shall reach, or when you shall enter into some honorable employment; and do not then build up again what you have now destroy'd; for that will be to become in a manner an *Apostate*; * *And to look back, after you have put your Hand to the Plow.* But Persever to the End in Poverty, and in dispoysing your self of all things; and in the place you have promis'd God to live in, persevere in that Humility and Patience, which you had, when with Tears you begg'd to be receiv'd into Religion.

Saint Basil, Saint Bernard and Saint Bonaventure add's another consideration to this, consider, say they, that you belong no longer to your self, but that all that you are, and all that you possess, belongs to God; to whom you have given it by means of your Vows: Wherefore have a care of taking back, what you have already given; because this would be to commit a Theft; † *Since 'tis a Robbery to dispose of any thing against the Will of him to whom it belongs.* Did I not say in the beginning of this Treatise, that he who Enters into Religion, gives to God the Fruit and the Tree? But if any one had given a Tree to another to Plant in his Garden, and he shou'd afterwards gather the Fruit of it, wou'd not this be a Theft? Behold here what a Religious Person do's, who follows his own Will, instead of performing what Obedience prescribes. Nay, he do's what is worse, for he commits a Sacrilege, it being in a thing that is Consecrated to God, and such a kind of Sacrilege as God very much abhors, as he himself tells us in these words, * *I am the Lord who love Justice, and hate Rapine in a Holocaust.* What greater Crime can there be, than to steal any part of a *Holocaust*, which intirely belongs to God, and is wholly Consecrated to him? Wherefore Saint Bernard says very well; ‡ *That there is not a greater, nor more enormous Crime; than to take our Will again into our Power, which has been once Offer'd to God in Sacrifice.*

* Mittens manum ad aratum & respiciens retro, Luc. 9. 62.

Basil. in Reg. fufius diff. 10. & ferm. de abdicat. rerum. Bern. ferm. 19. in Cant. Bonav. de inferior. novit. p. 1. cap. 2.

† Contrectatio rei aliena, invito Domino, furtum est.

Treatise 3. c. 3.

* Ego Dominus diligens judicium, & odio habens rapinam in holocausto. Isai. 61. 3.

‡ Nullum sacrilegij crimen reperitur detestius, quam in voluntate semel oblata Deo, reaccipere potestatem. Bern. Ep. 433.

Aug. l. 8. sup.
Gen. in illud:
* Tulit Deus
hominem, &
posuit eum in
paradiso vo-
luptatis, ut
operaretur, &
custodiret il-
lum.
Gen. 2. 15.

Saint *Austin* explicating this passage of *Genesis*, * God took *Man*, and put him in a *Paradise of Pleasure*, that he might work and take care of it, interprets it after a manner that suits very well with our Subject. Let us a little examin, says this Father, what the Holy Ghost would have us to understand by these words, is it that God put *Adam* into the *Terrestrial Paradise*, there to Cultivate the Earth? There's no likelihood at all, that before Sin, God would oblige him to work; yet certainly there was no inconvenience, at all that he shou'd then Exercise him in something, by way of Divertisement or Recreation, as those do who take pleasure in working themselves in their Gardens: But was he oblig'd to it by constraint? This was not convenient neither to his state, which was the state of Innocency, nor necessary as to the nature of the Earth, which brought forth all things of it self, without being Cultivated. Therefore what is there more to be understood, add's this great Saint, by these words? God put *Man in Paradise to take care of it*? What ought he to do in taking care of it? Because there was no other Man but himself in the World, ought he not to preserve it from the Beasts? Before Sin, the Beasts did no hurt at all to Man, nor to any thing else that did belong to him; and how was it possible that one Man alone, shou'd be able to guard a place of so great an Extent, from so many sorts of Beasts? Shou'd not he at first have made an Inclosure so securly fenc'd, that it might even have been able, to have hinder'd the Serpent from entring into it? And before he had ended it, ought he not to have hunted out all the Beasts that were in it? But how was it possible that a single Man shou'd be able to compass so many things? Wherefore 'tis not to be understood, by this passage of Scripture, that God put Man into Paradise to guard it after this manner, and to Cultivate the Earth: But what then is the meaning of these words, *To work therein, and to guard it*? Their meaning is, answers this Father, that he shou'd take care to put in practice those Commands, that God had given him, in performing which, he would have kept Paradise, which afterwards he lost by his neglect in practising 'em. Let us now apply this to our Subject, why think you, has God plac'd you in this Paradise of Religion? For this is a Name which the

the Saints give it; and which agrees very well with it, would you know why; 'tis that you may practise the Commandments he has given you, and the Evangelical Councils which are contain'd in your Rules; that by practising of 'em, you may conserve this Terrestrial Paradise for your self, which others have lost for want of their Practise.

The Saints also give another Sense of this same passage, for they observe, that the Scripture says not, that God put Man into Paradise, to Cultivate or to Guard Paradise, but only to Cultivate *himself* and to Guard *himself*; for that which he says, may be as well if not better understood of Man, than of Paradise; God therefore, add's the Father, plac'd Man in Paradise, not that Man shou'd Cultivate and Guard Paradise; but that God himself might there Cultivate and Guard Man: For as we say that Man Cultivates the Earth, when he Labors to render it Fruitful; so we may say also that God Cultivates Man, when he Labors to render him more just, more holy, and more perfect. But it was precisely for this, that God plac'd him in the Terrestrial Paradise, to Cultivate his Soul by Sanctity, to Guard him by this means, till such time as he shou'd be pleas'd to transfer him from this Earthly Paradise, to that of Heaven, and render him for ever happy in Glory. Make account after the like manner, that God has not plac'd you in this Terrestrial Paradise of Religion, only for this end, that you may Cultivate and Keep it; because 'tis Guarded and Cultivated by better Hands than yours; but he has plac'd you in it, that he may Cultivate you, that he may make you a Man fill'd with the Spirit of Mortification, an interior Man, a holy Man, a perfect Man. And that he keeps you by this means, till he shall vouchsafe to transfer you from this House of Peace, into the Eternal Mansions of his Glory.

We ought to help our selves with these considerations, and with others of the like nature; and excite our selves with all our power to correspond to the obligations we have to God; and to gather from the Renovation of our Vows, the Fruit we ought to propose to our selves therein. But if you must needs regard the pains and difficulties that the Practise of those things which you have Promis'd will occasion: Think at the same time of the Price and Reward annex'd to them, * *And*

both great the Recompence is. † We have Promis'd great

S 2

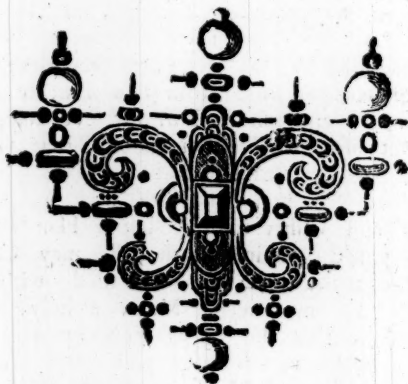
things,
* Magnam
habet remunerationem.
Hebr. 10. 35.
† Magna promissionis, ma-

jora promissa
sunt nobis.
S. Franc. l. 1.
Hijß. Minor.

* Etego pro-
mitto tibi vi-
tam æternam.

† Et habebis
thesaurum in
cælo.
Matth. 19, 21.

things, says Saint Francis to his Religious, *but greater things are Promis'd us.* Let us be faithful in our Promises, and God will not fail to be faithful in his. When a Religious Person also makes his Profession in the Order of Saint Francis, as soon as he has ended his Vows, and made 'em to his Superiour, the Superiour Answers him saying, and * *I Promise you in God's Name Life Everlasting;* and I affirm at present the self same thing unto you, if you keep what you have Promis'd to God, I Promise you on his Part Eternal Life; and I make you this Promise by Ver- tue of the Words of JESUS CHRIST, who assures us in the Gospel, that those who leave all to follow him, † *Shall have a Treasure in Heaven.*



T H E

THE THIRD TREATISE OF

The Vow of Poverty.

CH A P. I.

That the Vow of Poverty is the Foundation of Evangelical Perfection.

† **B**LESSED are the Poor in Spirit for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven. With these words, the Saviour of the World, began his admirable Sermon on the Mount. Which Some Doctors and Saints expound, and apply them to Humility; but others, with a great deal of reason, understand 'em of voluntary Po-

† Beati pauperes spiritu, quoniam ipsorum est regnum cælorum. *Matth. 5. 3.*

verty, and chiefly that Poverty which Religious Persons Profess: Wherefore I shall herein follow the last Opinion, which is both of Saint *Basil*, and of many other Saints. Certainly 'tis no small praise to this Vertue that it gave a beginning to our Saviours Sermon on the Mount, and was by him rank'd the very first of the eight Beatitudes. But that which makes far more for it's commendation, is his own Example

Example and daily Practice thereof; this being the first Lesson our Divine Master taught us, at his coming into the World. The Stable, and the Manger where he was Born, the Rags his Swathing Bands, the Hay on which he lay, the Breath of poor Beasts to defend him from the cold, declar'd his Poverty at his Birth: And as this was the first, so 'twas also the last Lesson he taught us. As soon as he was Born he Preach'd it to us from the Crib; and Dying he recommended it to us from the Pulpit of the Cross: He Dy'd naked and so poor, that *Joseph of Arimathea* was forc'd to buy him a Winding-sheet. What greater Poverty can be imagin'd? How truly do's his end correspond with his beginning? But his whole Life was the same; for he had not a Farthing to pay the Tribute which was ask'd of him; nor had he a House to Eat the Pascal Lamb in with his Disciples; and what was yet more, he had not so much as any place to abide or rest himself in. † *Foxes have their Dens*, says he, and *Birds their Nests*, but the Son of Man has not whereon to lay his Head. The Saviour of the World wou'd lay the Foundation of Evangelical Perfection in voluntary Poverty: * *If you wou'd be Perfect, go and Sell what you have and give it to the Poor*. And therefore 'twas necessary that his own Example shou'd give it Authority. Hence it was that Poverty was so much in vogue, in the beginning of the Primitive Church; and that all the Goods of the Christians were in Common, so that they who had Houses and Lands, sold 'em and layd the Mony at the Apostles Feet, to distribute it according to each ones necessity. Saint *Hierom* says this was done, † *To shew that Riches ought to be contemnit and troden under foot*. The same holy Doctor together with Saint *Cyprian*, and Saint *Basil* tell us, that the Christians in those Days made a Vow of Poverty; the proof of which they draw from *Ananias* and *Saphira*, who were punish'd with sudden Death, for retaining some of the Mony they had receiv'd for their Goods. For they wou'd not have deserv'd so severe a Punishment, say these three Saints, had they not acted contrary to the Vow or Promise they had made to Almighty God, by retaining something to themselves, of what they had Offer'd to him.

In conformity to the Sanctity of this Doctrine, and the Antiquity of this Practise, all holy Men and Founders of Religious Orders, have plac'd the Vow of Poverty as the

† Vulpes foveas habent, & volucres caeli nidos; filius autem hominis non habet ubi caput reclinet. *Matth.* 8. 20.
* Si vis perfectus esse, vende, vende quae habes, & da pauperibus. *Matth.* 19. 21.

Matth. 4. 33. 34.

† Ut ostenderet divitias esse calcandas.

the Foundation of a Religious Life. And our holy Founder, following their Example, says in his Rule, * *That Poverty is to be look'd upon as the Wall or Fortress of Religion; and that it ought to be preserv'd by us, in it's Purity, so far forth as God's Grace shall enable us.* As in the World, Estates and great Families are founded upon Riches; so on the contrary Religion and Christian Perfection, is built upon Poverty; for as the Building which we raise in Religion, is quite different from that of the World; so 'tis very reasonable, that their Foundations also shou'd not be the same. This truth was layd down by our Saviour in the Gospel in these words. † *Who is there amongst you being about to build a Tower, do's not first compute the Charges that are necessary to finish it? Lest having layd the Foundations, and not being able to carry on the work, those that see it shou'd Laugh at him, and say, behold a Man that began to build but cou'd not finish it. Or what King, going to make War against another, do's not first consider, whether he be able with ten thousand, to meet him that is coming against him with twenty thousand Men? Otherwise whilst he is afar off, he sends his Embassadors with propositions of Peace. In the same manner, if any of yee do not Renounce all he Possesses, he cannot be my Disciple.* By these two Comparisons, our Saviour gives us to understand, that as Men and Mony are necessary to maintain a War, and carry on a Building; so, to be Poor and Strip'd of all we have, is necessary to carry on a War against the Enemies of our Salvation; and to raise the Spiritual Building of Perfection, which we have undertaken. Saint Austin Explicating this very passage, says, that the Tower signifies the Perfection of a Christian Life, and the Stock requir'd for building imports a total Renunciation of our Goods, for then we are in a better state of serving God, and have less reason to fear the Devil; for hereby he has scarce any thing left to lay hold on, and the places where he might attack and assault us, are made fewer.

Saint Hierom and Saint Gregory are of the same Opinion. We are come into the World, say they, to Combat and fight with the Devil, who is Poor and possesses nothing: Wherefore in the like manner, we ought to deprive our selves of all things, to Fight against him: * *For he that Wrestles with his Cloaths on, against one that is Naked, is easily Thrown; because he has so many things to lay hold*

* Paupertas, ut murus religionis firmus diligenda, & in sua puritate conservanda est quantum divina gratia aspirante fieri poterit.
6. p. Const. c. 2.
§. 1. & Reg. 3. Summ.

† Quis enim ex vobis volens turrim ædificare, non prius sedens computat sumptus, qui necessarii sunt, si habeat ad perficiendum; ne, postquam posuerit fundamentum, & non poterit perficere, omnes qui vident, incipiant illudere ei, dicentes: Quia hic homo cepit ædificare, & non potuit consummare? Aut quis rex iturus committere bellum adversus alium regem, non sedens cogitat prius, si possit cum decem millibus occurrere ei, qui cum viginti millibus venit ad se? Alioquin adhuc illo longe agente, legationem mittens, rogat ea quæ pacis sunt. Sic ergo omnis ex vobis, qui non renuntiat omnibus quæ possidet, non potest meus esse discipulus.
Luc. 14. 28. & seq.

* Nam qui oneratus vestibus cum nudo luctatur, citius ad terram

ducitur, quia
habet unde te-
neatur. Vis
scilicet cum
diabolo dimi-
care, vestimen-
ta projice, ne
succumbas.
Quid enim
sunt terrena
omnia, nisi
quædam cor-
poris indumen-
ta? Qui plus
possidet, citius
vincitur.
*Hier. apud Eu-
seb. de morte
Hier. & Greg.
Hom. 31. Chryf.
sup. illud.
Act. 2. Et ap-
positæ sunt in
die illa animæ
circiter tria
millia.*

* Nudus athle-
ta fortius dimi-
cat. Nata-
tor exiit, ut
fluvium trans-
eat. Viator re-
jectis sarcinu-
lis bene cur-
sit.
*Chryf. Ibid.
† Radix om-
nium malo-
rum est cupi-
ditas.*

1 Tim. 6. 10.

* Ut rerum fa-
cultates in-
strumenta
sunt omnium
vitiarum, sic
harum abne-
gatio genera-
trix est, nu-
trixque omni-
um virtutum.
*Ambr. in locū
Apo sup. citat.
† Paupertas
bonis menti-
bus solet esse
custodia humi-
lilitatis.
Greg. I. Mor.
21. c. 11.*

* Diligent om-
nes paupertatem,
ut matrem.

hold on. Do you desire to Fight Valiantly against the Devil? Throw of your Cloaths, lest he throw you: For all Earthly things are no more than Cloaths which do you harm; and he that has most of 'em, is soonest overcome; by reason of the advantage they give his Enemy. Saint Chrysostom inquiring into the causes of the zeal and fervor of the Primitive Church; and the tepidity and looseness of Christians in his Days; gives this reason for it; that the former depriv'd themselves of their Goods; to Fight Naked against the Devil, but the latter Fight in their Cloaths; that is, they are charg'd with Plenty and Riches, which are very prejudicial to them in the Combat. But we are now disingag'd from all things that may hinder us, from not being in a good condition to Fight against the Devil, and to follow JESUS CHRIST: And this makes the same Saint say, * *That a Wrestler Strips to play the better, he that wou'd Swim a River throws off his Cloaths, and a Traveller on foot walks much easier, when he has nothing carry.*

Besides, as † *Covetousness is the Root of all Evil*, so Poverty is the Source and Origin of all Good: And 'tis for this reason, Poverty has the first place amongst the three Vows of Religion. Saint Ambrose, upon those words of the Apostle last cited, says, * *That as Riches are the Instruments of all Vices; because they render us capable of putting even our worst desires in execution; so a Renunciation of Riches, is the origin and preserver of all Vertues.* First of all, in regard of Humility, Saint Gregory says, † *That Poverty is it's Guardian.* As for Chastity, it is easie to shew how much a poor Habit and slender Diet, both procures and conserves it. 'Tis also no hard matter to prove, how far it concurs to Abstinence and Temperance: Nor lastly is there any difficulty to prove the same, in respect of all other Vertues, shou'd we take a survey of them all. Hence it is that holy Men, speaking of Poverty, call it sometimes the Guardian and Mistress; at other times the Mother of Vertues. Saint Ignatius in his Constitutions commands us to * *Love Poverty as a Mother*; because it produces and nourishes all other Vertues in our Souls and keeps up regular Discipline. Whence it comes to pass, that those Orders who have no regard to Holy Poverty, whose Children they ought to be, scarce retain the face of Religion, since they have left off to resemble their Mother. Wherefore let us love her in order to preserve the Spirit of Religion

Religion among us, and let us caress her with all respect and tenderness due to a Mother. Saint *Francis* us'd to call Poverty his Mistress, from whom Saint *Clare* also took it, making all those of her Order expressly say, we oblige our selves for ever to our Mistress holy Poverty.

3. p. Conf. c. 1.
3. 23. & Reg.
14. summ.

CHAP. II.

Of the greatness of the Reward, which God bestows upon the Poor in Spirit.

THE Young Man in the Gospel, who aspir'd to Perfection, and was not content with a bare observance of the Commandments, went away very much afflicted, when *CHRIST* told him, that if he wou'd be Perfect he must sell all he had, and give it to the Poor; had notwithstanding so great an affection for his Riches, which were very considerable, that he had not the courage to quit 'em, and so wanted a foundation requisite, to build the Tower of Evangelical Perfection upon; wherefore our Saviour to enable us to an absolute disingagement from all things of this World, proposes to us the greatness of the Reward, that certainly follows such an absolute disingagement. * *Blessed*, says he, *are the Poor in Spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.* Consider here, whether you wou'd not do well, to exchange all your Substance upon Earth, for the Kingdom of Heaven. Can you make a bargain more advantageous, than in giving the little you possess in this World, for an infinite Treasure in the next? Saint *Bernard* has an excellent remark upon this place, and says, that our Saviour do's not speak here, as in the other Beatitudes, of the time to come. He do's not say that the Kingdom of Heaven shall be yours, but that it is so already: For tho' you do not enjoy it at present, yet it do's not still cease to be yours; because you have really purchas'd it by leaving all you had in this World. For Example, if you have given an hundred Guineys for a Jewel, but left it in his Hands of whom you

Matth. 19. 21.

* Beati pauperes spiritu, quoniam ipsorum est regnum celorum. Matth. 5. 3.

Bern. serm. 4. de Adv.

Tom. III.

T

bought

bought it, the sayd Jewel is certainly yours, tho' 'tis not yet deliver'd to you, because you have bought and pay'd for it: In like manner, the Kingdom of Heaven belongs to a Person Poor in Spirit; because he has given all he was worth to purchase it. * *The Kingdom of Heaven, says our Saviour, is like a Marchant that seeks for fine Pearls, who having found a rich one, go's and sells all he has to buy it.* As this Pearl belongs to this Marchant, he having procur'd it by his Mony, so the Kingdom of Heaven belongs to you; because you have bought it by a sale of all your Goods.

But the Recompence, which the Son of God proposes to the Poor of Spirit, do's not end here, he promises still more. Can there be any thing more, you'll say, than the Kingdom of Heaven? Yes, for as in the World there are degrees of Honor and Command, so are there of Glory and Excellence in Heaven; and our Saviour has Promis'd the most Eminent Places thereof to the Poor in Spirit. CHRIST upon the Young Mans unwillingness to sell all he had to follow him, took occasion to shew the difficulty of Rich Mens entring into Heaven, whereupon Saint Peter sayd, † *We have left all and follow'd thee; what Reward shall we have?* To whom our Saviour says, *Verily I say to yee, that yee who have follow'd me in this Regeneration; when the Son of Man shall sit in the seat of his Majesty, yee shall also sit upon twelve seats Judging the twelve Tribes of Israël.* 'Tis the common opinion of holy Men, that these words ought also to be extended to all those, who have imitated the Apostles in Voluntary Poverty; and chiefly such, as have ingag'd themselves thereunto by Vow, as all Religious do; for suppose they die in that condition, and in the Grace of God, Saint Austin, with Saint Gregory and Venerable Bede hold, that they shall all appear sitting in the great Tribunal of God, at the Day of Judgment, rather to exercise the Office of Judges, than as Criminals; and they apply these words of *Isay* to them, * *The Lord shall come to Judge with the Elders and Princes of his People; as also these of Salomon*, which they Interpret of the Spouse of the Church, † *Her Bridgroom shall be Illustrions in the Assembly, when he shall sit with the Senators of the Earth.* All which Titles, of Senators, Elders and Princes, of whom the Holy Ghost speaks, the same holy Doctors give to the Poor of Spirit. 'Tis true some wou'd have this priviledge

* simile est regnum celorum homini negotiatori, quærenti bonas margaritas: inventa autem una pretiosa, margarita, abiit, & vendidit omnia quæ habuit, & emit eam. *Matth. 13. 45. & 46.*

† Ecce nos reliquimus omnia, & secuti sumus te: quid ergo erit nobis? Respondit Jesus: Amen dico vobis, quod vos qui secuti estis me, in regeneratione cum sederit filius hominis in sede majestatis sue, sedebitis & vos super sedes duodecim, judicantes duodecim tribus Israël. *Matth. 19. 27. 28.*

Aug. Ep. 89. ad Tit.
Et Beda hom. in Nat. S. Bened. Lib. 19. Mor. cap. ult.

* Dominus ad judicium veniet cum senibus populi sui, & principibus ejus. *Isai. 3. 23.*

† Nobilis in portu vir ejus, quando sederit cum Senatoribus terræ. *Psal. 31. 23.*

priviledge granted to all those whom the Church acknowledg'd for Saints; but Saint *Thomas of Aquin*, whom most follow in this point, limits it to those who have made Profession of holy Poverty, whether they be Canoniz'd or not, and he brings a great many plausible reasons, to prove why this priviledge ought to belong to them, rather than to other Saints. Saint *Gregory* upon the consideration of this great prerogative cry's out with the Psalmist, * *Thy Friends O Lord are even too much Honor'd? And their Dominion confirm'd to admiration? Be thou for ever blest, O my God, who hast thus honor'd thy Friends, particularly those, who have made themselves Poor for Love of thee. Thou art not content to give them only Part of thy Kingdom, but thou advancest 'em to the Glory even of sitting as Judges with thee, to Judge the whole World.*

*Greg. vii. sup.
* Nimis honorificati sunt amici tui, Deus. Nimis confortatus es principatus eorum.
Psal. 118. 16.
17.*

CHAP. III.

That God do's not only Reward the Poor in Spirit, in the other Life, but even in this also.

THAT you may not think all your reward reserv'd for the other Life; or imagine you trust Almighty God too long, by the giving him so much time to repay you, since you have pay'd him in ready-Money, I must assure you that the Poor in Spirit, are not only recompens'd in the other World, but even in this also; and that with considerable interest. All Men are so self-ended, and so sensibly touch'd with what is present, that they seem to lose courage, if they have not a prospect of some present advantage. 'Tis for this reason the Son of God, who knows our weakness, was unwilling that those who renounc'd all for his sake, shou'd live unrewarded in this World; and thereupon immediately makes this addition, to the promise we spoke of

† Et omnis
qui reliquerit
domum, vel
fratres, aut so-
cores, aut pa-
trem, aut ux-
orem, aut fili-
os, aut agros
propter no-
men meum,
centuplum ac-
cipiet & vitam
æternam pos-
sidebit.

Matth. 19. 29.

† Accipiet cen-
ties tantum
nunc in tem-
pore hoc, &
in seculo fu-
turo vitam æ-
ternam.

Matth. 10. 30.

† Qui carnalia
dimiserit, spi-
ritualia recipi-
et, quæ com-
paratione, &
merito suita
erunt, quasi
parvo numero
centenarius com-
paretur.

Hier. l. 3. in
Matth.
Cass. coll. ult.
cap. 26.

in the foregoing Chapter; † *He that shall leave his House, Brothers, or Sisters, or Father, or Mother, or Wife or Children, or Estate for my sake, shall receive a hundred fold, and enjoy everlasting Life.* This hundred fold is to be understood of this present Life, according to our Saviours own explication of it in Saint Mark; * *He shall at present receive a hundred fold here in this Life, and Eternal Life hereafter in the World to come.*

Saint Hierom interprets this passage, of Spiritual Goods, and says, † *That he who shall forsake Temporal Goods for the Love of our Saviour, shall receive Spiritual for them, which being compar'd with the others, are as a hundred in respect of any small inconsiderable number.* But Cassian understands this place of Exterior and Visible Goods, and says, in conformity to the words of Saint Mark, that Religious Persons receive this hundred fold even in this Life, as you shall see made clear by what follows. You have left a House for the Love of CHRIST, and in place of that, God has given you a great many: You have forsaken a Father and Mother, but find a great many other Fathers, who love you much more tenderly than the former, take more care of you, and are much more solicitous for your good. You have quitted your Brothers, and God has given you others in their place, who have a greater love and kindness, and is a more refin'd and Spiritual Love, since they have it for God's sake, and without any design or interest; whereas your Brothers in the World, scarce lov'd you any longer than they had occasion to make use of you, in order to serve their own ends: You have left those who waited upon you in the World, and perhaps had not any such to leave, however now you find a great number always employ'd in your service; one serves you as your Steward, another as your Porter, a third as your Cook, and a fourth attends you when Sick. And what is more, shou'd you travel into Spain, France, Italy, Germany, nay even to the Indies, or any other place in the World, you wou'd always find a House ready to receive you, and the same attendance to wait upon you; which is an honor and an advantage that never a Prince in the World can boast of. Is not this to receive a hundred fold, and more than a hundred fold, even in this Life?

What shall I say now of what you have left, I mean your Riches? Have you not much more in Religion than

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in the World? Has not God therefore render'd you the hundred fold? For you are more a Master of all the Riches of the World, than those are who possess them; since they are rather Slaves, than Masters, which makes the Royal Prophet call 'em, *Men of Riches*; as if he wou'd say, their Riches do not belong to them, but they to their Riches; since their Riches command and domineer over them: They continually take pains to get, to increase and keep their Riches; and the more they have, the more uneasie they are, and become the greater Slaves; * *Their Wealth*, says *Salomon*, *even robs 'em of their Sleep*. On the contrary, Religious have every thing they want, without the trouble of knowing whether it be dear or cheap; or whether the Year be hard, scarce or plentiful, and they live, to make use of *Saint Pauls* own terms, † *As having nothing, yet possessing all things*. As for satisfaction of Mind, you have hundred times more in Religion, than you wou'd have had in the World. Ask Worldly Persons, and those whom you think most satisf'd with their condition, concerning this Promise, and you'll find 'em hourly expos'd to a thousand misfortunes and disquiets, from which Religious Persons are exempt: As to Honor, you have it done you much more in a Religious Habit, than in a Secular. Princes, Lords, Bishops and Magistrates, which perhaps wou'd not have taken notice of you before, now pay you a Deference and Respect, upon the account of the Habit you wear. And God gives you much more peace and quiet in Religion, than the World can give, and hereby returns with interest whatever you quitted in the World, for his sake.

But, upon what account do's God treat Religious thus? 'Tis because they are disingag'd from all things of this World, and think of nothing but Heaven. The time they wou'd have spent in providing necessaries for their Bodies in the World, is now imploy'd in rendering themselves more pleasing to God, and hourly increasing in Vertue and Perfection. This is what the Psalmist testifies, when he says, * *God gave the Nations of the Gentils to the Children of Israel, they possess'd the Labours of other People, that they might keep his Commandments and observe his Law*. 'Tis for this Reason that God himself speaks thus by the Mouth of the Prophet *Ezekiel* concerning Priests; † *There shall be no Inheritance assign'd*

Viri divitiarum.
Ps. 73. 4.

* Satisfactio divitiis non finit eum dormire.
Eccles. 5. 12.

† Tanquam nihil habentes, & omnia possidentes.
1 Cor. 6. 10.

* Ex eduxit electos suos in lætitia, & dedit illis regiones gentium: Et labores populorum possederunt, ut custodiant justificationes ejus, & legem ejus requirant.
Psal. 104. 43. 44. 45.
† Non erit autem eis hære-

em

ditas, ego hæ-
reditas eorum;
& possessio-
nem non da-
bitis eis in Is-
rael, ego enim
possessio co-
rum.

Ecce. 44. 18.
* Functi ceci-
derunt mihi in
præclari; ete-
nim hæreditas
mea præclara,
est mihi.
Psal. 115. 6.

† Dominus
pars hæredita-
tis mee.
Psal. 135. 6.
* Deus cordis
mei, & pars
mea Deus in
æternum.
Psal. 72. 26.

*'em, I my self am their Portion; yee shall not give
any Possessions in Israel, I am their Possession and In-
heritance. Thrice happy Portion of Religious Persons, to
whom God himself is their Portion and Inheritance! So
that we can truly say with the Royal Prophet, * My Part,
is fallen very well to me, and the Inheritance which has
happen'd to me is admirable. Our condition is much to be
prefer'd before that of our Bretheren in the World; for
they have Earth, and we Heaven for our Portion; God him-
self is our Lot and Possession. † Thou art the Part of
my Inheritance O my God. * Thou art the God of my Heart,
and my Portion for Eternity. Saint Francis call'd Poverty
a Divine and Heavenly Vertue, because it makes us dis-
pise all Earthly things, and disingages our Soul from all
that might have intangl'd and troubl'd it in the World;
and puts our Soul in a condition of Meditating upon
Heaven, of raising it's thoughts more easily to God, and
uniting it self more closely to him.*

CHAP.

C H A P. IV.

In what true Poverty do's Consist.

AND the Son of God gives us a sufficient notion of true Poverty in these words; * *Blessed are the Poor in Spirit*; and at the same time shews us wherein it Consists; for by these words he intimates to us, that it ought to be in the Heart and Mind; and that 'tis not enough to forsake Riches to become truly Poor, unless we also bid farwel to all Affection and Inclination to them. 'Tis the part of true Poverty not only to dispoyl us of all Earthly things, but even of all desire of 'em; and by this means to render us more capable of following CHRIST, and devote our selves intirely to Evangelical Perfection, which is the end and intent of a Religious Life. Saint Hierom makes an observation to our purpose; upon the Answer our Saviour made to these words of Saint Peter, † *We have quitted every thing and follow'd thee, what shall we have for our reward?* Our Saviour answer'd, * *Verily I say unto yee that yee who have follow'd me, &c.* Observe here, says Saint Hierom, the Son of God do's not Answer, *Verily I say unto yee that yee who have left all*, but, *Yee who have follow'd me*, for to leave all, is not here the essential part, since several Heathen Philosophers, as Diogenes, Antichenes and others have done: For 'tis reported of Crates, the Theban, that being a Man of great Wealth, and desirous to go to Athens to Study Philosophy, he sold all he had, left his Riches, shou'd divert him, and call him home; and having got all his Mony together, he threw it into the Sea, saying, † *Get yee gone yee Covetous desires to the bottom of the Sea, I'll drown you now, lest you shou'd one Day do the same by me.* There's also a story of Phocion the Athenian Captain, which expressees an equal Contempt of Riches, and no less Love of Poverty. For Alexander the Great Presented him with a hundred Talents, which makes something

* Beati pauperes spiritus.
Matth. 5. 3.

† Ecce nos reliquimus omnia, & secuti sumus te: quid ergo erit nobis?
Matth. 19. 27.

* Amen dico vobis, quod vos qui secuti estis me, &c.
Matth. 19. 28.

† Abite pessum, male cupiditates, ego vos mergam, ne ipse mergat vobis.
Hieron. ep. ad Trull. Diogen. & ad Paulin. lib. 2. advers. Jov.
Diog. l. 6. Plut. in Phoc. in epist. vit. sect. 4.

something more than eighteen thousand seven hundred Pounds of our Mony. *Phocion* demanded of the Messengers why *Alexander* sent it him, they answering, that *Alexander* sent it because he look'd upon him to be the most Vertuous Man in *Athens*; let him permit me then to remain so, says *Phocion*, and so dismiss 'em without receiving a farthing. This refusal with the answer, caus'd great admiration and discourse amongst the *Grecian* Philosophers, who disputed very much, which was the greater Act, *Alexanders* Liberality, or *Phocion's*, generous Contempt of his Present. Antiquity, furnishes us with many instances of this Nature, all which prove that the Heathen Philosophers look'd upon Riches as an impediment to Vertue: Altho', as *Saint Hierom* and *Saint Austin* observe very well, Riches of themselves do not properly any harm; and for proof of this they alledge several Examples out of the Old Testament; as that of *Abraham*, *Isaac* and *Jacob*, who were all very Rich Men; of *Joseph*, who was next to *Pharao* in Power and Wealth; of *Job* that had great Possessions; of *David* who was a Powerful Monarch; of *Daniel* and his Companions Men of Great Authority in *Babylon*; of *Hester* and *Mardocheus*, who were also very considerable in the Reign of King *Affuerius*; and of several others who liv'd in all the Splendor and Greatness this World cou'd afford, and yet with an absolute disingagement from all Earthly things; which is the greatest sign of true Poverty of Spirit, and recommended to us by the Holy Ghost in these words;

* *Thou thou slowest in Riches, do not set thy Heart nor Affection upon 'em.*

But to return to our Subject, you must know that there are two things necessarily requir'd, for that Poverty of Spirit, which Religious Persons make Profession of. The first is, to leave our selves nothing in this World, and this is perform'd by the Vow of Poverty. The second is, not to retain any Inclination to what we had. And this second is most of all to be regarded; because it really disingages our Heart from the Love of Riches; and puts us in a condition of giving our selves totally to God. This makes *Saint Thomas* say, that the first is only a disposition to the second, and a help to shake off more freely, and bid farewell to all that we have in the World: Insomuch that *Saint Austin* says, † *We love those things that we really possess, far better than those we possess only in desire, and consequently,*

Et Hier. Ep. ad
Salvian. de
serv. Virg.
Aug. ep. ad
Hil. 89.

* Divitiz si
affluant, nolite
cor appo-
nere.
Psal. 61. 12.

3. Thom. 2. 2.
q. 183, art. 3.

† Terrena di-
liguntur ar-
ctius adepta,
quam concu-
pita.
Aug. Ep. ad
Paulin.

consequently, we can far more easily wean our Affections from what we do not Possess; than from what we are the real Masters of. 'Tis much easier not to trouble our selves for what do's not belong to us, than to abandon that which do's; for that which we have not, we look upon as a thing afar off, and not our own; but that which we actually enjoy, we esteem as a part of our selves, and as incorporated with us; and when we are to part with it we, as Saint Thomas teaches, resent the loss of it as much, as of a Leg or an Arm.

S. Tho. ubi sup.

Saint Hierom, Saint Austin and Saint Gregory, discoursing upon these words of Saint Peter, † Behold we have left all, treats this Subject admirably well. * What a great piece of Confidence, says Saint Hierom, was this in Saint Peter! Tho' he had been but a Fisher-man, always poor, living upon his trades, and getting his Bread by the sweat of his brows, yet with a great Confidence, he says, we have left all. Which he might very well do, says Saint Gregory, † For we are not to consider the things he left, but the Will with which he left 'em; he left a great deal who reserv'd nothing to himself: 'Tis a great matter to quit all, tho' the things be very inconsiderable that we leave. Do not we see with what a Passion we love, what we already have; and how earnestly we search after what we have not: 'Tis for this reason that Saint Peter and Saint Andrew left much; because they deny'd themselves even the desire and inclination of having any thing at all; Saint Austin is of the same opinion, and says, that * The Apostles even glory'd that they had left all to follow CHRIST; because upon his call they had forsaken their Nets and Fishers-boats, and with reason too, for 'tis certain, that he really despises and leaves every thing; who quits and despises not only those things which he possessed, but all other things also to which his Inclinations might have carry'd him: Wherefore this is no small comfort for those, who have forsaken only a little; because they had no more to forsake. This is Saint Austins own remark upon this place; because Saint Peter here speaks of the Reward he hop'd for, for having sold and left all for JESUS CHRIST. † Tho' I have not been Rich, says the same holy Father, yet I shall not have the less Reward for that: For the Apostles, who have done the

† Ecce nos reliquimus omnia.

Matth. 19. 27.

* Grandis fiducia! Petrus

piscator erat,

dives non fuerat,

cibos manu & arte

quærebat, &

& tamen loquitur confidenter: Ecce

nos reliquimus omnia.

Hier. in sup. ad loc.

† In hac reser-

tiat charissimi, affectum

debemus potius pensare,

quam sensum.

Multum enim reliquit, qui sibi

nihil retinuit: multum reliquit, qui quantumlibet parum, totum deseruit. Certe

nos & habita cum amore possidemus, & ea quæ minime habemus, ex desiderio quærimus.

Multum ergo Petrus & Andreas dimisit, quando uterque etiam desiderium habendi reliquit.

Greg. Hom. 5. in Matth.

* Piscatores, vocante Domino, quod naviculas & retia dimiserunt, omnia se dimississe, & Dominum secutos esse, etiam

am commemorando lætati sunt. Et reverà omnia contemnit, qui non solum quantum potuit, sed etiam quantum voluit habere contemnit. Aug. Epist. 34. ad Paulin. † Nec enim quia dives non fui, ideo minus mihi imputabitur; nam nec Apostoli, qui priores id fecerunt; sed totum mundum

dimittit, qui
& illud quod
habet, & quod
optat habere,
dimittit.
*Idem, ep. 89. ad
Hilar.*

* Ecce nos re-
liquimus om-
nia.
Matth. 19. 27.

† Omnia ar-
bitror ut Rec-
tor, ut Chris-
tum lucrificem.
Ad Philip. 3. 8.

*Boet. lib. 3. de
Consolat. Philo-
sophia.*
Beatus est
qui habet quid-
quid vult, &
nihil mali vult.
*Aug. lib. 13. de
Trinitate*

* Avarus non
implebitur
pecunia.
Eccl. 5. 9.

* Crescit a-
mor Nummi,
quantum ipsa
pecunia cre-
scit.
Horat.

same thing with me, were no richer than I; he therefore leaves all the World, who leaves all he has, and the very desires, of ever having more. If for the Love of God you forbear the desire of a thing, you are justly sayd to leave it for his sake; and therefore you forsake all Earthly things, if you forsake the desire, not only of what you have or might have had; but even those things, to which your affection might have led you; and by consequence you may rejoyce and say with the Apostles, * *Behold we have left all.* On the contrary, he that was a Rich Man in the World, ought not to glory the more upon this account, nor imagine that he has left more than another has done; for he has forsaken very little, if he has not also forsaken the thoughts and desires of all Earthly things. Whereas he that had but a little in the World, has left a great deal, if in leaving the little he had, he has left the desires of having what he had not.

This is the Nature of that Poverty of Spirit, we now treat of. It consists in an absolute disingagement from all things of this World; in treading them under foot, by a generous Contempt of 'em, and in believing with the Apostle, † *That if we can but gain JESUS CHRIST, all the rest is but filth and ordure.* Those who are thus truly Poor in Spirit, are the Persons whom the Son of God calls Blessed, and they are really so; for the Kingdom of Heaven do's not only belong to them, as we have already shewn; but they are at present in a state wherein they desire nothing, which is the highest idea of Temporal Blessings. For Happiness according to *Boetius*, do's not consist in the fruition of a great many things, but in the accomplishment of our desires; or as Saint *Austin* says, * *He is happy who has all he desires, and desires nothing but what he ought to do.* The Poor in Spirit have a greater advantage than Rich Men of the World; for they have all they desire, because they desire nothing but what they have, and look upon the rest as superfluous; whereas the Rich are never satisfied, and their desires are boundless; † *The Covetous Man shall never have his fill of Money*, says the Wise Man, and Avarice will never say, 'tis enough. The reason is; because nothing here below can satisfy the Heart of Man, but renders it rather uneasy, than quiet. A Covetous Man is like one in a Dropsie, the more he Drink's, the more he Thirsts, just as the Miser's, * *Desire of having more, grows and increases with his Riches,*

Riches, let his Wealth be never so great, his wishes also are the greater; he Daily languishes after what he has not; and looking upon that as nothing which he already has, he is always solicitous how to get more. The trouble also for what he has not, exceeds the pleasure acquir'd by what he has, and by giving way to his unvariable desires, he spends his Days in care and anxiety, and in a vain search after what he can never obtain.

Alexander is sayd to have Wept, when he heard *Anaxarchus's* opinion of many Worlds; and that he made this answer to one who ask'd him the cause of his Tears; have I not sufficient reason to Weep, says he, since there are so many Worlds, and I have not as yet Conquer'd one? This very fancy alone, of something being wanting to his greatness, damp'd the joy he had for all his success in War, and the vast extent of his Empire. *Crates* on the contrary, tho' only Master of a poor Wallet and a Cloak, was always Merry and Pleasant, and always look'd, as if every Day had been a festival one with him; and was Richer and more contented with his Poor condition, than *Alexander* with the Empire of the World. This same Emperour happen'd one Day to light upon *Diogenes*, and seeing him very Poor, told him he thought he was in great necessity, and therefore bid him ask what he pleas'd, and it shou'd be granted him. The Philosopher, not being to seek for an answer, reply'd, who do you think *Alexander* is more in want, you or I? I have nothing but my Cloak and Wallet, nor do I desire any thing else. But you, tho' you are so great a Prince, yet expose your self to a thousand dangers, to enlarge your Dominions, and the whole World is not able to satisfy your Ambition; be therefore assur'd that I am Richer and Happier than you. Saint *Basil* says, that *Diogenes* spoke very rationally. For when all is done, pray who is Richer, he that wants nothing, or he that wants many things? Certainly the former. *Diogenes* wanted nothing; because he was content with what he had, but *Alexander* wanted, because he desir'd many things, and consequently Poor *Diogenes* was Richer, than Rich *Alexander* the Great.

Therefore as the most substantial Riches, and the truest happiness of this World, do not consist in the possession of many things, but in the accomplishment of our desires, and real satisfaction of our Will; so Poverty do's not consist in being depriv'd of all things, but in the desire of

*Plut. l. 2. de
tranq. animæ.
cap. 9.*

*Valer. Max. de
Cratæ.*

Basil. Hom. 24.

† quæ si recesserit, qui bonus est dives quoque fuerit. Refert Clem. Alex. lib. 2. Strom. de Plat.

* Est quasi dives, cum nihil habeat; & est quasi pauper, cum in multis divitiis sit. Prov. 13. 7.

† Eum esse Diis simillimum, qui quæ paucis egeret, cum Diis omnino nullius indigeret rei. Diag. Laert. l. 2. Cic. 5. Tusci.

Quam multis rebus non egeo?

not possessing any of 'em at all; and of being free from that insatiable humor of still getting more; † Which, says *Plato*, is no sooner quenched, but a good Man becomes Rich upon it. *Saint Chrysostom*, has a comparison very par to our purpose; if a Man says he, is so very thirsty, that he is oblig'd to Drink continually, without being able to quench it, shall we think this Man happy; because he had at the same time plenty of Water? By no means; for if at the same time we shou'd see another who in all appearance had no thirst upon him, certainly we shou'd look upon the one as troubl'd with a Dropsie, or else in a burning Feaver; and upon the other, as a Person in perfect Health. The same difference is found betwixt those, whose thoughts are always imploy'd in the pursuit of Riches, being never content with what they have: Wherefore they are truly Poor in Spirit, who are satisfied with the little they enjoy, and never seek after more: These being in perfect Health, and the others are indispos'd; these are fully satisfied, the others suffer extream Hunger; these last are truly Rich in their Poverty, and the others really Poor, notwithstanding all their Riches. This is what the Holy Ghost wou'd have us understand, by these words of *Salomon*; * *There be some who seem Rich, yet have nothing, and others who seem Poor yet abound in Riches*. But you'll ask me whence this difference comes? I answer from the very Nature of Riches themselves, for nothing here below can fully satisfy the Heart of Man, and from the Nature of Poverty of Spirit, which is capable of abundantly satisfying those who are Masters of it. *Socrates* us'd to say, † *That he who wanted but very few things, did in a particular manner resemble God, who wants nothing*. And passing once throw the Market place of *Athens*, where he saw a great deal of Merchandise expos'd to sale, he cry'd out, *How many things are there here, which I have no need of?* On the contrary ordinary People, who judge only according to outward appearance; and the Covetous who set no limits to their greedy desires, are troubl'd at the sight of such things as they have not; and sighing cry out, *alas how many things do I still stand in need of?*

C H A P. V.

*Of the fault of some Religious Persons, who
in Religion place their Affection upon Trifles,
having left considerable Estates in the
World.*

IT follows from what I have already sayd, that if a Religious Person, when he forsakes the World and all it's Riches, do's not at the same time, disengage his Affections from all things, he is not truly Poor in Spirit. For Poverty of Spirit essentially consists, not only in the bare depriving our selves of all Earthly goods, but chiefly in cutting off, and for ever destroying all Inclination or Affection towards 'em. If any Inclination towards 'em still remains in you, you cannot be truly sayd to have left all; no, you have only transplanted 'em out of the World into Religion; for you retain 'em in your Heart, and therefore you are not truly Poor; but are only so in appearance, and by consequence only Religious in the Exterior; and therefore you unjustly bare the Name of a Religious Person, since 'tis only your Body that is in Religion, but your better part is still in the World.

From hence we may conclude, that shou'd a Religious Man, after he has generously renounc'd his Worldly Possessions, set his Affections upon such trifles, as a pretty Cell, a good Habit, choice Books or the like; he is no longer truly Poor in Spirit. The reason of this, is the same we have already given, and is taken from the nature of true Poverty of Spirit; which consists in an intire disengagement of our Affections, from all things of this World; and such a person as we have now spoke of, is by no means in this happy condition. He has only chang'd the Affection he had for Temporals in the World, to the Affection of Temporals in Religion; and has forsaken great things, to cleave to little ones,

ones, and in the main he is as much engag'd and affected to these little trifles in Religion, as he cou'd have been to greater in the World. *Cassian* treats this Subject incomparably well. I am at a loss, says he, when I wou'd speak of that Childish weakness of some Religious, who after they have bid adieu to what they had in the World, fall in love with trifles in Religion; and seek their little conveniences with so much zeal and solicitude as they do; * *So that their Inclinations are sometimes more violently bent upon these inconsiderable things; than they were before upon the Riches they had in the World.* What do's it signifie, to these Men to have left great Possessions, if they have not also left all disorder'd Passions towards em? By retaining a desire and an inclination to little things, since they cannot aim higher at present, they discover too clearly, that they have not quite destroy'd their former Passions, but only chang'd their Objects. Their care and anxiety is still the same, and yet they make little or no account thereof, as if different Objects, and not disorder'd Passions, made Avarice a Crime. They are of opinion that we may leave great things, to fix our Affections upon less, and that it may be done for this reason; but they are in an Error, for we renounce greater, in order to dispise lesser things with greater ease. For if our Affections continue irregular, and Avarice domineers in our Hearts, it imports very little what is the cause, since our Hearts are as much troubl'd and disquieted for trifles in Religion, as they cou'd have been for an Estate in the World. The one is as much as the other, and there's no difference at all: For if a Man were to be depriv'd of the sight of the Sun, were it not all one, whether a plate of Gold or of Brasse be put before his Eyes, for he wou'd be equally hinder'd from seeing the light. This is the sentiment of Saint Mark the Abbot, who had the following Conference with his own Soul, upon this matter. † *You'll tell me, my Soul, that we do not heap up Riches, that we neglect getting an Estate, but I answer thee, that the abuse of Riches, not the true use of them do's a Man a prejudice: As we see in Abraham, Job, David and several others, who were Masters of great Estates, and at the same time great Favorites of Heaven; because they did not set their Hearts upon their Riches. We tho' Poor, yet nourish Avarice in our Hearts, and tho' we heap up neither Gold nor Silver, yet we pick up a great many trifles, to which we tie our Affection, and suffer as much uneasiness from em, as from all the Riches in the World. We renounce all Dig-*

* Ut horum cura pristinam omnium facultatum superet passionem. Nam vitium cupiditatis, & avaritiæ, quod erga species pretiosas exercere non possunt, circa viiores materias retinentes, non abiciunt, sed immutasse probant pristinam passionem. Eadem qua antea libidine detinentur. Quasi verò differentia tantummodo metallorum, & non ipsa passio cupiditatis habeatur innoxia. Sed idcirco pretiosiores abiecit materias, ut facilius discretemus viliora contemnere. *Cass. Coll. 4. Ab. Dam. c. 2.*

† Et nos, inquit anima mea, nec aurum cumulumus, nec prædia possidemus. Et ego respondebo tibi, nec aurum, nec prædia detrimentum asserere, sed præposterum illorum usum. Quidam enim divites cum divitiarum amore minime tenerentur, Deo placerent, ut sanctus Abraham, Job, & David: nos verò sine divitiis, vitium

nities, nor do we aspire to the greatness of the World; yet we court the praises of Men, and desire to be honor'd and look'd upon as somewhat considerable. These disorders of our Mind make us more unhappy and less excusable, than Worldlings; and we shew a meaner Spirit, than they do. For they set their Hearts upon what has at least some appearance of greatness in it, whereas we, after having forsaken all, debase our selves by a degenerate pursuit, of what we ought generously to condemn. We ought to increase in Perfection Daily, and grow into a Perfect Man, as Saint *PAUL* says; but we act quite contrary, and instead of becoming Men, by entering into Religion, and by a generous forsaking the World, and disengaging our selves from it, we are by an over-spoilish affection to toys and childish baubles, become Children. A Child cries when you take his Rattle from him, or deny him any thing he has a mind to, just so the parties we speak of, fret themselves, and are troubl'd, when they are depriv'd of any thing they fancy; or when all their demands are not granted. And certainly 'tis a thing very ridiculous, and much to be pitty'd, to see a Grave Religious Person, who had the courage once to condemn the World, become so strangely fond of trifles, as to be as uneasie and troubl'd at the parting with 'em, as a Child is, when you deny it an Apple, or take away it's Baby.

* We Religious Men, says Saint Bernard, are the most miserable of all Men, if we permit things of so little consequence to do us so much harm. For what blindness, or rather, what folly and madness is it, to set our Hearts thus shamefully upon trifles, after we have renounc'd things far more considerable? For if we have renounc'd all Earthly Possessions, and all Carnal Love to our Parents, and confin'd our selves within the Walls of a Monastery, and lastly if we are come to Religion to deny our own Wills, and freely submit to anothers in every thing, what is it that we ought not to do in order to preserve the Merit of all these good Actions, and never forfeit it by any folly or negligence?

rum carcere mancipamus nosmetipsos; si denique non velimus voluntatem nostram facere, sed impossimus homines super capita nostra, quid non oportet fieri, ne forte conflagret hæc omnia nobis in insipientia nostra, & negligentia deperire? Bern. ad Mon. S. Tertio.

in abjectissima materia nutrimus. Non cumulamur aurum, sed res vilissimas congerimus. Principatus & potestates non accipimus; sed omni ratione gloriam & laudem aucupamur.

In ultimo opus. Abb. Marc. in Biblioth. S. S. Patr.

In virum perfectum. Ad Eph. 4. 13.

* Misericorditer sumus nos Monachi, si pro tam exiguis tanta patimur detrimenta: quid enim insipientie, imò quid infaniz est ut qui majora reliquimus, minora cum tanto discrimine tenemus? Si mundum contempnimus universum: si abrenuntiamus affectibus propinquo- rum; si Monasterio-

C H A P. VI.

Of the three different degrees of Poverty.

THE Saints and Masters of Spirit, assign three degrees of Poverty. The first degree, is to be found in those, who quit all things of the World as to the Exterior; but still love it Interiorly, and have their desires hankering after it. For 'tis sufficiently prov'd already, that these Persons are not really, but only hypocritically Poor; and that they do an injury to the Name they bear. The second, comprehends all those who have left the World, both in Will and Deed, and whilst they are in Religion do not seek after superfluities, but are extremely careful to have all things necessary, as good Victuals, good Cloaths, convenient Lodgings and such like; and are much troubl'd and complain, when they are deny'd what they desire. This is no true Poverty; and as Saint Bernard says, 'tis strange that so many at present shou'd glory in the Name of Poor Men; and at the same time be unwilling to want the least conveniency. This is the way to be Rich rather than to be Poor; and such as these outdo even Secular Persons, who are not always provided of their conveniences: Some, because they have not wherewith to procure 'em; and others who had rather suffer 'em, than be at any charges; so that a saving thrifty humor, do's in them what Vertue shou'd do in us. Lastly others, tho' they have much and put themselves to vast expenses, yet they are never serv'd according to their Will. For notwithstanding all this, some who are Religious, and have made a Vow of Poverty, wou'd have every thing they want, and suffer no manner of inconvenience. This shews no love of Poverty, but rather a desire to live in ease and plenty. Had these been in the World still, perhaps they wou'd have suffer'd a great deal more in this point; is it therefore fitting for those who enter'd into Religion to Mortify their Passions, and lead a Penitential Life, to be solicitous for those very conveniences, which they wou'd not have met with in the World?

Bern. serm. 4 de
Adventu.
Idem S. Vinc.
tract. de vit.
Spir. c. 1.
Et Alb. Magno:
in paradiso ani-
ma, c. 5.

If we therefore desire to arrive at this perfection of Poverty of Spirit, comply with the Name and Duty of a Religious Person, not only live according to your Profession, but advance one step higher, and be content to want even what is necessary; which is the third degree of Poverty, and carries along with it, even a contempt of necessary things. 'Tis not enough to forsake all Inclinations to unprofitable and superfluous things, but we must also break off all affection even to those that are necessary, and shew our love of Poverty by a want as well of these, as of other things. I speak not here of such things as are necessary for Life; for these we cannot be without, but I wou'd have us content our selves with such as are absolutely necessary; by containing this necessity within very strait bounds, rather than by extending it; and hereby shew, that we are glad of any occasion to give a testimony of our love of Poverty.

'Tis nothing to be Poor, says Saint Vincent, unless we love to be so, and even rejoyce, to suffer for JESUS CHRIST, all the inconveniences of Poverty. He that wou'd bring his love of Poverty to the Test, must consider if he loves the effects of it; as Hunger, Thirst, Cold, Weariness and a real want of all things. See if you are glad when you have an old patcht Habit given you, when you want part of your Dinner, when the Server forgets you, or gives you what is displeasing to your Palate, or lastly when you have a very poor Cell assign'd you: For if you do not take a satisfaction when these things happen, but rather endeavour to avoid 'em, be assur'd that you are not yet arriv'd to the perfection of Poverty of Spirit.

S. Vinc. de Vir.
Spir. c. 3.

Tom. III. X CHAP.

C H A P. VII.

Of some means whereby to acquire and preserve
this Poverty of Spirit.

3. p. Conf. c. 1.
§. 7. & reg. 4.
sum.
Et l. §. c. 4.
Vit. S. Ignat.

SAINTE Ignatius in his Constitutions provides us with the first means or help towards it in these words, no body must have or keep any thing as his own, or in propriety. A Religious Mans, says this Saint, ought to be in all things he has for his use, like a Statue, which is adorn'd, and left naked again without being troubl'd, or without making any resistance. In the same manner you ought to behave your self towards your Books, Habit, Chamber or any thing else, that is lent you to make use of, and if you are order'd to leave 'em, or to make an exchange with others, you must be no more concern'd, than a Statue is when 'tis undress'd; and by this means all propriety will be avoided. Whereas, if when you are bid to change your Chamber, or part with this or that, or exchange it for another, you find any repugnance, and are not like a Statue herein, 'tis a sign you look upon those things as properly belonging to your self, otherwise you wou'd not be vex'd to part with 'em, or be depriv'd of 'em. For this reason our Holy Founder appoints Superiours to try their Religious, as God did Abraham; and particularly in Poverty and Obedience; in order hereby, to make a tryal of their Vertue, and give 'em an occasion of making every Day a new progress in Perfection: And without question 'tis an excellent tryal of their Vertue; to take away now and then, what is lent to Religious to make use of. * 'Tis an ordinary thing, says Saint Austin, to believe that we do not love a thing, whilst 'tis in our Possession, but when we come to be depriv'd of it, 'tis then we certainly know how we stand affected to it. If you find your self troubl'd and uneasie when any thing is taken from you, there's no doubt but you lov'd it; for all that trouble and uneasiness, arises from your too great inclination

* Plerumque, cum adsumt nobis, putamus quod non ea diligamus; sed cum abesse ceperint, invenimus qui sumus.

to

to it. On the contrary, if you felt no grief at all in parting with it, 'tis clear you had no eye at all to it; for as the same holy Father says, † *We forsake without pain, what we possess without love; but we cannot part from that without grief, which we enjoy with pleasure.* Hence we may gather how profitable 'tis for Superiours, sometimes to Exercise their Subjects in making 'em change their Chambers; when they find some convenience in 'em, and begin to love 'em but too well; in taking such Books away as they most of all fancy; in obliging 'em to exchange a good Habit, for another that is worse; for otherwise there would be a kind of Propriety, pretended over every thing; and by degrees the Wall of Poverty, which invirons us, and is the bulwark of Religion, would at last be quite demolish'd. The Old Fathers of the Desert us'd their Religious to this Practice; in order to disengage 'em from every thing; and that they might account nothing as their own. Thus Saint *Dorotheus* treated his Scholar Saint *Dositheus*. He us'd to give him a Habit to make up for himself, and take it again from him and bestow it upon another; after he had taken a great deal of pains about it. This is conformable to what we Practise at present; and the Book of Instructions which Saint *Dorotheus* left, from whence this Example is taken, affords a great many more of this Nature, which are very profitable to maintain Religious observance. One of which I'll here set down; Saint *Dositheus* whilst he look'd to the Sick had a great mind to have a Knife, and ask'd it of Saint *Dorotheus*, not for himself, but for the use of the Infirmary which he had care of. Whereupon the Saint reply'd, well *Dositheus* do's the Knife please you? * *Had you rather be a Slave to a Knife, than to Jesus CHRIST? Do you not blush to think that a Knife is your Master?* Henceforward I charge you not so much as to touch it. Which Saint *Dositheus* comply'd with ever after: So much force had this grave rebuke and prohibition upon him. I wish we would in the like manner often reproach our selves, and say, are you not asham'd that the love of a trifle, shou'd prevail so much upon you, and cause you so much uneasiness? And do not believe that these things are so frivolous, or of such little consequence as you imagine, after you have examin'd them. For as Saint *Hierom* says, perhaps they may seem trifles and very inconsiderable, to those who are Strangers as yet to Vertue and Perfection, but at the bottom, they contain

X 2

things

†... Hoc enim sine amore aderat, quod sine dolore discedit; Et non relinquitur sine dolore quod cum delectatione retinetur.
Aug. l. 1. de serm. Dom. in monte.
Et l. de vera Rel. c. 4. c. 33.

* Placene tibi Dosithee? visne fieri huius gladioli servus, an servus Christi? Non erubescis appetere, & velle ut gladiolus hic dominetur tibi?
Doros. doct. II. tom. 3. Bibl. S. S. Pair.

Hier. in Reg. Mon. c. 12. tom. 4.

things of profound Wisdom and exquisite Perfection; which God has hid from the Wise and Prudent; but discover'd to the Simple and Humble of Heart.

The second help to maintain Poverty of Spirit, is to have nothing superfluous; and the Mercy of God has admirably provided for this; by the Conduct which is observ'd in the SOCIETY of JESUS. Our Chambers are like to that which the *Sunamite* fitted up for the Prophet *Elisha*, who having occasion to pass frequently that way, us'd to call in to refresh himself. * *I Observe*, says this Woman to her Husband, *that he who comes often hither is a Man of God; and therefore let us provide him a little Chamber with a Bed, a Table, a Chair and a Candlestick in it, that he may lodge with us when he comes.* Such ought to be the Furniture of our Chambers, such ought to be our Moveables; these are really necessary, the rest superfluous. For this reason we are not permitted to adorn our Chambers with Pictures or such like Ornaments. We admit of no great arm'd Chairs, nor Couches, Tapestry, Cabinets, or wrought Carpets. We cannot keep any thing in our Chambers, either for our selves to Eat, or to entertain Strangers withal; nay, we are oblig'd to ask leave to go to the Refectory, tho' it be but to Drink a Glass of Water; nor can we have any Book in our Chambers, in which we may write so much as one line, or carry away with us. And as 'tis not to be doubted, but this is true Poverty, so 'tis at the same time to be granted, that 'tis a great happiness, and no less Perfection; for were we permitted to have superfluities, the care and trouble of getting 'em, of preserving 'em, and of increasing their number; wou'd take up a great deal of time, and be too great a divertisement and distraction to a Religious Man; whereas this wise prohibition, do's remedy all these inconveniences. And one of the chief reasons why the SOCIETY do's not permit Secular Persons to come into our Chambers, is to preserve us in this holy Poverty. For we are Men, and shou'd we receive Visits in our Chambers, we shou'd perhaps be tempted to exceed the limits prescrib'd us concerning Poverty, and at last procure a handsom provision of Books, in order to make People believe we are Learn'd. Wherefore this exact observance in the SOCIETY, is a mighty help to make us live up to the Rules of Poverty, and to cut off all desires of what is superfluous; and certainly this conduct is so prudent, that we can never esteem it enough, nor observe it too strictly.

Another

* Animadver-
to quodd vir
Dei sanctus
est iste, qui
transit per nos
frequenter. Fa-
ciamus ei ce-
naculum par-
vum, & ponamus ei in co-
lectulum, &
meniam, &
sellam, & can-
delabrum, ut
cum venerit ad
nos, maneat.
4 Reg. 4. 9. &
10.

Another proper help, which also conduces much to this Vertue, is, that a Religious Person as soon as he perceives himself to have a particular inclination for any thing that he makes use of, shou'd carry it immediately to the Superiour, and leave it to him to dispose of, even tho' the sayd Religious shou'd have had leave to keep it. This practise was very Religiously heretofore observ'd, by the Monks of Saint *Hierom*; who were also very vigilant, to see that none shou'd have any thing superfluous; and if at any time they found a Monk to have any vain or curious thing about him, they presently assembl'd themselves, and burnt it before his Face; saying, that such things as these were the Idol's of Religious. In imitation of them, we ought to deprive our selves of every thing which we have not a real need of, and put it in the Hands of our Superiour, without hopes of recovery: Moreover, to make this kind of Sacrifice, 'tis not necessary to expect till we have an affliction to the thing it self; for if it be not really necessary, this is a sufficient motive for us, to make this Sacrifice thereof.

*Chron. Ord. S.
Hier. c. 43.*

Saint *Bonaventure* gr's father, and do's not approve that any shou'd heap up superfluous things, in order to make a Present to any body; even under pretence of Devotion or upon any other account whatsoever: For, says he, this makes the Person singular, and look'd upon as one that traffick's in such ware; and those People that want 'em, still make their addressee to him: 'Tis certain that this takes up our thoughts too much, and by consequence diverts us from our duty. The same Saint finds also this other inconvenience attending upon it; because a Religious may sometimes dispose of such things without leave, either out of haste or inadvertency, or for shame of troubling the Superiour with his frequent Petitions, about such frivolous things. Hence it also happens that the party he gives it to receives the present without leave; either because he has not the courage to refuse it, or because he is unwilling to put the other to the blush; and thus he gives at once, both ill Example, and matter of Scruple to his Brethren. Besides these little presents serve ordinarily either to create or continue particular friendships amongst Religious, which holy Men have always condemn'd, as highly prejudicial to Union and Fraternal Charity. And 'twas for this reason, says Saint *Bonaventure*, that our Ancient Fathers wou'd never allow of it. 'Tis the same amongst us, for altho' we permit some Religious to have such things upon account of their employments,

*Ben. de infirma.
Nov. p. l. c. 8.
c. 9.*

*1. Part. Tr. 4.
c. 18.*

employments; yet certainly this can be no reason, why others shou'd pretend the same privilege; for if any one shou'd, he wou'd both displease his Superiour, and disedifie his Brethren. A Religious Man ought to be so Poor, as to have nothing to dispose of; this is what most of all Edifies; for those who are glad always to be Masters of some little Presents, are never look'd upon as the most Regular Persons; and therefore 'tis best to follow Saint *Bonaventures* Counsel in this matter, thereby to live up to the Rule of true Poverty.

There's another thing observ'd in our SOCIETY, which helps very much to keep Poverty in it's purity, and which God in particular seems to have favor'd us withal. Our Chamber Doors are never lock'd, nor can we have a Chest, Cabinet or Cubbord lock'd, without leave from the Superiour. All things are to be expos'd to Superiours Eyes, so that we may be able to say, we have nothing which they may not take away. This agrees with these words in Saint *Hieroms* Rule; * *Let all use of Locks and Keys be prohibited amongst yee, that all the World may see by your exterior, you possess nothing but JESUS CHRIST.* But altho' our Chambers stand open, yet all things in them are secur'd from the rest of the Religious, by a prudent foresight of our Holy Founder; who in another Rule, forbids any Religious to enter anothers Chamber, without leave of the Superiour: And in another place prohibits all his subjects, to carry any thing out of the House, or even out of anothers Chamber, unless the Rector consents thereunto. These are the securest Locks and Keys, which being defended with the Vow of Poverty, they are render'd almost incapable of being broke open. And without doubt our Chambers tho' so expos'd, are safer by this means, in respect of our own Religious, than if they were shut up with Bolts and Padlocks. Let us then endeavour to maintain this holy practice; and certainly shou'd any Religious give the least blemish thereunto, by endeavouring to Violate it, he wou'd deserve a most severe punishment, and run the hazard of making a change, in the purity and simplicity of what we practice, wherein true Poverty appears and shines so bright; Saint *Basil* and Saint *Bonaventure*, do very much exclaim against such Persons as these.

* Neque opus
sit clavibus, ut
jam ex ipsis
monstratur in-
dicijs, quod
nihil habetur
extrinsecum,
præter Jesum.
*Hieron. in reg.
quam collegis.*
Lup. de Oliv.

C H A P. VIII.

Of another very efficacious help, to obtain and preserve this Poverty of Spirit.

CERTAINLY 'tis of very great profit to us, in order to increase this Vertue of Poverty, and gain it in Perfection, not only to deprive our selves of things superfluous, but also to retrench those which are absolutely necessary for us; thereby to shew our love of Poverty, and to appear what we really are; I mean, Poor Men. This is what Saint *Ignatius* enjoyns in his Constitutions, when he says: Let their Diet, Cloaths and Lodgings be like that of Poor Men; and let every one for his greater profit in Spirit, and greater Abnegation of himself, always suppose that the worst things in the House are to be given to him. And he recommends the same over and over again in several other places of his Rule in these words; Let every one love Poverty as a Mother, and according to their Zeal, endeavour now and then, so far as prudence and discretion shall permit, to feel some effects thereof. Our Holy Founder desires that we shou'd always incline to have the meanest and most ordinary things; but he do's not pretend that our love of Poverty shou'd rest in these bare desires and go no farther, no, he wou'd have us feel the effects of it, so far as to put it really in practice; tho' he wou'd not have us want any thing that is necessary for Life. Nor is he content to speak in several other places of Poverty in general, but in the sixth part of his Constitutions he descends to particulars, and assign's Habits to us, according to the Offices we are employ'd in, but always with regard to the Poverty we Profess. And in order to this effect, he appoints that our Cloaths shou'd be decent as becoming Religious; that they shou'd suit with the place we live in, since our way of living, is common as to the Exterior; and lastly that they shou'd be Poor, which they wou'd not be, says he, if they shou'd be made of very fine Stuff, or Cloath that

Cap. 4 Exam. 9.
16. reg. 25. sum.

3. p. Conf. 1.
9. 25. reg. 24.

3. p. Conf. c. 2.
9. 3. & list. C.

6. p. Conf. c. 2.
9. 15. & in de-
clarat.

that is dear. And therefore when the Parents or Friends of any Religious, wou'd give him Cloaths of this Nature, he must not accept of 'em, as being contrary to our Constitutions, and not suitable to the Poverty we Profess. Some may hereupon object, that 'tis good husbandry to buy the best Cloth and Stuff, because they last longest, and consequently are more agreeable to Poverty. These reasons are the dictates of Flesh and Blood, and may hold in the World, but not in Religion; for this thrifty sparing humour, is not of so much importance to true Religious Men, as is that obligation they have, to manifest to the World their Poverty by the Cloaths they were; and of appearing such as they really are. Nor ought this Poverty to appear only in the Cloth or Stuff, but also in the fashion and make of it; for thou'd any of ours have a Cassock too wide in compass, or with too many plaits in it, or trailing upon the ground; 'tis certain he wou'd transgress against the Poverty he has made Profession of.

3. p. Conf. 2. 2.
iii. C.

Basil. in regul.
fuf. disp. inier.
22.

* Habentes
alimenta, &
quibus rega-
mur, his con-
tenti sumus.
1. tom, 6, 8,

Chr. de S. Fran.
1. p. l. 2. c. 19.

Saint Ignatius only requires that our Cloaths shou'd be Religiously decent and warm; which are the two chief ends for which Cloaths were first invented. This is Saint Basil's Doctrine, in his explication of these words of Saint Paul, * *Having Nourishment and what is sufficient to cover us for Cloathing, let us be content.* Another Saint observes, and very much to our purpose, that Saint Paul says, *Nourishment and not Delicacies*, and that which is, *to cover us, not to make us Gay and Fine.* We ought to content our selves with what is barely necessary, and absolutely banish every thing that looks Rich, or has any appearance of ostentation; as smelling too much of vanity and prophaneſs. Let us never suffer such things, nor ever permit the Pride and Vanity of the World, to set foot into our Order. Saint Francis us'd all possible precaution in this Point. And yet we Read in the Chronicles of the *Franciscans*, that Friar Elias, one of the chief Men of the Order, and afterwards General of it, got himself a Habit made that was very large and full, with Sleeves that hung down to the ground, and of very fine Cloth. As soon as Saint Francis knew of this, he sent for him, and in the presence of several Religious, desir'd to see his Habit. When he had brought it, Saint Francis put it on above his own, and began to set the plaits in order, and to let fall the Sleeves with an Air that was vain and fantastical, after this he put on a haughty Meen, and strutting

to and again paid his honors to the Religious, with as affected a Voice, as were his Gestures: The Religious being surpris'd at this, and staring at one another, the Saint transported with zeal, hastily pull'd off the Habit, and casting it with violence upon the ground, told Frier *Elias* before all the Company, that the Bastard Sons of the Order, were Cloath'd after that manner: After this, he reassum'd his sweet and mild Air, and conversing with the Religious according to his custom, recommended Mildness, Humility and Poverty unto them. Wherefore let us take care that we do not declare our selves illegitimate, by the like Vanity; let us like the Lawful Issue, and true Children of holy Poverty, endeavour to resemble our Mother, and according to this quality, wear no Habit that may distinguish us from Poor Men. Wherefore to this effect, we ought to retrench something, even of what we might wear with decency; as also something which the World might judge really necessary for us. For he cannot be call'd Poor in his Cloaths, who is well Cloth'd from head to foot; and he that wants something of what in this part is really necessary, only deserves that Name. And for this reason we have declar'd, all a long in this Treatise, that true Poverty consists in the satisfaction, of wanting what is really necessary: And he that do's not find an ease and content of Mind in this necessity, is by no means as yet arriv'd to the Perfection of Poverty of Spirit.

What I have sayd of Cloaths, may be apply'd to other things; for in all things we ought to appear like Poor Men, and endeavour to make our Poverty remarkable. And therefore our Chambers ought to be provided with nothing, but what is precisely necessary, and that too, ought to be the worst in it's kind: As for Example, the worst Table, the meanest Chair, and the poorest Bed. Nay, we ought to desire the worst of every thing in the House, and return those Books to the Library, which we do not actually stand in need of, and never be in love with that Vanity of having a great number of 'em upon our Shelves. Saint *Bonaventure* treating this matter, very nicely descends to particulars. And recommending to his Religious, that they shou'd have nothing but bare necessities, bids 'em take particular care that even those shou'd not be curious or finely wrought, but rather course ordinary and plain; that they shou'd not seek after Books neatly Bound; that their Breviaries and Diurnals shou'd be plain and like those of others; that they shou'd not have any Pictures

*Ben. de inform.
Nov. p. 2. c. 9.*

*History of the
Order of S.
Francis p. 2.
l. 1. c. 19.*

† Qui propter
nos egenus
factus est,
cum esset di-
ves.
2 Cor. 8. 9.

*Bern. serm 1. in
Vigil. Nativ.*

or Beads of any considerable value; and that if they had any Agnus Dei's, Crosses or Reliquaries, they shou'd be conformable to the Poverty they had Vow'd; and be assur'd, says the same Saint, that the more your Poverty appears, the more agreeable you are in the sight of God and his Saints. The Humble Saint Francis sayd, that an affection in a Religious Person, to curious and unnecessary things, is a sign of the Soul's being Dead to Grace; for it cannot proceed but from the want of the life and warmth, of Divine Grace; and therefore not finding any satisfaction in Spiritual things, seeks it's comfort and ease elsewhere. Daily experience confirms this truth, and makes our Superiours so vigilant in this Point; because not only Poverty, but fervor of Spirit also, is destroy'd by these trifles: Wherefore, if we desire to be truly Poor, 'tis not enough to disengage our affection from these, but also even from necessary things, and be glad of the occasion of suffering this want of necessities, the better to resemble JESUS CHRIST, † *Who when he was Rich became Poor for our sakes*; who felt all the extremities of Hunger and Thirst, Cold and Heat, Weariness and Nakedness, and was several times even reduc'd to the want of necessities to maintain Life. Saint Bernard says, that Poverty is a kind of rich Marchandise; and that our Saviour, whilst in Heaven he abounded with all Riches, yet did not find it there; and tho' it was common in the World, yet Men did not esteem it, nor know the value of it. What therefore did the Son of God do? He left Heaven, and knowing the true value of Poverty, he came to Earth, to purchase and charge himself therewith; to teach others the true value of Poverty, and shew them how necessary it is to purchase Heaven withal; where 'tis so highly esteem'd and valu'd.

C H A P.

C H A P. IX.

Wherein what has been sayd in the precedent Chapter, is confirm'd by several Examples.

WE Read in the Book of the most famous Men of the *Cistercian* Order, that one of their Abbots in *Saxony*, being not content to wear the Cloath of that Country, was therefore wont, Yearly to send into *Flanders* to buy finer, wherewith to make him a Habit. After his Death his Cloaths were distributed amongst the Religious, and the Prior kept an under-garment for himself, which he put on upon the Eve of a great Festival, and had no sooner done so, but he presently fell a crying out, as if hot Plates of Iron had been apply'd to his Flesh, so great was the pain he felt. The Religious hearing this noise presently ran to him, in whose presence he immediately pull'd off the Garment, and threw it upon the ground. They were much surpris'd to see it look like red hot Iron, and all those who had got any of the deceas'd Abbots Cloaths, being terrified with this sight, immediately brought 'em to the same place, and threw them all in a heap together, where they forthwith took Fire, and by their sparks and flame seem'd like a burning Furnace, which miraculously lasted so long, that they had time to advertise the Abbots of the Neighbouring Monasteries to come and see it, and become witnesses hereof.

*Lib. vii. illuf.
Ord. Cister.*

Cesarin tells us, that the *Benedictine* Monks of a Monastery in *France*, being much oppress'd by a Gentleman that liv'd hard by them, resolv'd to make their complaints to *Philip* the first. They made choice of a Young Religious that was well Born, to present their Petition, in hopes that the consideration of his Family, might procure him a more speedy and favorable Audience of his Majesty. The Young Monk being presented to the King, lays open his complaints, demands Justice, and begs that the Gentleman might be oblig'd to restore what he had taken from their Monastery.

*Cesar. lib. 4.
Dial. c. 12.*

nastery. The King for some time looking upon him, and observing his Habit and Comportment, ask'd who he was; the Answer being made, that he was Son to a Person of Quality, well known to the King, he began to talk of another matter, till the Monk interrupted him saying, Sir, 'tis certain that this Gentleman has almost depriv'd us of all we had and scarce left any thing in the Monastery. I easily believe it, reply'd the King, for it appears so by your Shoos, which wou'd not have been so strait and little, had he left one bit of Leather more in your Convent: Which check his Majesty graciously sweetn'd, by adding, for the future make it your business, to surpass the rest of your Religious as much in Humility, as you exceed 'em in Quality, and be not troubl'd at what I have sayd, since 'tis for your good; return home to your Monastery, and I'll give orders, that the Gentleman shall not any farther molest you.

Ibid. c. 13

The same *Casarius* set's down an Answer of another *Philip* King of the *Romans*, unto a *Bernardine* Abbot, much like to this, who was representing the great necessity of his Convent. His Majesty having taken notice of the straitness of his Shoos, told him that he perceiv'd by them, that his Convent was very Poor, seeing they were so sparing of their Leather.

1. p. l. 2. c. 20.

We Read in the *Chronicles of the Franciscans*, that a Guardian of that Order, and an intimate Friend to Saint *Francis*, having built a Chappel for his Religious, order'd that a Cell shou'd be built very near it, to which the Saint might retire, to do his Devotions when he came thither, whereby he might be oblig'd to stay the longer with them. The first time he came thither, the Guardian conducted him to his Cell, which was only made of ordinary Timber, which the Saint no sooner saw but told him, that if he design'd he shou'd stay there, he shou'd cover it at the top on the inside with boughs of Trees tied together with Osiers, that he might have a truer Picture of Poverty, and this being done accordingly, the Saint stay'd there for some Days.

In the History of his Life, l. 4. cap. 2.

Saint *Francis Borgia*, as may be seen in his Life, gave most signal proofs of his real love for holy Poverty. His Habit, his Diet, his Chamber and Bed were truly Poor. Poverty appear'd in the very Paper he us'd to write his Sermons in, as also in that little handful of Fire, they made sometimes for him in great necessity, and in a thousand other things like to these. He came to such a Perfection

of

of Poverty that they cou'd not obtain of him to change his Shoos and Stockings; and once having taken away his old Stockings, and put a pair of new ones in their place without his knowledge, he oblig'd 'em to bring the old ones back again. When he went a begging, he chose rather to Eat of the scraps of Bread he brought home with him, than of the whole Loaves that were layd upon the Table. In his longest journey's, and worst health, he wou'd never take a pair of Sheets along with him; for he thought this against holy Poverty. He pass'd many Nights upon a little Straw, expos'd to the open Air; and he took such a satisfaction herein, as caus'd astonishment in his fellow Travellers. He had only one Cloak Winter and Summer, and to preserve it the longer, he caus'd it to be lin'd. It was the greatest difficulty imaginable, to persuade him to ride in Boots; and he wou'd never have more than one Hat, which he thought a sufficient defence against Sun and Rain. In Travelling, he often came to his Inn all wet, and half dead with cold, and it was an extraordinary joy to him, when he met with no manner of conveniency or comfort in this condition. Tho' he was never so sick, and the weather extreme cold, yet he wou'd never admit of any thing about his Bed or in his Chamber, which might keep the Wind from him. Nay he judg'd a poor Mat, which was fasten'd to his Bed's head, to have too much delicacy in it. The great condition and state he had forsaken, made all these things much more admirable in him.

CHAP.

C H A P. X.

Of the obligation of the Vow of Poverty.

THERE remains now to shew, what we are oblig'd to in rigour by the Vow of Poverty, and when we offend Venially or Mortally against it; for 'tis fitting that Religious Persons shou'd understand the obligation of their Vows made at their Profession. Hitherto I have spoken of the Perfection, now I shall treat of the obligation of this Vow; and this we ought always to have before our Eyes, it being the Foundation upon which our perfect practise of Poverty depends. In order to which I'll lay before you as briefly as I can, the opinions of Divines and Canon Lawyers, taken from, and grounded upon the sentiments of holy Men, and decided by Canon Law. They tell us, that a Religious Person is bound by the Vow of Poverty to have no Dominion, no Propriety nor any use of any Temporal thing, without licence from his Superiour. Hence two things do necessarily follow; first, that the Vow of Poverty obliges a Religious Person, not to possess, nor take, nor receive any Temporals, either to keep, make use of, or even to dispose of in any manner of way, without leave from his Superiour; for all this cannot be done, but by such who have a Propriety and Dominion in Temporals. The second, is, that a Religious Person acts contrary to his Vow of Poverty by taking, and retaining, or by any way whatsoever, giving or disposing of any thing that belongs to the House without permission. As also by accepting of any thing from People abroad, tho' they be his Parents, Friends or Penitents; and by keeping or disposing of it without licence from his Superiour. These two consequences are drawn from the premises above, admitted by all Divines, and look'd upon as certain and infallible; and the Canon Law it self expressly sets them down as such. These are fix'd and undeniable principles in this matter, and all that I shall say upon this subject

*Tit. de Stat.
Mon. cap. Cum
ad Monasteri-
um, &c. cap.
Monachi, cod.
tit. cap. Ex
parte de Caus.
c. 12. g. l. cap.
Non dicatis.
Cap. Nolo cap.
Expedi. cap.
Scimus. Et
Clem. Ne in
agro Dom. de
stat. Mon.*

subject shall be grounded upon them, they being the fittest to decide all particular difficulties, which I shall have occasion to speak of hereafter.

Saint *Ignatius* treats of this subject after the same manner in his Constitutions, but that every body might be the better acquainted with his Doctrine, he has inserted it in one of his Rules, the twenty sixth of which has these words, All are to know, says he, that no Religious can either borrow, or lend, or in any sort dispose of any thing that belongs to the House, without the knowledge and consent of the Superiour: Had he sayd no more than this, some might have believ'd that they offend'd not against Poverty, but by disposing of things of the House, and so might receive presents from Strangers, without acquainting the Superiour; but he explains himself still farther upon this Point in another Rule; and says, that no Person shall take the least thing belonging to the House, or out of another's Chamber, or receive any thing, let it be what it will, upon any account from Strangers, either for himself or another, without Permission of his Superiour. Behold here you have in short, what the Vow of Poverty in rigour obliges us unto, and our Holy Founder has compriz'd it all in these two Rules.

Yet here I must desire you to take notice, and also to be very cautious, lest you deceive your self by imagining a breach of these two Rules to be no Mortal Sin; upon account that our Constitutions do not oblige us under Sin. For it may easily happen, that some one may be so far mistaken as to argue thus; to give or receive any thing without leave, is a breach of a Rule, but since our Rules do not oblige us under Sin, therefore I only transgress the Rule, but commit no crime by doing so. 'Tis true, that Saint *Ignatius* has declar'd in his Constitutions, that his Rule do's not oblige under Sin, yet doubtless the Vows we make in Profession, draw that obligation upon us, as the same Saint positively asserts in the same place, that no body might pretend ignorance in so clear a truth, and thereby fail in their Duty. For as 'tis certain, that a Religious Person by offending against Chastity sins Mortally against his Vow of Chastity, and commits a Sacrilege; so 'tis equally certain, that by offending against Poverty, he is guilty of a Mortal Sin against the Vow of Poverty. This is what no body can deny. Had you not enter'd Religion and there made

§ 2. Conf. c. 2.
§ 3. Or reg. 26.
sum.

Reg. 9. commun.

made the Vow of Poverty, but continu'd in the World, and been Master of your Estate, then you might have dispos'd of it at your pleasure, and you wou'd not have had any obligation upon you to the contrary: But having enter'd into Religion and Vow'd Poverty, 'tis not in your power, to receive or keep any thing without leave; this being an obligation, arising from the Vow you have made. Saint *Peters* answer to *Ananias* was something like this, upon his bringing only part of the Money, for which he had sold his Estate, instead of the whole; and retaining the rest for his Wife and himself, notwithstanding the Vow of Poverty, which some holy Doctors say they had made. * *Why has Satan*, says the Apostle, *tempted thy Heart to Lye to the Holy Ghost, and to defraud the price of thy Land? Possessing it, did it not remain to thee, and being sold was it not in thy Power? Why hast thou admitted this thing into thy Heart? Thou hast not Ly'd to Men, but to God himself.* But what was the event of this? *Ananias* immediately fell down Dead in punishment of his Crime, and about three hours after his Wife *Saphira* Died also, shating in the punishment, as she had participated of the fault. Upon this, says the Scripture, † *There fell great fear upon the whole Church, and upon all those that heard these things.* Certainly we cannot be too cautious in the Vow of Poverty, since we see how severely those that break it, are Chastis'd by Heaven.

To return to our subject, I say that were Poverty only injoynd us by our Rule, a breach of it wou'd not be a Sin, and 'twou'd not be a Sin not to keep it; but when a Rule contains the matter of a Vow, there is no doubt but we are oblig'd to keep it, under pain of Mortal Sin; not that the Rule it self is of such force, but the Vow express'd in it, obliges us thereunto. Whence it is, that those Rules which concern Chastity, or the Law of Nature, oblige under Mortal Sin, not barely of themselves, but upon the account of the obligation, which the Vow of Chastity and the Law of Nature, lay upon us. For as the Rules here mention'd, contain in substance the Vow of Poverty and all it obliges unto; so he that violates 'em Sins Mortally; not because he violates the Rules, but because he breaks the Vow of Poverty, contain'd in the Rules. Therefore when we read these Rules, let us not look upon 'em barely as Rules, but consider 'em as interpreters of the Vow of Poverty, and declaring

* Cur tentavit Satanas
cortum mentiri te Spiritui
Sancto, &
fraudare de
pretio agri?
Nonne manes
tibi manebat,
& venditum
erat in tua
potestate?
Quare posuisti
in corde tuo
hanc rem?
Non es mentitus
hominibus,
sed Deo.
Act. 5. 3. 4.
† Et factus est
timor magnus
in universa
Ecclesia, & in
omnes qui au-
dierunt hæc.
Ibid. 7. 11.

claring the nature and indispensable obligations thereof, according to the Decrees of the Canon Law, and the Opinion of all Divines. Saint *Austin* speaking of those Religious that live in Communities, says, † *That 'tis certain they ought not to Have, Possess, Give or Take any thing, without Permission of their Superiour.* Our Constitutions say the same in expresse terms, and indeed exterior Poverty consists in this. For the power of Giving Taking, Possessing or Disposing of Temporals at pleasure, or without leave from another Person, do's most certainly argue a Propriety, which is directly opposite to the Vow of Poverty.

† Certum est eos nihil habere, possidere, dare, vel accipere, sine Superioris licentia debere. Aug. de comm. vit. Cler. & habetur. Can. Nondicatis, 12. p. 1.

Tho' what I have sayd, be look'd upon as a certain principle in this matter, yet that you may understand it the better, I'll set down the usual distinction which Divines and Canonists make, betwixt one that is a Proprietor or Master of a thing; and one that has only the bare use of it: He that is Proprietor, can give, lend, sell, or dispose of the thing appropriated, in what way soever he pleases: Whereas he who is not Master thereof, but only has barely the use of any thing, cannot do so; for he can neither buy nor sell, nor dispose of it to any other use, but what it is design'd for, by him that gave him liberty to use it. This is wont to be made more clear and evident by the following Example. You invite a Person to dine with you, the invitation do's not make him Master of all that's set upon the Table. He cannot carry any thing away with him, send it to his Friends, or sell or dispose of it at his pleasure, for you only grant him the favor of Eating what is set before him. And from hence flows the distinction betwixt the bare use, and the propriety or dominion of those very things, which are wasted and consum'd by their first usage. The same holds amongst Religious, as Divines teach, in respect of those things they possess, by permission of their Superiours. They have only the bare use of 'em, for they are given 'em for this end only, and they cannot dispose of 'em at their pleasure, seeing they are not Masters of 'em. For Example, you cannot bestow the Habit you wear upon another, without your Superiours leave; and if you shou'd give it away on your own accord, you wou'd Sin Mortally against the Vow of Poverty. Because that deed of gift renders you absolute Master of it. What I have sayd of a Habit, may be understood of any thing else, which is lent us to make use of.

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for you have not any right to dispose of your Hat, Breviary, or Coperculum or Cover you put your Writings in, without leave of your Superiour, because they are not really yours. You have only the use of things permitted you and no more, just as a guest at a Gendemens Table, which Comparison is very exact and gives no small light to this matter. If then this be true, that we cannot dispose at our pleasure, of what the Superiour permits us to make use of, it is also most evident that we cannot dispose of what belongs to the House we live in, without licence from the Superiour. Nor take a Book out of the Library, or any thing out of the Wardrobe, Refectory, Buttery, Larder or any other place, without increasing our Offence by acting directly against the Vow of Poverty.

C H A P. XI.

*How far 'tis against the Vow of Poverty, to
give or receive any thing, which do's not
belong to the House we live in, without
Permission of the Superiour.*

YOU have seen how all Divines unanimously agree, that a Religious Person breaks his Vow of Poverty, not only when he takes any thing belonging to the House for his own use, or when he gives it to another, but also when he receives any thing from abroad, without his Superiours leave. For Example, shou'd your Parents, Friends, or any other Person give you Mony to buy a Habit, a Book or any other thing whatsoever, and you take it and make use thereof without permission, you Sin against your Vow of Poverty. And this is certain, whether you ask'd the thing or not, nay tho' it was given you purely out of Friendship, or by way of Alm's, or upon any other motive whatsoever: Some will object, that 'tis easie to comprehend how the

the Vow of Poverty may be broken, by appropriating a thing which belongs to the Community, to one's particular use; but 'tis very hard to understand, how this can happen when the thing is given me from abroad; when no injustice is done to any body; and when the thing given redounds to the profit of the House; by sparing it the charges which it must have been at, in providing me that very thing. Sure this is no Sin, nor is it against any Commandment. I answer that this is a Sin of theft, and that you offend against the Seventh Commandment. This Saint *Austin* says expressly in his Rule. † *If any thing, says he, be given to any particular Person, for example a Religious Habit, let it be kept for the Common use, and be given to him who shall be judg'd to stand most in need of it.* If therefore any one shou'd present any thing to a Religious, he cannot admit of the Present without leave; since it belongs to the Superiour to receive it, and the thing is not for him that 'tis given to, but for all in Common, and may be dispos'd of to any one, as necessity shall require. You have a Habit sent you from a Friend, the Superiour is pleas'd to bestow it upon another, and this without any injury to you, for 'tis as much mine as yours, and every one in the Community may pretend equal right with you unto it: But to decide this Question Saint *Austin* subjoyn's these words: * *If any one shou'd have any thing given him and he conceal it, he is guilty of Theft.* Saint *Basil's* Opinion is the same, when he says, † *To possess any thing in particular, without the Superiours Consent, is down right Theft.* You'll ask me, from whom it is, that the Religious Person steals? In answer to this, Saint *Basil* tells you 'tis from the Community, by applying to your proper use, the least thing imaginable, let it come from whom it wou'd. These are no exaggerations of these holy Doctors, nor do they act in this matter, as if they had a mind only to create a horror of the thing. They only assert an evident truth, receiv'd by all Divines, and founded upon this common Principle, that the Vow of Poverty renders a Religious Person incapable of possessing, or disposing of any thing, independent of his Superiour. He himself is no more his own, he belongs to the Order he is Profess'd in; so that all he gets, or has given him any manner of way, do's at the same moment the gift is made him, belong to his Order. And therefore in all well order'd Communities, when any one of

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† Quod si aliquid detur alicui, ut vestis, redigatur in communem rem, & cui necessarium fuerit, præbeatur.
August. reg. 3. cap. 28.

* Quod si aliquis rem sibi collatam celaverit, furti iudicio condemnatur.
Id. ibid.
† Furtum est privata possessio. Societatis enim ex-pilatio, est rei cuiuscumque, & undecumque in privata uium se-vocatio.
Basil. in Const. Mon. c. 31.

them has a Revenue annex'd to the Title he bears, the said Revenue do's not belong to that individual Person; but to the Monastery; in whole Name, the Superiour Orders that to be receiv'd like other Rents, and apply's it to the necessities of this Religious, as he wou'd have done, independent of his Title or Benefice.

Heréby we see clearly that a Religious Person, who receives or keeps any thing in private, without leave of his Superiour is guilty of Theft; which is committed, by taking away or retaining, what belongs to another against his Will; now the Religious that so takes away or retains what belongs to his Order, do's consequently by his private Usurpation rob his Order. Hence it follows, that the Person to whom a Religious gives any thing without leave, tho' by way of Alm's, acquires no right to the thing, nor is true owner of it, but is really oblig'd to restore it. Here those also may see their error, who believe they may freely give a Book a Picture, or a Reliquary given 'em from abroad, and who think it lawful for 'em to dispose of any thing at their pleasure, that do's not belong to the House. For as 'tis a Theft and a Breach of the Vow of Poverty, so to dispose of any thing belonging to the House without leave; so 'tis an equal Crime, to receive any thing from abroad, and dispose of it without the Superiours consent or approbation.

But admit there shou'd be no Theft committed, nor any prejudice done to the Community (as it may happen) yet to receive any Temporals, and make use of 'em, or dispose of 'em according to our own Will, without licence from the Superiour, is of it's own nature a Mortal Sin: It being absolutely prohibited to all Religious, who by their Vow of Poverty are render'd incapable of all such practices. Besides shou'd any one receive any Present from a Religious Man, the receiver wou'd not be the true Master of the Present; for it belongs to the Community, and he wou'd be oblig'd to Restitution; because he receiv'd it from a Person who had no more power to give it, than a Child under-age, and is still in the Hands, and under the power of his Tutors.

The truth of this Doctrine is confirm'd, by what Saint Gregory the great did, to a Monk in the Monastery which he built in Rome, after he was made Pope. I take the following Relation from his own Dialogues, and from *Suntius* in the Life of this holy Doctor. One *Iustus* a Religious of the foresaid Monastery, desir'd a Brother he had in the World

*Greg. lib. 4.
Dialog. c. 55.*

World to buy him an under Garment, this Brother to free himself from any farther trouble, gave him Mony sufficient to buy what he demanded. *Surius* says, that they were three *Spanish* Reals, and this Author took his History from the Original Copies. Saint *Gregory* says, they were three Ducats, which are twelve Shillings of our Mony; but 'tis all one to the business in hand, whether they were Reals or Ducats; if they were Reals 'tis clear they were sufficient in those Days to buy an under Garment. Now to come to the Fact: The Religious Man took the Mony and chanc'd to fall Sick, whilst it was in his custody. Another Monk, who by accident knew of it, acquainted the Abbot (and the same custom is still maintain'd amongst us, for if any one shou'd discover any thing of moment that another has done, he must immediately give notice of it to the Superior) the Abbot judging this a matter of consequence, though it deserv'd the Popes Ear, and accordingly went and ask'd what his Holiness thought fit to be done in it. Upon the hearing hereof, Saint *Gregory*, then Pope, gave orders, that the Sick Person shou'd be look'd upon as Excommunicated, and that none of the Monks shou'd visit, or have any conversation with him in his Sickness; because he had broken his Vow of Poverty. Moreover, he commanded that he shou'd not be Buried in Holy Ground with the rest of the Monks, but in a Dung-hill out of the Monastery, and that the Mony shou'd be thrown upon the Body whilst the Monk's all sayd. * *Thy Mony be with thee unto Perdition.* The foresaid Monk Dyed of this Sickness, and all things were put in Execution according to Saint *Gregory's* orders, who tell's us farther that this fact created such a general fear and consternation amongst the Religious, that they look'd over all the things they made use of with permission, and which they might lawfully keep, and brought 'em immediately to the Superiour for a farther assurance, that they might retain nothing, that was contrary to Holy Poverty. The Sacred Canons, mov'd by this Example and the Praise of the Ancient Fathers, have Ordain'd the same Punishment for all those Religious that Dye Proprietors of any thing in these our Days.

* Pecunia tua
tecum sit in
perditionem.
Mat. 23. 25.

Cap. Manu, &
Cap. Cum ad
Monasterium,
de statu Mo-
nach.

CHAP.

C H A P. XII.

*Wherein some particular Difficulties concerning
the Vow of Poverty are Solv'd and
made Clear.*

TIS case to decide several particular Cases which may offer themselves in this matter, by the help of those Principles we have already layd down, and which are founded upon the universal consent of Divines. And since nothing conduces more to it, than to descend to particulars. I'll here put down such cases as may help to clear all others, and give very great light to the matter in hand.

The first consequence which I draw from the foresaid Principles, is, that a Religious Man, when he receives Money from his Superiour to make a Journey, is not permitted to buy Beads, Pictures, or any thing else, either for his own use, or to present others withal. Nor can he so much as get his Reliquary mended with it, tho' he shou'd for this very design, save some expences which he might reasonably make. The reason of this is, because the Money is given him barely to defray the charges of his Journey, and he is oblig'd to give up all that remains, either to the Superiour from whom he had it, or to him that is Superiour of the place he go's to; so that if he retains or employs this Money in any other use, he rob's his Oorder, and Sins against his Vow of Poverty. This is to be understood when the Superiour gives the Religious what is really requisite for his Journey, according to the practice amongst us. For shou'd he only be allow'd so much a Day, and no more, tho' he shou'd stand in need of it, the case is alter'd; for this wou'd be a tacite consent, for him to employ what he sav'd of his Viaticum, to any other honest and lawful use.

The second is, that tho' he shou'd be provided by his Parents or Friends, and not by the Superiour with this Money,

Money, yet he cannot so much as buy a Breviary, a pair of Tweezers, Spectacles, or any other thing, either to keep or give away. His Friends, and not his Order, giving of this Money, must not cause any mistake here; seeing the party it comes from signifies nothing, for it being once in his Hands, it belongs to his Order; and 'tis the same thing, as we have already observ'd, as if he receiv'd it from the Rector or Procurator of the House; and therefore 'tis only to be employ'd for the expences of his Journey; the Superiour having given it him only for this end, and he is bound to restore what is overplus, so that if he keep it or spend it any other way, he breaks his Vow and turns Thief to his Order. And this holds good, tho' the Religious shou'd receive this Money from his Friends with the Superiours leave, which if not obtain'd, this is another breach of his Vow, as has been already sayd.

The third is, that when a Religious Man comes from the Mission, or from visiting his Relations, where some has furnish'd him with a pair of Boots, a Cloak or some other conveniences for his Journey, these things belong to the Community he is of, and upon his coming home, he ought to deliver 'em up to the Superiour, or to him who has charge of such things, for shou'd he keep 'em without leave, he wou'd become Proprietor, and so commit a Theft and offend against his Vow of Poverty.

The fourth is, that tho' a Religious shou'd have his Foot in the Stirrup, and be upon his departure to another College, he can neither ask, nor accept of any thing from Seculars, tho' it shou'd be only to bear his charges upon the Road, without licence from the Superiour of the House he leaves, even tho' he shou'd be perswaded that the Superiour of the House he leaves, as well as the Superiour of the House he go's to, wou'd be glad he shou'd do so, in order to save charges. The reason of this is; because he is still under the authority of the Superiour he leaves, and not under his to whom he go's, and therefore not to ask his consent, which might still be done, is to receive things without his permission. If he were upon his Journey indeed, then he might accept of as much as he shou'd think the Superiour he go's to wou'd admit of, but still with a design at his arrival to give him an account of it. In this case we may presume of the Superiours consent, but never when

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we can have recourse to him, or when the thing in agitation may be deferr'd.

The fifth is, when a Superiour permits his Subject to receive Mony, and to put it into the Procurators Hands for such a determinate use; for Example, to pay for copying out some of his Writings; he cannot apply this Mony to any other use without leave, nor give any part of it, to another Religious that wants it, either for himself or Relations; nor can he employ it in Charity, Devotion or any other way, any more, than the other Religious can receive it from him without permission. And shou'd they do it, they wou'd both offend against their Vow of Poverty; for as I have already sayd, this Vow is broke, either by giving, or accepting any Temporal thing, without the Superiours leave.

The sixth is, that as a Religious Man can neither give nor take, so cannot he either borrow nor lend, or make any contract without leave; the Vow of Poverty equally prohibiting both: Yet notwithstanding this, there may be presum'd a tacite or general consent of the Superiour, in respect of things of very small consequence; and Religious Persons may frequently have occasion to borrow of one another, provided it be but for a short time, and according to the practise of the House they live in.

The seventh is, that 'tis a breach of the Vow of Poverty to receive a Depositum, either from a Domestique or Extern without leave. For in all Depositums, there is a kind of contract, which obliges you in Law, to be responsible for the things put into your hands, and to return the worth of 'em supposing they be lost by your negligence. Moreover, the keeping of Mony, or any other thing of value, brings a great deal of care and trouble along with it, and 'twou'd be highly Scandalous to find such things in a Religious Mans custody, when he has no authority to receive 'em, and when no body knows from whence they came. As to those ordinary things which we are permitted to keep in our Chambers, those we may commit to the care and custody of another Religious in the same House.

The eighth is, a Religious Man without leave, cannot have Mony, nor any thing equivalent in his own keeping, nor in the hands of a third Person; for 'tis the same thing whether he or his Friend has it. For shou'd he give some Goods or Cloath's to his Relations to keep for him, in order to equip him the better when he takes a Journey, he

he wou'd offend against the Vow of Poverty, as much as if he had kept them himself; without the knowledge of his Superiour.

The ninth is, it do's not look like holy Poverty, but rather has an appearance of Propriety in it to carry Books, Pictures or any thing of that nature along with you, when you remove from one House to another. And therefore this is not allow'd of in the SOCIETY of JESUS, which takes care, that all things which the Religious make use of, be reckon'd amongst the moveables of the House; and that they shall not carry any thing away with them when they go to live in another College. And shou'd any Religious do it, independent of the Superiour, he wou'd steal the goods of the said House, and break the Vow of Poverty. And this Doctrine holds good, tho' he shou'd carry things away with him, which do not belong to the House, but to some other place, for the reason heretofore specified.

The tenth is, he that shou'd spend his Mony in vain and superfluous things, tho' with leave of the Superiour, wou'd also Sin against the Vow of Poverty, for the holy Canons declare such expences contrary to Poverty, nor can the Superiour himself, either buy or give leave to buy any thing but what is necessary, profitable and decent. Hence it is, that shou'd any one receive such vain curiosities from any Religious which he has foolishly bought, he wou'd be oblig'd to restore them, as I have prov'd in the precedent Chapter.

The seventh is, when a Religious Person hides any thing for fear his Superiour shou'd find it, and take it from him, he Sins against the Vow of Poverty; for as Divines observe, this secrecy is a mark of Propriety, and manifests an inclination to keep it against the Will of his Superiour.

The twelfth is, a Religious that has the disposal and distribution of things, committed to his care for the use of the Community, is oblig'd to follow the orders of the Superiour, and not his own private sentiment. And if he gives either more or less, better or worse than the Superiour ordains, he offends against Poverty; for by so doing he acts also independent of another, and disposes of the things as if he were the Master and Proprietor of 'em, and not as if he depended upon another.

The thirteenth is, as a Religious Man wou'd Sin against the Vow of Poverty, by deliberately wasting or spoiling of what is committed to his care, or given him to make use

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*In instruct. co.
reg. 25. comm.
Clement. 1. de
stat. Mon. Abul.
tom. 2. in
Matth. c. 6. q.
37. Silvestr.
restit. 6. q. 7.
dist. 2. Molin.
tom. 7. disp.
276. Less. lib. 2.
de just. c. 28.
dub. 11. n. 85.
Nav. l. 1. de
restit. c. 1. n. 117.
c. 182. Petr.
Ledesm. 2. p.
summ. tr. 31.
c. 2. concl. 10.*

* Culpa lata
dolo æquipa-
ratur.

Cass. lib. 4. de
instit. renunt.
cap. 20.

of; so according to this Maxim of Canon Law, * *A considerable negligence is look'd upon as a fraud or cheat*, he wou'd also Sin who by his notorious carelessness, shou'd lose or spoil any thing committed to his charge. For first it belongs only to the Master of the goods, to waste and consume them at his pleasure. Secondly, things in Religion are given totally for the service of the Religious, and those Persons that are intrusted by their employments with things of the House, cannot dispose of 'em, unless it be for the advantage of the Community; so that if they shou'd dissipate or waste them, they wou'd certainly violate the Vow of Poverty. And tho' perhaps once or twice doing so, wou'd not prejudice the House much, yet at long run, the loss wou'd be very considerable. *Cassian* has an Example upon this Subject, which shews how exact and strict the Ancient Fathers were in this point. The Dispenser, or he who keeps or gives out all the Provisions of a Monastery, coming into the Kitchen, perceiv'd that the Cook, who had been washing his Pease to boil for Dinner, had let three fall upon the ground, and he immediatly acquainted the Abbot with it, who gave the Cook a publick Penance for the little care he had of what belong'd to the Community. And *Cassian* add's that those Ancient Religious, did not only look upon themselves as Consecrated to God, but also look'd upon all the goods of the Monastery to be so too, and this made them to be so very careful, even of the least thing that belong'd to the Community, as of what was Consecrated to God.

C H A P.

C H A P. XIII.

Wherein an objection is answer'd which gives farther light into this matter.

SOME may object, that this exact observance of every little point relating to Poverty is too severe, and tyes us up too hard; for when all is sayd, several other Religious, who make the same Vow of Poverty as we do, receive Money from their Parents and Friends without any difficulty, to buy them a Breviary, Books or Cloaths; and yet are look'd upon as Persons of repute and credit, and as true Servants of Almighty God. Nor are they less free in giving a Book to one of their fellow Monks, or to any one of their Friends or Relations, and perhaps even something of greater consequence without their Superiours leave, nor do they think that they act at all against their Vow of Poverty in this; wherefore according to the same reason, we Sin no more than they do against our Vow, by disposing of things in the like manner. All the fault that can be committed, is, that we do not act herein according to the Perfection of Poverty, nor shew that submission we ought to our Superiours, and to the Rules and Constitutions of our Order. I set down this objection on purpose, that the answer to it may give a farther insight, into what I have already sayd; and clear some doubts that may hereafter happen. I agree with you, that in some Orders, the Religious do, and may dispose of some things, as the objection says, without scruple or breach of Poverty; but it do's not follow from thence, that we can do so too without committing a Sin, on the contrary I maintain, that we shou'd hereby not only offend against the Obedience we owe our Rule, but also violate the Vow of Poverty. The reason of this difference, is taken from the permission some Orders grant, or from the expresse or tacit consent of Superiours, which tacit consent may be presum'd, says Divines, when Superiours know of a custom that has been introduc'd, and either permit or wink at it, instead of hindering it;

quiltacet con-
sentire vide-
tur. Reg. 43. de
regul. juris.

For silence gives consent. A Religious Man when he has either a tacit or exprefs leave from his Superiour, do's not offend against his Vow of Poverty, by receiving or disposing of any thing, and consequently the practice of those Religious mention'd in the objection is Lawful. But this do's not hold in the SOCIETY, where we endeavour to live up to the Perfection and Purity of Poverty, and where there is no leave either tacit or exprefs given for this Practice. On the contrary, our custom is directly opposite to this, and one of Ours wou'd Sin against his Vow of Poverty, shou'd he so receive or dispose of any thing; and the other Religious above mention'd wou'd equally offend, had they not a protection or a permission. Religious Women Vow Poverty, yet some of 'em have Pensions to buy themselves Habits, Books and other conveniencies; nor do's any body look upon this as a fault in them, since their Superiours permit this Practice. Yet if any of the SOCIETY shou'd do this without leave, he wou'd Sin against his Vow of Poverty, nor can the practice of several learn'd and pious Men in other Orders, warrant the same amongst us. Other Orders have either a tacit or exprefs leave for it, the SOCIETY has none, and it's practice is quite contrary, and therefore the obligations charg'd upon us in the precedent Chapter are not bare Scruples, but solid Truths, grounded upon the very Nature of Poverty and general consent of Doctors.

Pen. in speculo
discip. p. 1. c. 4.
Gerson in one of
his Treatises of
questions free
he propose,
quest. ante
penult.

Saint *Bonaventure* and *Gerson* both of 'em very Spiritual Men and great Divines, have left in their Books several of these very cases we have set down, and upon the determining whether a Religious Person can give or receive any thing, they reduce the whole matter to this one point, of his having either an exprefs or tacit leave from his Superiour. And they declare that a Religious can neither give, nor take, nor dispose of any thing, independent of this leave, without a breach of his Vow of Poverty; for he wou'd thereby cease to be Poor and turn Proprietor, which consists in accepting or disposing of things at pleasure. *Gerson* put's the case in the Person of a Procurator of a Monastery, who has the Mony of the Community in his Hands, and he asks the question, whether, this Procurator wou'd Sin against his Vow of Poverty by buying a Knife a Comb-case, or a pair of Spectacles either for himself or for another? Nay, he descends to things yet more inconsiderable

inconsiderable, as a Needle or a little Thread, and answers, that shoud he do these things by an expresse or tacit leave from his Superiour, there woud be no Sin, but without the sayd leave, he woud break his Vow of Poverty; and this great Chancellour of *Paris*, says the same of a Religious, who gives or receives any Present from a Secular Person, without his Superiours permission. Thus you see how all Divines agree, that the giving, taking, or disposing of any thing without leave, is certainly forbidden all Religious by the Vow of Poverty. Therefore when an Order permits a Religious to have something in particular, or to receive Presents from his Friends and dispose of them, the practice proceeds either from a tacit or expresse leave, otherwise the Vow of Poverty woud be broken. Hence it follows (and pray observe the consequence well, for it is necessary in things of this nature) that you must well understand the custom, to frame a right judgment of an expresse or tacit leave. For unless you know this, you shall never be able to judge aright, there being many things permitted in some Orders, by a connivence and tacit consent, which are not so in others.

Hence it also follows, that tho' some Authors hold that, a Religious that receives Money from a Secular Person, to buy Books or any thing else of that nature, do's not Sin, provided, he exposes what he buys to the view of the Community, and be ready also to give them up, when the Superiour shall think fit; yet one of the SOCIETY by doing so, woud break his Vow of Poverty. For these Authors suppose a tacit or under-hand leave, and that Superiours woud be content with this act of resignation in the Religious when call'd upon. But amongst us there is no such connivence or tacit leave, but a determination and expresse practise to the contrary. As to our Cassock, Cloaks, Breviaries or any thing else, we are permitted to use, we still have all imaginable submission and dependance upon our Superiours Will for them, and must be ready to part with 'em, when he pleases, otherwise we thou'd act against our Vow of Poverty and become Proprietors. Nor can we receive Money to buy a Habit or Books, or any, thing else, tho' we shoud expose them to the view of the whole World, and be dispos'd to give them up at the Superiours Command; for the practice in the SOCIETY being quite contrary,
draws

draws a breach of the Vow of Poverty along with it, upon any that shou'd do so. For shou'd we but once admit of this liberty, and become the least relaxe in this Point, I do not doubt, but that it wou'd be cry'd down in a Congregation, and an immediate stop put to all further abuses in this kind; which wou'd destroy the very foundations of that Poverty we Profess.

Divines make another observati^{on} upon this tacit consent or suppos'd leave; and tells us that 'tis not sufficient for a Religious Man in order to ask, receive, take or keep any thing, to know certainly that his Superiour wou'd give him leave at the first asking; no more than it wou'd be sufficient for him to go abroad or to write a Letter upon the same Presumption; but that a Religious must be very well assur'd, that his Superiour wou'd also be very willing, he shou'd accept or dispose of the thing without his leave; and that he wou'd not take it ill, tho' his leave were not ask'd. This is a true description of this tacit permission or leave, which is now introduc'd into several Orders, and by vertue of it they may freely give or take, without any farther permission. But this custom is not yet brought into the SOCIETY, where Superiours are so far from being glad that their Subjects shou'd not address themselves in the like occasions, that they hold nothing more dear, than to see the contrary strictly observ'd; and are never more displeas'd, than at the least liberty or presumption in Point of Obedience. And for this reason we ought to act quite different from some other Orders in respect of Poverty, and in some other particulars; for their bounds at present are not so strait as ours, tho' without question they were so at first, if we may credit their own Histories; and we see some Orders at present, who live up to the Primitive strictness and severity of their Rule.

C H A P. XIV.

That the Vow of Poverty obliges under Mortal Sin.

SOME may here with reason start a question, and desire to know, whether all those breaches of Poverty above mention'd, be Mortal or Venial Sins? All Divines agree, as we have touch'd before, that a breach of the Vow of Poverty, is at the same time a Sin against the seventh Commandment, which prohibits Theft. This suppos'd, I answer, that as this Commandment obliges under Mortal Sin of it's own nature, unless the thing stolen be very inconsiderable, as for Example, an Apple is, or a Farthing, for then 'tis only a Venial Sin. So likewise do's the Vow of Poverty oblige under Mortal Sin, unless the Transgression be so small, that it proves only Venial. If you desire to know what kind of Transgression against this Vow is a Mortal Sin, you must first inform your self what is a Mortal Sin against the seventh Commandment; for one is the measure of the other, and the Theft which amounts to a Mortal Sin, is a Mortal breach of the Vow of Poverty; as all Doctors hold, who have writ upon this Subject.

To give more light to this matter, some Divines assign two causes, which render this Sin the more greivous. The first is, an unjust usurpation of another Mans goods against his Will: The second is, a breach of a Vow made to God. As to the first cause, they require the thing shou'd be more considerable to make a Sin Mortal against Poverty, than against the seventh Commandment; because the Goods a Religious Man disposes of, are not so properly another Persons, as when an ordinary theft is committed; nor is the disposition in which it is done, so contrary to the Owners intention as in Felony. But if we consider the second cause, that which is sufficient to make theft a Mortal Sin, is also a Mortal breach of the Vow of Poverty; the Obligation we have contracted by the Vow of Poverty, of not taking

*Cordub. l. de
Caf. q. 109.
Morus l. i. tit.
de Stat. Monach.
consul. 3. du-
bio. 3. m. 18.
Sorbo. in comp.
Priv. l. p. ver-
bo. Date, in
explic. consil.
Clem. 8. de
largi. cap. 2.
vers. Sed dif-
ficile, Lud. Lo-
pez. 2. p. sum.
q. 3. concl. 5.
Man. Rodr.
tom. 3. de reg.
q. 20. ars. 10.
concl. 8. Azor,
l. 12. inst. Mor.
c. 12. q. 6.*

taking or disposing of any thing without our Superiours consent, being far greater, than that which the Seventh Commandment lays upon us, namely not to take another Māns goods against his Will.

Chap. 11.

Ariaf. p. 3. de
Imit. de 1. 7.
17. 7. ch. 29.

You find in the story we lately cited out of Saint *Gregory*, that the Mony which the Religious Man had given him by his Brother, to buy him an under Garment, was no more than three Crowns, both according to the relation of *Gregory* and *Surin*, and was for that, which the Monastery must have furnish'd him withal, had not his Brothers kindness prevented 'em, and yet you see Saint *Gregory* judg'd it a Mortal Sin, as appears by the Excommunication and his severe Punishing of the Fact. Amongst the modern Authors who treat this Subject, some require three Crowns to make a Mortal Sin, others exact four, others five. And amongst the *Carthusians* a far less thing wou'd be a Mortal Sin, and be sufficient to incur an Excommunication, and deprive one of their Monks of Christian Burial.

Navarr. l. 3.
Tit. de Statu
Monach. Confid.
3. dub. 3.
Num. 18.

But let us put the case, that the thing be of greater value than Divines require, and that three Crowns be too little to make a mortal Sin against the Vow of Poverty, shall a Religious Man who ought daily to endeavour his advancement in Perfection, expose himself to the danger and trouble of examining if the thing he has receiv'd, given, or kept, amounts precisely to six, or only to four Crowns, and thereby be at least in danger of plunging him into Mortal Sin? 'Tis ordinary for Servants that go to Market, to defraud their Masters of a penny or half penny in their bargains, and yet no body says they Sin Mortally, by reason of the smalness of the sum; but do's it become a Religious Man to do the like, tho' it be only a Venial Sin? If therefore you are asham'd to do this, and you look upon it as an infamous thing, take care not to receive or give the least thing, under pretence that 'tis only a Venial Sin, for this is as infamous in you, as 'tis for a Servant secretly to play the thief. We ought to be very cautious in the least things which belong to any of the three Vows, they being the essentials of Religion. For he that wou'd deliberately commit a Sin against Poverty under pretence that 'tis only Venial, is in very great danger of Sinning Mortally against his Vow. The desire of having, and of giving and receiving, is a passion Natural to Man, and so violent, that we may be easily deceiv'd by it, and carried farther than

than we imagin. Besides 'twill often happen that we are left in doubt and perplexity, whether the Sin be Mortal or no; to which, no Religious Man ought ever to expose himself or risque so great a danger.

C H A P. XV.

Whether a Religious Man can without leave of his Superiour, receive Mony in order to do works of Charity with it: And what those cases are, wherein he wou'd Sin against his Vow of Poverty by doing so.

THE SOCIETY requires of us so great a Perfection and Exactness in all things which concern Holy Poverty, and is so careful to take from us all pretences, to have Mony at our own disposal, that we are forbidden by our Institute, to ask or receive Mony from any Person, even our very Penitents, in order to give Alms or make Restitution. So that if a Penitent, who is oblig'd to Restitution, shou'd desire to leave Mony to be restord, in the Hands of his Ghostly Father, the said Father cannot take that charge upon him, without leave of his Superiour. This Rule is grounded upon reason, experience, and the Doctrin and Examples of Holy Men. Saint *Basil's* sentiment agrees with it. Saint *Francis Xavierius* also very earnestly recommended the practice of it. And that which Saint *Hierom* relates, concerning Saint *Hilarion* upon this subject, is very remarkable. A Rich Man, out of whom Saint *Hilarion* had cast a Legion of Devils, finding the Saint to refuse a considerable sum of Mony, which he wou'd have presented him, as an acknowledgment of the favor done him, press'd him at least to accept of it and distribute it amongst the Poor. The Saint persisting in his refusal, told him you who know many great Cities,

*Basil. Epist. ad
Celsion in eius
vital. 6. c. 12.*

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and know their Poor Inhabitants, can dispose of it better then I; neither did I forsake my own Estate, to intangle my self with anothers. Wherefore 'tis our duty to assist our Neighbour, by good Advice and all other Charitable works of that nature, but not to turn their Almoners; for that wou'd create so great a confusion, by such a concurrence of indigent Persons, that two Porters wou'd not be sufficient at the Gate to give answers to all humble petitioners; and the Confessours wou'd be disturb'd in their Confession Seats, and hinder'd from Preaching and other Spiritual duties. The Apostles themselves knew by experience, that they cou'd not be employ'd in such affairs, without at the same time they fail'd in their duty, of Preaching the Word of God. † *'Tis not fit, sayd they, we shou'd leave the Word of God to serve at Table;* and therefore committed that charge to others, that hereby being disengag'd from the care of Temporals, they might attend only to the Conversion of Souls. There are some who imagine this distribution of Alms, to be a very good way to gain the Peoples Hearts, and induce them to a frequent use of the Sacraments; but they lye under a mistake, for a Man rather loses than gains by it, upon the account of malecontents; who are always the greater number: Some are dissatisfied because they had nothing given 'em; others because they had not as much as they desir'd; and at last most will complain and cry out, that the Charity was distributed rather according to favor than justice; and that we converted part of it to our own use. Besides it can never be a good motive to bring People to Confession, but on the contrary becomes injurious, thereunto, giving occasion to Penitents of inventing many lies and forgeries, thereby to move their Confessor to have compassion of 'em, and bestow part of the Charity he has to distribute upon 'em. Notwithstanding this, a Religious may with leave of his Superiour, receive Mony to make restitution; for Example, when the thing requires secrecy, and the Penitent cannot restore it himself, without loss of his reputation. Yet in this very case, Divines Counsel the Confessor to take an acquittance from the Person, to whom he makes Restitution, and give it afterwards to the Penitent; who tho' he may endeavour to hinder his Confessor from doing it, and give signs of his great confidence in him, yet he will be always glad when he sees the acquittance, is more Edified at his Confessor, and more

† Non est æquum nos derelinquere verbum Dei, & ministrare mensis.
Act. 6. 2.

more easie within himself; nor will he be afterwards expos'd to those difficulties and surmises, which sometimes happen, when this precaution in the Confessour is wanting.

But since I have undertaken to discover the obligation of the Vow of Poverty in it's utmost rigor, it will not be amiss to propose those cases, wherein by receiving Mony for Charitable uses without leave, we Sin against the Vow of Poverty, or only trespass against the Obedience due to our Rule. Divines handling this very Question, ask whether or no a Religious Man wou'd Sin against his Vow of Poverty, if he shou'd without permission of his Superiour receive Mony of a Secular Person, not for himself, but to apply to Charitable uses, in the Name of him who gave it? One wou'd think that in this case he wou'd not Sin against his Vow of Poverty, since the Mony is not for his own use, nor to be distributed in his own Name, but in the Name of the party from whom he receiv'd it. Notwithstanding the decision of this question, depends upon the manner of receiving Mony, or any thing else to be given to another. For if the giver says expressly, that 'tis to be dispos'd of in his Name, and mention the Charities he wou'd have it employ'd in, as for example, when Mony is put in the Hands of a Confessour either to make restitution or distribute to the Poor; then the Religious that so receives it without leave of his Superiour wou'd only offend against the Obedience he ow's his Rule, but not against his Vow of Poverty, for the giver wou'd still remain Master of it, and it wou'd be dispos'd of at his pleasure, and the Confessour is only the Instrument, to convey it according to the others Will. But shou'd the giver leave the free disposal of it to the Confessour, and he shou'd employ it all in Charity or any other way, he wou'd Sin against his Vow of Poverty, by receiving and disposing of it without permission from his Superiour. For first, the giver by doing so, deprives himself of all propriety to the thing, and transfers it as much as he can to the Religious, in order to dispose of it as he pleases, and certainly no Religious Person is capable of propriety. Secondly, 'tis not propriety only which is inconsistent with the Vow of Poverty, but also the use and free disposal of any thing without leave, these two latter, being a branch of the former, and equally prohibited to all Religious by their Vow of Poverty. Again this use and free disposal of things is still more opposite

*Accor. lib. 12.
Inst. mor. c. 10.
§. ultim.*

*Id. ibid. ca. 9.
§. 1. & ca. 11.
§. 1.*

*Dionys. Cart. in
apusc. de refor-
mat. Claustraliū
art. 16.*

*Th. Sanchez 16.
l. de Mastrim.
lib. 6. disp. 4.
num. 7.*

to the Vow of Poverty, than dominion or propriety; by reason it diverts a Religious more from his duties, and prov's a greater prejudice to him than propriety alone. This reason made the Church and Holy Fathers agree, that no Religious shou'd have any thing he might call his own, that so being deliver'd from the care and trouble, which the administration of Temporals draws along with it; they might be the better qualified for the service of Almighty God: And by consequence, tho' a Religious Man has neither the dominion nor propriety of another Mans goods, but only the bare administration and use of 'em without leave of his Superiour, yet hereby he Sins against his Vow of Poverty. Wou'd it not be very ridiculous, says *Denis* the *Carthusian* speaking to our purpose, if a Father that had a Son stark mad, shou'd content himself to take the propriety of a Sword from him, but leave him the use of it? This says he is the Practice of some Religious, who are content not to hold any thing in propriety, yet take upon them the use and administration of other Peoples goods, which is the most dangerous thing that attends Riches; and most of all takes 'em off, from the duties of Religion. There be some who pretend the first case I layd down concerning this matter, to be equally with the rest, contrary to the Vow of Poverty, it being an acceptance and disposal of Mony or something equivalent, without leave of Superiours; yet they say the Sin is only Venial and not Mortal; because they give the Mony to the Person's use, for whom it was design'd.

Hence we may draw an answer to that ordinary difficulty, which frequently presents it self, which is, whether a Religious wou'd Sin against his Vow of Poverty, in case he shou'd without leave of his Superiour, ask Mony of any one, to assist his Parents or Friends; and having got the Mony shou'd either effectually give it himself, or desire the party who do's the Charity, to give it or send it to the Person for whom he begg'd it? To this I answer, that the said Religious if he ask's and receives this Mony, with an intention to be Master of it, and to dispose of it as he pleases, he Sins against his Vow of Poverty, altho' at the same time, he shou'd design to give it, and shou'd accordingly give it afterwards, or send it in the Name of the party from whom he had it. But if he do's not take it to dispose of at his pleasure, and shou'd speak thus to the giver; for my part I have no need of it, nor can I receive it for my own use,

use, but if you please to give it to such a Person in necessity or leave it with me to give or send it him as from you, I shou'd be very much oblig'd to you, and thereby you wou'd do a true act of Charity. In this case, tho' the Person thou'd do this Charity for the sake of the Religious, and the Religious thou'd afterwards return him thanks for it, yet he wou'd not Sin against his Vow of Poverty, because he do's not receive this Mony for his own use, nor pretends to be Master of it, but is only an Executor of the givers Will, and an intercessor for the Poor. Much less wou'd he offend against his Vow, thou'd the giver at his request, send or give the Mony himself to the party for whom he petition'd. For tho' the Charity really proceeds from the Prayers and Intercession of the said Religious, yet this do's not alter the case, nor fasten either propriety or use of the thing given, upon the Religious Man. But after all, tho' this practice be not contrary to the Vow of Poverty, yet it brings several inconveniences along with it, when 'tis done without permission. And 'tis to be fear'd lest these limits here prescrib'd, thou'd not stop Persons thus dispos'd, but that they shou'd go on even to a breach of their Vow of Poverty. For I cannot always examin, whether the Present be made to my self, or in what manner I receiv'd it, nor whether I am to give it in my own or anothers Name, or whether it comes from another or from my self. Besides it often happens, that the desire of having Mony at our own disposal, blinds us, and at last under some plausible pretence, we come to act directly contrary to the Vow of Poverty; and therefore we ought to be very cautious in avoiding all danger in this kind. Wherefore let us give no occasion of having that apply'd to us which Saint Basil, as *Cassian* says, told a Senator, who having forsaken his Dignity: To become Religious, reserv'd a small part of his Estate to live upon, without being oblig'd to work and labor as the other Religious did; * *You have order'd the matter so, says Saint Basil to him, that now you are neither a Senator nor a Religious Man.*

Cass. l. 7. c. 9.

*Et senatorem
perdidisti, &
Monachum
non fecisti.*

CHAP.

C H A P. XVI.

Several Examples in Confirmation of all that has been sayd.

*Hier. Epist. ad
Pustach. de
custod. virgin.*

TIS recounted by Saint *Hierom*, that one of those Hermits that liv'd in the Desarts of *Nitria*, and maintain'd themselves by their labor, had a great desire to lay up a little Mony. This Man by eating little and working hard, got at last a hundred Crowns together and so died. When they came to bury him, they found this Mony in his Cell. Whereupon all the other Hermits, who were about five thousand dwelling thereabouts in little Cells separated from one another, assembl'd to consult what was to be done in this matter, and how they shou'd dispose of the Mony. Some were for giving it to the Poor, others to the Church, and others to the Relations of the deceas'd party, who perhaps might stand in need of it. Saint *Macarius*, and the Abbots *Pambo* and *Isidore*, with some more of the most Ancient amongst 'em, inspir'd by the Holy Ghost, counsel'd 'em to bury the Mony with the Corps and pronounce over it, those words of Saint *Peter*, * *Thy Mony be with thee to Perdition*. This advice was follow'd. And Saint *Hierom* wou'd not have us think this sentence too severe or rigorous, but rather prudent and charitable, for it struck such a fear into all the Fathers of the Wilderness in *Egypt*, that they look'd upon it as a very great crime, to have any Mony found about 'em at the hour of Death.

* Pecunia tua
tecum sit in
perditionem.
Mat. 6. 20.

*Aug. serm. 5.
ad fratres, in
Eremitis.*

Saint *Austin* recounts an Example very like the former, of one *Januarius* a Religious Man, who was look'd upon as a Saint, and He set down his own words which are very expressive and patherical. We cannot, says he, sufficiently lament the loss of our Brother *Januarius*, who seeming the very model of Obedience and Poverty, has made an unhappy end. He begg'd his Admission amongst us with
Tears

Tears in his Eyes, he promis'd to be a faithful observer of Poverty all his Life, and at the same time reserv'd to himself without knowledge, the enjoymēt of an Estate in the World. O unfortunate Profession, and faithless Promise! His Words promis'd what his Heart Detested, and we thought him Holy and Vertuous, who now proves a deceitful and an impious Impostor. He liv'd thus above twelve Years, and his Death was answerable to his Life. He lead a wicked Life by secretly possessing, what did not nor cou'd belong to him; and died most miserably in Sin, without acknowledging his fault; and made a Will in favor of a Son he had in the World, but never acquainted us with it. I wish he had but own'd his crime at the hour of Death, then we might have endeavour'd to procure his Pardon, by our Prayers, but alas he neither Confess'd it nor Repented of it; and therefore we ought not to look upon him at present as one of ours, but as one that had never been amongst us. Whereupon he bound his Hands together, and tied up the hundred and eleven Sickles which he had hid in the Wall of his Cell in a Cloath, and putting them into his Hands, buried them both together and with very deep sighs pronounc'd these words, * *Thy Mony be with thee to Perdition*; for it is not lawful for us to imploy that upon the necessities of our Monastery, which has been the price of his Eternal Damnation.

* Pecunia tua
tecum sit in
perditionem.
Mat. 23. 20.

Casarius has a Story of a *Cistercian* Monk, who lying upon his Death Bed, Confess'd to his Abbot; and forthwith had the Blessed Sacrament brought him, which he Receiv'd into his Mouth, but was not able to get it down his Throat; hereupon the Priest taking it out gave it to another Religious that was Sick, who Receiv'd it with a great deal of Devotion, and swallow'd it with no less ease. A little after, this first Religious died, and then they discover'd the reason of this impediment, as well as of his ruin: For when they wash'd his Body before his Burial, they found five pieces of Mony about him, which tho' only Brass, yet render'd him no less faulty, than if they had been Silver. The Religious seeing this, admir'd the Judgments of God, and by the Abbot's orders, whom they had advertis'd of the matter, they buried the Corps in an open Field, throwing the Mony upon it and saying, † *May this Mony which you have kept in private,*

Lib. 9. Dial.
cap. 64.

† Pecunia tua
quam clam
nobis, contra

contrary

professionem
tuam, posside-
disti, tecum sit
in eternam
perditionem.

contrary to thy Profession, perish with thee Eternally. The Abbot gave an account of this passage, in the next General Congregation of his Order. The Historian add's that none ought to impute his not swallowing of the Sacred Host to his Sickness; for the very same Day he had Eaten a whole Chicken that was boild for him.

P. 2. l. 1. c. 28.

We Read in the Chronicles of Saint *Francis*, that there was a Brother in one of the Convents of his Order, who knew how to Read a little, and desirous to learn more, found a way how to procure himself a Psalter: But Saint *Francis's* Rule prohibiting all Lay-Brothers to learn to Read, Father Guardian therefore, understanding he had got this Book, ask'd him for it. He answer'd that he had it not, whereupon the Guardian press'd him to tell where he had put it, and shew'd him that to live proprietor of any thing, was to live in a continual breach of his Vows, notwithstanding the Brother wou'd not hearken to what he sayd nor obey him. Not long after this, he fell dangerously Sick, and the Guardian for fear he thou'd die in that condition, commanded him, in Vertue of Holy Obedience, to restore the Book, or tell him where he had hid it, but this unhappy Man being harden'd in his Sin, died without declaring any thing. The Night after he was buried, when the Sacristan rung to Martins, he saw a frightful Ghost coming suddenly towards him, and hearing a melancholy mournful Voice, without being able to understand any thing distinctly, he was seas'd with such a fear, that he fell down as if he had been dead. The Religious having heard the first peal to Martins, wonder'd why the Bell did not ring again; wherefore after having waited a little they went to the Church, and found the Sacristan lying along like a Dead Man, who coming again to himself, told them what had happen'd. After they had begun to Sing Martins, the same Ghost appear'd again, crying and howling most lamentably; but did not utter any word so clearly as to be understood. The Guardian to incourage his Religious, who seem'd very much affrighted, commanded the Spirit in the Name of God to tell who he was, and what he wanted there. To whom it reply'd, I am the Lay-Brother whom you buried yesterday. Then the Guardian ask'd him if he stood in need of the Prayers of the Religious, to whom he answer'd, no; for they cou'd do him no good at present; he being now Eternally
Damn'd,

damn'd, upon the account of the Book which he had kept in propriety at the Hour of his Death. Since therefore, reply'd the Guardian, we cannot do you any service, I command you in the Name of our Lord JESUS CHRIST, to depart hence immediately, and return no more to disturb us. Which words were scarce utter'd before the Ghost disappear'd, and was never seen after.

Denis the Carthusian relates the following passage. *Inscula. Relig.*
A Religious Man finding his Habit torn, went into the Taylors Shop, and took a piece of Cloath to mend it, without having ask'd leave. He fell Sick soon after, and thought himself a great Servant of God, for he felt no check's of Conscience, nor cou'd the Devils find any thing wherewith to disturb him, which made him wait for Death, with a great deal of Resignation and Comfort. Being thus dispos'd he chanc'd to look towards the corner of his Cell where his Habit hung, and saw the Devil in the shape of a Monky sitting upon it, and licking with satisfaction the piece of Cloath wherewith he had mended it, when presently he perceiv'd the fault he had committed, in raking the piece of Cloath without leave, wherefore sending for his Superiour, he Confess'd it to him, and having begg'd his Pardon the Devil immediately vanish'd out of his sight.

'Tis recounted in the History of Saint *Dominick's* Order, that, whilst the Holy Man *Regnatus* was Prior of the Convent at *Bolonia*, a Lay-Brother of the same House, receiv'd a piece of Stuff to mend his Habit from a Person in the World, without leave of his Superiour. The good Prior having notice of this, call'd the Brother to the Chapter-house, where he gave him as severe a check, as if he had been a Thief and Traitor, and injoynd him a publick Discipline, and burn'd the piece of Stuff in full Chapter, before him and all the rest of the Religious.

We Read in the same History that *Albertus Magnus*, when Provincial amongst the *Dominicans*, prohibited all his Religious under great penalties, from having even the least sum of Money, either in their own or anothers keeping, either for their own or anothers use. After this Ordination they held their Provincial Congregation, in which it was prov'd that a certain Re-

ligious who was lately Dead, had not observ'd this Prohibition. *Albertus* punish'd this transgression so severely, that he caus'd the Body to be taken and buried in a Dung-hill, in imitation of the Ancient Fathers of the Desert, who treated their Monks after the same fashion, that dy'd proprietors of the least thing imaginable.



—THE

THE FOURTH TREATISE OF CHASTITY.

CHAP. I.

*Of the excellency of Chastity, and the
degrees by which we ought to raise
our selves to a Perfection in
this Vertue.*

† **T**HIS is the Will of God, that yee be-
come Holy, that yee abstain from all
Uncleanhess, and that every one of yee
keep your Body Intire and Undesl'd;
for God has not call'd us to Impurity,
but Sanctity. Saint Bernard says, that
Chastity is meant here by the word
Sanctity. And our Blessed Saviour himself

observes, that Chastity equals us to Angels: * *In the Re-
surrection, says he, they shall neither Marry nor be given
in Marriage, but be like the Angels of Heaven.* Saint

* In resurrectione neque nubent, neque nubentur, sed erunt sicut Angeli Dei in Cælo.

† Hæc est vo-
luntas Dei,
sanctificatio
vestra, ut ab-
stineatis vos à
fornicatione,
ut sciat unus-
quisque vesti-
rum vas suum
possidere in
sanctificatione
& honore.
Non enim vo-
cavit nos Deus
in immunditi-
am, sed in
sanctificatio-
nem.
1 Thess. 4. 3. 4.
C. 7.
Bern. serm. 12.
sup. Cant.
Matth. 22. 30.

Cyprian speaks thus to Virgins, you already enjoy part of the Blessing which one Day you shall fully possess in Glory; for you are not inferior to Angels, as long as you remain Chast and Pure. In like manner *Cassian* assures us, that no Vertue renders us so like to Angels as Chastity, by the help of which we live in Bodies, yet so, as if we carried no Flesh about us, being now transform'd by it into pure Spirits, according to these words of Saint *Paul*;
 * *You live no longer in Flesh but in Spirit.* And in this we are superior to the Angels themselves, who being Incorporeal, 'tis no wonder they live pure and spotless. Wherefore it certainly deserves far greater admiration, that Man in this frail and mortal Body, which continually Wars against the Spirit, shou'd live as if he had no Flesh about him.

Besides our Blessed Saviour, to shew how pleasing this Vertue is to him, when the Mystery of his Incarnation was to be accomplish'd, chose a Virgin for his Mother, who by Vow had consecrated her Virginitie to God, as many holy Fathers observe. Saint *John* also saw Virgins follow the Lamb *Jesus* upon Mount *Sion*, that is, in Heaven, whether soever he went, and heard them Sing a new Song to him which none else cou'd intone. † *I saw*, says he, *the Lamb upon Mount Sion, and one hundred and four and forty thousand with him, Singing as it were a new Song, and which none else cou'd Sing, but only these hundred and four and forty thousand, which he had Redem'd from the Earth. These are such as were never defil'd by Women, they are Virgins, who follow the Lamb wheresoever he go's.* Saint *Gregory* upon this place says, that Virgins are describ'd upon the Mountain with *CHRIST*; because the highest degree of Glory, is due to the Merit of Chastity.

Saint *John* the Evangelist is stil'd in Scripture, * *The Disciple whom Jesus lov'd*, and Saint *Hieron* and Saint *Anstin* assign his Virginitie, as the reason of this his Title. And the Holy Church in the Office of Saint *John*, says,
 † *That Jesus lov'd him more tenderly than the other Apostles; the prerogative of his Chastity claiming this privilege as it's due; for he was not only a Virgin when he call'd him to be an Apostle, but remain'd so all his Life.* And hence the words of the Proverbs are by some not unfitly

*Cass. l. 6. de
inst. remunt. c. 6.*

* Vos autem
in carne non
estis, sed in
spiritu.
Rom. 8. 9.

† Vidi (supra
montem Sion
Agnum, & cum
eo centum
quadraginta
quatuor millia,
& cantabant
quasi canticum
novum, & ne-
mo poterat di-
cere canticum,
nisi illa cen-
tum quadra-
ginta quatuor
millia, quia re-
dempti sunt
de terra. Hi
sunt qui cum
mulieribus
non sunt coin-
quinati, vir-
ginis enim
sunt. Hi sequ-
untur agnum
quocumque
ierit.

Apo. 14. 1. 3.

Gen. 1. 4. in

c. 13. l. 1. Reg.

* Discipulus
ille quem dili-
gebat *Jesus*.

Joan. 21. 7.

† Diligebat
autem eum *Je-
sus*, quoniam

specialis prerogativa castitatis ampliori dilectione fecerat dignum, quia virgo electus ab
ipso; virgo in ævum permansit.

Hieron. lib. 1. contra Jovinian.

apply'd

apply'd to him; * *He that loves Purity of Heart, shall by the grace of his Discourse, be in the Kings favor.* 'Twas upon the account of his Virginity that our Saviour lov'd him so well, as to permit him to sleep upon his own Breast, and that he bestow'd several favors upon him, which he did not give the rest of the Apostles. Hence it was that Saint Peter who had been Married, durst not ask of Jesus, when he wou'd eat his last Supper, but desir'd Saint John to propose the question for him. On Easter-day Blessed Magdalen bringing the news of Christs Resurrection, Saint Peter and Saint John ran immediately to the Monument, but Saint John got thither first. Another time when some of the Apostles were Fishing in a little Boat, upon the Sea of Tiberias, Jesus stood on the shore, and there was none of 'em besides Saint John that knew him, who told Saint Peter; † *Look yonder behold 'tis our Lord. There was none in the Company, says Saint Hierom, that was a Virgin except John; and therefore one Virgin knew another.* And what other reason was there but this, that mov'd our Saviour, by his dying words upon the Cross, to recommend his Mother to him, who, as Saint Hierom says, recommended his Virgin Mother, to his Virgin Disciple.

My intended brevity in this Treatise, in imitation of our Holy Founder, will not permit me to enlarge, and write a Panegrick upon Chastity; therefore I hasten to lay down the seven degrees thereof, which Cassian has deliver'd; since they serve as so many steps, to mount to the most sovereign Perfection of this Angelical Vertue. The first degree, is not to suffer our selves to be overcome, by any Impure thought or motion whatsoever. The second is, not to entertain such thoughts even for a moment only, but immediately fly from 'em, and remove the occasion of them. The third is, not to be mov'd at the sight of a Woman. This degree is more Perfect, than the two former, by reason of our frail and virious Nature, which is too apt to rebel upon such occasions. The fourth is, not to incourage, upon any account, the least unchast motion of our Body, when we are awake. The fifth teaches us, when we treat or study this matter, to do it with all tranquillity and purity of Mind, and keep our Imagination as steady and quiet as if we were studying of Architecture, or the art of Gardening; or any other subject of that nature. Saint Ignatius arriv'd to this degree of Perfection, at the very first

* Qui diligit
cordis mundi-
tiam, propter
gratiam labio-
rum suorum
habebit ami-
cum Regem.
Prov. 22, 11.

Joan. 13. 24.

Ibid. 10. 4.

Ibid. 21. 7.

† Solus virgo
virginem
Christum ag-
noscit, & dicit
Petro: Domi-
nus est. Hier.
ubi sup. Ma-
trem virginem
virginem com-
mendavit
Idem. ibid.

Cassian. Collat.
12. Abbat. Chre-
tem.

first beginning of his Conversion. The sixth, not to have in our sleep, any impure fancies or unchast dreams, which certainly is an argument of a pure Heart, as well as of a Memory free'd from all those filthy representations. Whereas on the contrary, impure illusions of the Night, tho' they happen without Sin, yet they prove, that the Sensual appetite is not yet subject to Reason, and that the Imagination still retains some of those bad ideas. The seventh, and last degree is a particular Grace, says *Cassian*, which God has bestow'd upon some few, as upon the Abbot *Serenus* and some other Saints; and consists in being free'd, both sleeping and waking, from all those motions of the Flesh, which nature alone uses to cause in us. Which shews that by Vertue of this Grace, our Concupiscence is subdu'd, and render'd so Peaceable and Obedient, that it seems to be restor'd, in some sort, to the happiness and priviledge, which Man enjoy'd in the state of Innocency. * *Destroying the Body of Sin in us*, as Saint *Paul* has it. This Grace works so powerfully in those, that have arriv'd at this last degree, that it removes that opposition, which Sin usually causes in us, and renders it of no force at all. They feel no disorder'd motions in their Body, nor any thing that tends that way, nay they live in a Body of Flesh as if they had no Flesh about 'em. Notwithstanding I will not venture to say, that these kind of alterations and motions in the Body, either in sleep or otherwise, are contrary to Chastity, even when 'tis in the greatest Perfection, since they are no more than a Natural effect, and consequently may happen to the greatest Saints. Yet God by a special Grace has been pleas'd to exempt some of his Servants from 'em, and rais'd 'em to the most sublime degree of Perfection. From others he has also remov'd all the uneasiness which these motions cause. And lastly he has been mercifully pleas'd to grant to others the Grace of appeasing, and suppressing without any difficulty, the rebellion of their Flesh so far, as that they enjoy'd a perpetual Peace: These are the Persons that live like Angels, whom we ought to propose to our selves for Imitation, as Saint *Ignatius* advises us in his Constitutions, by forcing our selves, † *To imitate their Angelical Purity*. And here 'tis to be observ'd, that the word *Force* includes more than a bare essay, endeavour, or labour. The Saint would have us offer violence to our selves in this case, and even to use our utmost endeavour, as we ordinarily do

† *Enitendo*
Angelicam pu-
ritatem imi-
tari.
P. 6. conf. c. 1.
§. 1.

† *Enitendo*
Angelicam pu-
ritatem imi-
tari.
P. 6. conf. c. 1.
§. 1.

do in the most difficult enterprizes. His meaning is, that we shou'd imploy all our forces, in order to make our selves Masters of this Angelical Vertue, and Exercise it early upon our own selves, by a constant application to the practise of Vertue, and particularly of Mortification. For tho' Chastity be the free gift of God, and plac'd above the reach of our endeavours, yet God himself requires, that we shou'd do as much as lies in us, in order to obtain it; our endeavours being as it were the price, by which it is to be purchas'd.

C H A P. II.

That to live Chast, we must necessarily Mortifie our selves, and keep a strict watch over our Senses, particularly our Eyes.

THE Ancient Fathers, taught by long experience, says Cassian, thought it impossible for Religious Persons, especially the Younger sort, to bridle and subdue the heat of Concupiscence, unless they had first been accusom'd to Deny and Mortifie their Will, by a perfect compliance, with Obedience: Saint Basil with other holy Fathers, go farther and require a concurrence of all Vertues, to obtain and preserve Chastity in it's Perfection; for in effect all other Vertues contribute to the getting of this one, and when got, do defend it. This is sufficiently treated throu'out this whole Work, and most of all in the second Tome; therefore Ile only speak at present of such means, as particularly serve to this end: The first of which is, that if we desire to get Chastity in Perfection, and to keep it in the same degree, we must guard very diligently all the avenues of our Soul, and chiefly our Eyes, the ordinary and most common passage of Evil to our Heart.

Saint Gregory writing upon that place of *Isay*, * *Who are these that fly like Clouds, and sit at their Windows like*

Doves.

Multis sicut
dem experi-
mentis edocti,
tradunt mona-
chos, & maxi-
me juniores,
ne voluptatem
quidem concu-
piscenz suae
refrenare pos-
se, nisi prius
mortificare
per obedientiam
suam didicerit
voluntatem
Cassian. l. 4. de
instit. renuns.
cap. 8.

Lib. 21. Mor.
cap. 2.
* Qui sunt isti,
qui ut nubes
voiant, & quasi
columbz ad
fenestras suas?
Isai. 60. 8.

Doves; compares the Just to Clouds; because they are above all Earthly things, and to Pigeons also, for as much as they are Recollected within themselves, and not carried away with the consideration of exterior things; but even learn by the help of consideration, not so much as to desire them. We find different effects in those who give a liberty to their Eyes; for they frequently desire what they see: As *David* did, who tho' he had frequently rais'd himself as a Cloud to Heaven, and employ'd much time in Divine Contemplation, yet by one single cast of his Eye, he fell into very unlawful Desires. * *Death*, says *Jeremy*, has entered by my Windows, † And my Soul is become a Prey to mine Eyes: Wherefore Saint *Gregory* gives us this wholesome Counsel, * Never to cast our Eyes, upon what is forbidden us to desire; for 'tis much to be fear'd, lest the Object shou'd Captivate our Hearts by our curiosity, and so, when we least think on't, we come unfortunately to be surpriz'd.

* Ascendit mors per fenestras nostras.

Jerem. 9. 21.
† Oculis meus depredatus est animam meam.

Thren. 3. 51.
* Intueri non decet, quod non licet concupiscere.
Greg. ubi sup.

† Pepigi fœdus cum oculis meis, ut ne cogitarem quidem de virgine.
Job. 31. 1.

This was the reason of *Job's* wise Precaution, † I have struck up a League with my Eyes, not to think upon a Virgin, upon which words, Saint *Gregory* the Great starts this Objection. What kind of treaty is this with his Eyes, in order to avoid thinking? Methinks he shou'd rather have acted this business with his Understanding and Imagination; for that but your Eyes, end there needs no farther treaty with them. To which this holy Doctor replies, and commends this League of *Job*, as a very wise and rational one. *Job* knew, says he, that the Eyes were the inlets to all the malice of the Heart; and that if he kept a strict guard upon them, and of his other Senses, his Interior wou'd be secure and out of danger. If you therefore wish to prevent all Evil thoughts, let your Eyes be modestly reserv'd, and strike up an agreement with them, never to look upon any thing, which is not permitted you to desire. Who wou'd not be astonish'd, says Saint *Chrysostom* upon this same place, that so great a Man as *Job*, who had made head against the Devil, fought hand to hand with him, and Triumph'd as well over all his Stratagems as his Power, shou'd not dare to look a Woman in the Face? He did this, add's the same holy Father, to teach the greatest proficients in Vertue, to keep a Restraint and Custody over themselves.

Serm. de continent. Joseph.

Saint *Ephrem* prescribes Temperance, Silence and a Modest custody of Eyes, as extremely conducing to the preservation of Chastity in it's Purity: For tho' you practice the two first, yet a neglect of the last, will indanger your Chastity. And as Water is lost, when the Conduit Pipe is broken, which instead of keeping it, lets it out; so when the Soul sallies out, at the Eyes and wanders about, Chastity will quickly be lost. Another Saint compares the sight of a Woman, to a poison'd Arrow; which no sooner wounds, but the Heart is seiz'd; and also to a spark of Fire, which lighting upon Straw, unless immediately put out, sets it all on Fire. In like manner those ill thoughts, caus'd by the sight of a Woman, bring along with 'em nothing but Fire and Confusion into the Soul, unless timely stifled and prevented.

Ephr. tom. 2. p. 226. c. 87. de variâ doct.

Syrus says, that *Hugh* Bishop of *Grenoble*, heard Womens Confessions every Day, for above fifty Years together, and convers'd with all sorts of Persons, who address'd themselves to him concerning their affairs, by reason of his great Sanctity. And yet he never look'd any Woman so much in the Face, as to know her by sight, except one, and this so slightly that he did not know whether she was Old or Young, Handsom or Ugly. This Saint us'd to say, that we ought to be extremely cautious in this point; for if we once give scope to our Eyes, we shall never be able to deny an admittance to bad thoughts into our Heart.

Abbas Anisoc. tom. 8. pag. 60. Bibl. 33. PP.

Saint *Bernard*, one Day stood still to look upon a Woman, without reflecting upon the Action, but taking himself in the Fact, he conceiv'd such an Indignation against himself, that he immediately went and stood up to the Neck in a frozen Lake, where he remain'd, till he was taken out half Dead.

In ejus Vit. l. 2. cap. 3.

C H A P. III.

That we ought to be very nice and careful, even in the least point of Chastity.

THE more excellent Chastity is in it self, the more it ought to be our care to conserve it: For generally speaking, in all Vertues we ought to be very cautious, even of the most minute things, that relate to them; since he * *That contains small ones, falls by little and little even into the greatest inconveniences.* But this Rule holds most of all in Chastity, where the least slip, may turn to a very great prejudice. The better a thing is in the esteem of the World, the more the least defect in it is taken notice of. This is most of all verified in Chastity, which contains within it self a greater delicacy than other Vertues do, and consequently sooner suffers a prejudice. Wherefore a holy Man very fitly compar'd Chastity to a Looking-glass, which is dull'd by the least breath, as Chastity is in like manner sullied by the least offence, and quite loses it's luster. Hence it is, that we ought to be very careful in preserving it's beauty, by a Mortification of our Senses; by rejecting an evil thought, as soon as it offers it self; and by carefully avoiding every thing, from which we may apprehend any danger. A flame leaves always more or less some mark behind it, where it has been, and tho' it do's not burn, yet it blackens the place in which it was. In the same manner, some things tho' they do not burn us, yet they blacken us, for as much as they create in our Souls, black and cloudy thoughts, repugnant to Chastity, and inciting the Body to Impurity.

'Tis an admirable saying of Saint Ignatius, that Chastity admits of no glosses or interpretations. No body must trust himself in this case, nor presume that he can go so far and no farther without danger: For how can any Man be secure of this? Yet suppose he were, I wou'd fain know whether he can promise himself not to transgress those bounds,

* Qui spernit modica, paulatim decidet. Eccl. 19. 1.

Father Giles, one of the first Companions of Saint Francis.

P. 6. Constitut. cap. 1. §. 1.

bounds, he has prescrib'd, since the least thought, is able to carry him farther, than he is aware of. When we walk upon slippery ground, we go very softly, and endeavour to pass only to such a determinate place; notwithstanding the weight of our Body, and the slipperiness of the ground, often carries us farther than we design'd. So fares it with us in the business of Chastity, every step we make, is upon slippery ground, and the corruption of Nature, clogs and hangs so heavy upon us, that it easily carries us beyond our mark. Infinite Chastity is so delicat and nice a Vertue, that the least thing wounds it, and therefore we ought to be extremely cautious of exposing it to the least danger. * *This is the rich Treasure which we carry in Earthen Vessels*, which if once broken, all is lost; therefore we ought to be the more attentive and vigilant, in blocking up every passage, by which Impurity may find a way to our Hearts.

* Habemus thesaurum illum in vasis fictilibus.
2 Cor. 4. 7.

We Read of a certain Religious Man, who tho' priviledg'd from Heaven with the gift of Chastity: Yet he never omitted his former care and moderation, both in his looks and words; and was extremely vigilant in avoiding the least occasion of unclean thoughts. The Religious of the same Monastery ask'd him once, why he stood so much upon his guard, since God had favor'd him with the gift of Chastity? To whom he answer'd thus, if in the smallest matters I endeavour to do what I ought, and as well as I can, God will give his Grace to carry me throu' greater: Whereas, shou'd I neglect the former, 'tis more than I know, whether Gods Grace will assist me in the latter; or I shou'd at least hereby deserve to be forsaken by him, and so fall into Sin. This is the reason why I keep continual watch over my self; for tho' the things seem small and inconsiderable in themselves, yet I am resolv'd to do what lyes in me, thereby the better to discharge my duty. *Sirius* says, that Saint *Thomas of Aquin*, after he had receiv'd the gift of Chastity, and been assur'd by an Angel that he shou'd never lose it, was not the less uneasie, when any Temptation accur'd against it; and made it his business, to avoid even the sight of a Woman; and banish'd far from him every object, from whence the least impression of Impurity might arise.

Father Rogers in the History of the Order of S. Francis, p. 2. l. 4. c. 6. 11.

Sup III 111
- 100 20 100
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- 100 20 100

If we desire to preserve Chastity unspotted, and in it's vigour, we must imitate these holy practices, or else we may justly fear that sad disaster which *Job* after he had

† *Pepigi* foras
cum oculis
meis, ut ne
cogitatem qui-
dem de virgi-
ne. Quam e-
nim partem
heberet in me
Deus desuper?
Job. 31. 1. & 2.

sayd, * *I have made a League with mine Eyes, never to think of a Woman, subjoins, for without this, what part will God have in me?* Which is as much as if he had sayd, if I am negligent in guarding my Senses, if I do not avoid all occasions of Evil, reject the first offer of impure thoughts, and make a Conscience of the smallest things in this matter, I shall presently give way to unlawful desires, and so forfeit and lose the Grace of God. The Devil acts in this business, as a thief that is going to break into a House, who finding the Windows too strait for himself to enter in, thrusts in a Boy, to open the Door on the inside. Bad suggestions, want of recollection, too much liberty of our Senses, and a thousand such like occasions, are the engines the Devil makes use of, to force a passage into our Soul. Hence we have an obligation of studying how to prevent, and avoid all such dangerous circumstances; for we can never be too cautious, in so ticklish a point as this is.

*Cass. lib. 6. de
instit. remunt.
cap. 7.
† Omnis au-
tem, qui in a-
gone conten-
dit, ab omni-
bus se abstinere.
1 Cor. 9. 25.*

Cassian applies these words of *Saint Paul* to our purpose, † *He that is to fight in the Lists, for this end observes a Diet before hand,* and discourses thus, if says he, those who are to run or wrastle at the Olympick Games, nicely abstain from any thing that may in the least weaken their Bodies; if they deny themselves all sorts of Victuals, that may do them the least harm; and continually give themselves to such exercises as improve their strength; if they proceed to wear plates of Lead upon their Reins, as well to increase their agility, as to prevent the slippery illusions of the Night, which do not a little cause a decay in their strength, and all this * *To gain a Corruptible Crown*; what ought we then to do in defence of our Chastity, which will procure us a Crown that is Everlasting?

‡ *Et illi qui-
dem ut cor-
ruptibilem co-
ronam accipi-
unt, nos autem
incorruptam,
ibid.*

C H A P.

C H A P. IV.

That the least Offence against Chastity, is to be told in Confession.

S AINT *Bonaventure*, speaking of Confession, lays down this Rule, which is very profitable and useful for all sorts of Persons. Several things may happen which may seem little and trivial in point of Chastity, but take care says the Saint, not to conceal 'em in your Confession, under the pretence that they are no Sin, or at least not a Venial one, which you are not oblig'd to Confess; for upon the neck of this, follow infinite disorders. The ruin of many a Soul has taken it's date from hence; God preserve you therefore from ever giving the Devil this advantage against you, for he'll desire no greater than this to destroy you, since 'twill immediately be seconded by a certain bashfulness, which being joyn'd with the other, will impose a belief upon you, that those things which really are sinful, or at least much to be doubted of, are not so in effect; and thus at last you'll grant your self a dispensation, from declaring any thing at all in Confession. Persons that are naturally inclin'd to Vertue, and very rarely commit Mortal Sin, are very subject to this vicious bashfulness, when they fall into any Sins of the Flesh. 'Tis then, that Pride and a desire of being esteem'd (two Vices rooted in our Nature) awake us, and make us believe, that we shall hereby lessen our credit, at least in the opinion of our Confessour, and so put us upon finding our reasons, why the thing we blush to own, should be no Mortal Sin; and consequently is not to be Confess'd under a strict obligation. But supposing we proceed to accuse our selves of it, yet we oftentimes so mince the matter, that our Confessour is at a loss, to know what we would be at; and we might as well have held our Tongue, as sayd what we did. For an accusation in Confession ought to be so clear, that the Confessour

*to specul.
discip.*

Confessour no sooner hears it, but he understands the grievousness of the Sin. And therefore to cover and lap up our Sin in so many doubts and excuses, that either the Sin, or at least the deformity of it, scarce appears; and those aggravating circumstances which are necessary to be express'd, being either palliated, or quite and clean omitted; makes it the very self same thing, as if we had not Confess'd the Sin at all: Now 'tis bashfulness, or rather Pride that blinds the Penitent, and leads him into this Error, of not Confessing in clear terms; which is moreover a sign, that he has no true sorrow for his faults; since he has not the courage to declare 'em as he shou'd do in Confession: For had he a real regret for his Sins, he wou'd not stick to Sacrifice that needless modesty to God, in order to satisfie for them. And I must needs say, that the bare repugnance we find, to accuse our selves of a fault,ought to make us suspect all those reasons, or plausible pretences, which dissuade us from revealing it; and 'tis worth our while thus to discover it, had we no other design therein, than barely to overcome the difficulty we feel, and take revenge upon our selves for it; and hereby prevent all farther domination, that either the World the Flesh or the Devil has got over our Conscience.

But that which renders this discovery still more necessary, is ignorance; which often happens in the matter of Chastity; for some think those things to be no Sin against it, which really are so: Other things are so dubious, that 'tis not an easie matter, positively to determine whether they be Mortal Sins or no; and yet we are oblig'd under Sin to Confess such Sins as these, as well as the former. If a simple Man doubts whether his fault be Mortal or no, he is to be made sensible that he has an obligation under Mortal Sin to accuse himself of it, which shou'd he omit, his Confession and Communion that wou'd follow, wou'd be both of 'em Sacrilegious. It happens sometimes that the Confessour himself, tho' never so able a Man, can scarce decide, whether the Sin be Mortal or Venial; how then shall the Penitent dare to take upon him to be a Judge in his own cause? And by determinating the fact he has done to be no Mortal Sin, give himself a discharge from Confessing it: This is too great a risque, especially when we find our selves inclin'd to smother the fault, or at least to diminish it, and make it appear less for a salvo
to

to our Modesty. For my part I wou'd not answer for a Penitent thus dispos'd. But some may say every Mans own Conscience is the best Judge in this case, and he that accuses himself of such small Sins as these in Confession, cannot have any remorse for them; being hereby hinder'd, from Confessing things of far greater consequence. Wou'd you venture then at the hour of your Death to pass such things over in silence? No certainly; wherefore take care, not to do it at present. For not only our Confessions, but all our other Actions ought to be done, as if we were a going to Dye. Saint Gregory says, * *That 'tis a sign of a good Soul, to find a fault where there is none*; on the contrary 'tis a sign of one very ill dispos'd, not to fear Sin, where there are grounds for such a fear.

* Bonarum
mentium est,
ibi etiam ali-
quo modo
culpam agnos-
cere, ubi cul-
pa non est.
Greg. epist. ad
Aug. Respons.
10.

Some will say, that they may lawfully do this to prevent scruples; to which as they imagine, my Doctrin very much leads; but I answer, that there's another trick of the Devils, couch'd in this objection, by which he the more easily cheats 'em. Such accusations as I spoke of, are not at all scrupulous; those who profess Piety accuse themselves of things far more inconsiderable, than what I mention'd, not out of necessity or scruple, but out of respect and veneration to the most Blessed Sacrament, which they are to receive after Confession. And some great Spiritualists reflecting upon the Purity, with which we are to approach the Holy Altar, advise us to accuse our selves of all things relating to Chastity, tho' in themselves they are no Sins at all. For Example thus, I accuse my self, Reverend Father, to have had some Temptations of Impurity; and if you think that you have been negligent in driving 'em away upon the first sight, or that you have entertain'd 'em a while (as it happens but too frequently to our corrupt Nature) then are you to declare how far that negligence was criminal. But if you believe that all this pass'd without any fault of yours, you may still accuse your self to have had evil thoughts, and humbly add, but by the Grace of God I hope they happen'd by no fault of mine; for I resisted 'em as much as layd in my power, and we ought to behave our selves after the very self same manner, as we are wont to do when we have any wicked suggestions against any Article of Faith. Wherefore the same Masters of Spirit, wou'd have us accuse our selves of the least thing against Chastity,
that

that I have hinted at in this Treatise; For Example, of that which happens to us in our sleep, which really is no Sin; by reason 'tis not voluntary in us. Nor that 'tis necessary to accuse our selves of these Night illusions, when we know that we have no ways given occasion to them before hand, nor consented to them when they happen'd; yet notwithstanding 'tis laudable to Confess 'em for our greater Humiliation; and the best and devoutest Persons being in the like circumstances, always Confess 'em before they go to Communion, out-of Respect to the Holy Sacrament of the Altar. Divines are wont to inquire, whether or no such an illusion, ought to hinder us from Communion? And they answer, that it wou'd be a far greater Respect in any one, if he shou'd abstain from it for one Day; unless some other lawful motive shou'd prevail, as a Scandal given to the whole Community; which might follow upon his abstaining from Communion, upon a Day when all the rest were oblig'd to it. In this circumstance, we may make use of this permission to Communicate, but in all others 'tis best to follow the Counsel I have before mention'd.

C H A P.

C H A P. V.

Of the Nature of Love; how violent and dangerous a Passion it is, and how much we ought to dread it.

LOVE is the most dangerous of all other Passions, it surpasses all the rest in force and violence, which as it renders the conquest thereof more difficult, so are we hereby more easily expos'd and drawn to ruin. Saint *Austin* to shew the power of Love, and how much we ought to fear it, makes use of two Examples in holy Writ; the first of which, is *Adam's* disobedience. What made *Adam*, says this Saint; break God's Command and Eat the forbidden Fruit? Was he so credulous as to fancy, that Eating it would make him like God; as the Serpent told *Eve*? No, 'tis not at all probable, that he who was endow'd with so much Wisdom, should be so blinded as to believe such an improbability. This is what the Apostle says, † *Adam was not seduc'd; but 'twas the Woman who being seduc'd, was the cause of his fall.* 'Twas *Eve* therefore and not *Adam* that was deceiv'd; for he gave no credit to the Serpent. Hence Almighty God ask'd *Eve*: * *Why hast thou done this?* To whom she reply'd, *the Serpent deceiv'd me and I did Eat.* *Adam* when ask'd the same Question, did not answer, the Woman whom thou gavest me did deceive me, and I did Eat; but only sayd, † *The Woman, whom thou didst assign me for my Companion, gave me some of the Fruit of the Tree, and I did Eat it.* His Passion was so great towards her, that rather than afflict her, he comply'd with what she desir'd of him; so that 'twas Love that deceiv'd him. Nor was this a brutish sensual Love (for as yet he was a stranger to all Rebellion of the Flesh) but an effect of an easie kind Nature, which sometimes makes us offend God, rather then displease a Friend. This was the

Tom. III.

E c

Gate

*Aug. l. 11. sup.
Genes. ad lit.
cap. 4.*

† *Adam non
est seductus,
mulier autem
seducta in prae-
varicatione
fuit.
1 Tim. 2. 14.*

* *Quare hoc
fecisti? serpens
decepit me, &
comedi.
Gen. 3. 13.*

† *Mulier quam
dedisti mihi
sociam, dedit
mihi de ligno,
& comedi.
Ibid. 12.*

Gate by which Sin, Death, and all those other Miseries and Misfortunes which we unhappily ly under, enter'd into the World.

The other Example, is *Salomon's Idolatry*. What was it, says Saint *Austin*; that made *Salomon* an Idolater? Certainly the wisest of Men cou'd never be so stupid, as to place Divinity in an Idol, or think it worth his while to Worship it. There must be then some other cause, why he offer'd Incense to them. Wou'd you know what it was? 'Twas Love; as the Scripture positively sets down in these words. † *He lov'd a great many Women that were Strangers and Gentils, concerning whom God had given this Command to the Children of Israël, none of yee shall Marry any of these Women, nor shall any of their People Esponse your Daughters: For certainly they will pervert yee, and make yee Worship their Gods. Salomon notwithstanding lov'd 'em most passionately, and in his Old Age he was so debauch'd by them, as to Adore their Strange Gods. Salomon did not obey God's Orders, and therefore what God had foretold happen'd to him. For most of his Concubines differing from one another in their way of Worship, he order'd 'em to have particular Idols set up, whom they and he together might Adore and Sacrifice unto. * Nor, says Saint *Austin*; that *Salomon judg'd their Idols worthy of Adoration, but being besotted with Love, he was afraid to offend those Women, whom he was so passionately fond of, as to Idolize them in his Heart.**

The Saints and Directors in a Spiritual Life, taught by these two sad Examples, and many more of the like nature, advise us to stand continually upon our guard, against this so dangerous a Passion, and against all events which may occasion it. Nor wou'd they have us imagine, that Love, which seems most remote from sense, and founded only upon Vertue and Merit, is free from danger. For tho' Vertue be pretended on both sides, tho' the parties be good and innocent that ingage in such a Love, with hopes of a Spiritual advancement from it, yet there is still some cause left to fear, and a Man can never be too much upon his guard. The reason is; because all holy Doctors agree, particularly the Seraphical Saint *Bonaventure*, that Spiritual Love easily degenerates into that, which is Carnal and Sensual. And as sometimes the best and purest Wine, as the Prophet *Isay* says, † *Is mix'd with Water,*

† Adamavit mulieres alienigenas multas... de gentibus, super quibus, super quibus dominus dixit Dominus filiis Israël: Non ingredimini ad eas, neque de illis ingredientur ad vestras: Certissime enim avertent corda vestra, ut loquamini Deos earum. His itaque copulatus est Salomon ardentissimo amore... Cumque jam esset senex, deprecaturum est cor ejus per mulieres, ut sequeretur Deos alienos. 3 Reg. 11. 1. 2.

* Ne suas delicias quibus deperibat atque diffuebat, contristaret. Aug. ubi sup.

Bonav. com. 2. apusc. l. 2. de profect. vel. c. 27. † Vinum tuum mixtum est aqua. Isaiæ 1. 22.

and so loses all it's goodness: So Spiritual Love tho' a great cordial of it self, yet 'tis often spoil'd, and adulterated by other mixtures, from whence we may gather, how craftily the Devil drops his Baits to deceive us, and bring us to his pleasure. In this case the Devil acts like the Bridegroom of *Cana in Galilee*, who told his Steward that waited at the Marriage Feast, * *This was the custom to serve in the best Wine first, and after the Guests were well warm'd to bring in worse.* The Devil would make us believe, when we ingage in such a Friendship, that there is no other design in it, but Vertue only; that Piety is the only cause of our correspondence, and that an advancement in good, is the only motive why we ingage our selves in this particular familiarity. But when once the ingagement is made, and both Hearts are taken with one another, then the Devil shews his cloven Foot, then his malice appears, and we perceive that all these their entertainments, serv'd him to deceive us the more handsomly. Nor do's he suffer a Person to remain long in this Error; tho' he thinks not the time long, which he employs upon this project, if he can at last but compass the end of his design, which is to change Chast and Vertuous Love, into that of Fleth and Blood. How many, says the same Saint *Bonaventure*, have begun their Friendship by Devotion, pretending nothing else by it, but the service of God and their own Salvation? And perhaps this was their real meaning at first; yet afterwards that Vertuous and Holy Friendship, has by little and little degenerated, and entertainments not altogether Spiritual have crept in: † *And so what was begun Spiritually, unfortunately ended Carnally.*

Gerſon relates a Story of a Holy Man, no less commendable for his Learning, than Vertue, who having often treated with a Young Woman of great Sanctity, and having had many Pious Discourses with her, came at last to conceive such a violent affection for her, that he could not refrain from making her very frequent and very long Visits, and had her, tho' absent, always in his thoughts, and tho' he fear'd so great a tye of affection as this, was not intirely from God, notwithstanding, since he had no bad intention, in what he did, as he own'd himself (in which particular many are deluded and blinded) he was so far over-seen, that he did not believe there was any harm at all therein, nor that the Devil had any hand in it. Nay, he persisted in

*Bonav. proces.
6. relig. c. 16.*

* Omnis homo primum bonum vinum bibit; & cum inebriatus fuerit, tunc id, quod deterius est.
Joan. 2. 10.

† Cum spiritus ceperitis, carne consummemini.
Gal. 3. 3.

this Error, till being once oblig'd to take a long journey, he found a very great difficulty in leaving her, and that his kindness for her, was not so Spiritual as he imagin'd. So that had not God made use of this journey, to take him out of the occasion, there might have been great danger of his falling into very great disorders. The same *Gerson*, upon this subject, speaking of the dangerous intrigues of Love, says that Charity is often mistaken, and that all is not Gold that glisters; and add's that a holy Man us'd to say, that nothing caus'd so much diffidence and fear in him as Love; tho' towards Persons of great Sanctity, and eminent Vertue. And to this purpose he cites these words of the Wise Man; † *There is a way that seems right to a Man, and yet it leads to Death*, and concludes, such is the way of which I spoke.

† Est via quæ
videretur homi-
ni recta, &
novissima ejus
ducunt ad
mortem.
Prov. 16. 25.

CHAP. VI.

Of certain remedies against all Temptations to Impurity.

IN the fourth Treatise of the Second Tome, I hinted at several remedies against these kinds of Temptations; but in this place I'll treat of them more at large. The first that presents it self is Prayer, recommended to us by the Saints, as the most soverain remedy against all sorts of Temptations; and taught us also by the Son of God himself; when he gave this Counsel and Admonition to his Apostles; * *Watch and Pray that yee enter not into Temptation*. Venerable *Bede* says, that as a noise and out-cry makes Thieves run away, and causes our Neighbours to come to succour us, so the voice of Prayer makes the Devils fly, and calls the Saints and Angels to our assistance. We Read in the Life of Saint *Bernard*, that a dishonest Woman finding him all alone, wou'd have forc'd him to have been naught with her, and not finding any other remedy so near at hand, to deliver himself from the danger, cry'd out Thieves, Thieves.

* Vigilate &
orate, ut non
intretis in ten-
tationem.
Matth. 26. 41.
Beda in cum
loc. Matth.

In Vit. S. Bern.

Theives. If the Voice of one Man in a fright, is so powerful against Theives, what force must we not allow to earnest Prayers, against our invisible Enemies, who would rob our Souls of Grace? And how can we choose but hope, that they will soon betake themselves to flight, when once we begin to call upon God for help?

A frequent Meditation also of the Passion, and putting our selves in the Wounds of our Saviour, is the best of remedies against all suggestions to impurity. † *There is no remedy so powerful*, says Saint *Austin*, *against the heat of Concupiscence, as the remembrance of my Saviour's Passion; in all my difficulties, I never found any thing so efficacious, as the Wounds of CHRIST, in those I rest secure, and awake with a pure and quiet Conscience.* A grave Doctor observes, that the Gospel, speaking of the Wound in our Saviours Side, do's not say that CHRIST was Wounded in the Side, but, * *That a Souldier open'd his Side with a Lance*, as if the Holy Scripture would signifie to us, that the way to JESUS's Heart is open, and that we ought to retire thither, as † *Into the holes of a Rock, and the caverns of a Wall.* Saint *Bernard* proposes the same remedy to us in this manner; as soon as you feel any Temptation of Impurity, apply your self to think of the Passion of the Saviour of the World, and make this following Act. * *My God is fix'd to a Cross, and shall I admit of these most unlawful Pleasures?* Thus the trusty *Urias* when coming from the Army, to give *David* an account of the Siege of *Rabba*, wou'd not so much as rest his wearied Body by the way, but answer'd thus to *David*, when he ask'd him the reason of it, † *The Ark of God, and the People of Israël and Juda, are still in the Camp; Joab my General, with a great many more of your Majesties Servants, Sleep upon the Ground, and shall I go Eat, Drink and Sleep by my Wife. I swear by your Sacred Life and my own, that I will never do it.* Let us imitate his Zeal, and say as he did, Lord, you are fastned to a Cross, to satisfy by your own sufferings for Mans Sinful Pleasures, I am resolv'd therefore not to give my self up to that Pleasure which cost you so dear.

There be others, who when they are Tempted in this kind, help themselves by remembering in general the four last things, as the Wise Man advises, * *In all your Actions remember your last things, and you will never Sin.* Several

also

† Nullum tam potens est, & tam efficax medicamentum contra ardorem libidinis, sicut mors redemptoris mei.

Aug. in manuali c. 23.

In omnibus rebus non invenit tam efficacius remedium quam vulnera Christi. In illis dormio securus, & revivisco intrepidus. Ibid.

* Unus militum lancea latus ejus aperuit.

Joab. 19. 34. In foraminibus petre, in caverna materice.

Cant. 2. 14. * Deus meus pendet in voluptatibus, & ego voluptati operam dabo? Bern. in serm. honesta vir.

† Arca Dei, & Israël, & Juda habitas in papilionibus, & dominus meus Joab, & servi domini mei

super faciem terre manent; & ego ingrediar domum meam, ut comedam, & bibam, & dormiam cum uxore mea? per salutem tuam, & per salutem animæ tuæ non faciam rem hanc. Reg. 11. 11.

* In omnibus operibus tuis memorare novissimam tuam, & in æternum non peccabis. Eccl. 7. 40.

Greg. l. 9. Mor.
c. 36.

* Descendant
in infernum
virentes.
Psal. 34. 16.

also make use of the consideration of Hell in particular, and seriously weigh that saying of Saint Gregory; pleasure is Momentary, but the punishment due to it is Eternal. And without doubt * *To descend alive into Hell*, by an Act of Faith, and to consider the Torments there, which shall never have an end, but last as long as God shall be God; is a means very proper to prevent our falling into Sin. There are others also who find much comfort and assistance from the contemplation of Eternal Glory; by reflecting what folly and madness it is, to lose that and God for all Eternity, only for a Moments Pleasure; and to fail to do those things which God invites us to, and to which he has inseparably annex'd such glorious rewards; by performing what the Devil solicites us unto, and which will infallibly be punish'd by endless pains. Others find much profit from the consideration of Death, and the last Judgment: All these considerations are very good; and every one would do well to make use of that, which he finds to move him most. Sometimes one, sometimes another will make a more lively impression upon us, so that it will be no small advantage, to put 'em all in practise now and then.

To make the Sign of the Cross, upon our Fore-head and Heart, and earnestly to invoke the Holy Name of Jesus, is also a remedy no less profitable than comfortable. The effects of this have been wonderful, and Histories are full of the Miracles, which God has wrought by this means. A Devotion also to the Blessed Virgin, is no less advantageous than these others in all our difficulties. Therefore no body ought to fail in this, but fly to her with confidence in all their necessities; it being impossible, that she who carried the Eternal Mercy nine Months in her Bowels, shou'd not be most Merciful her self. She is the Mother of Mercy, the Advocate of Sinners, whom she loves most tenderly; knowing how much her dear Son lov'd 'em, and how much they cost him. Nay, she knows moreover, that Sinners were the occasion of the Eternal Words taking Flesh upon him in her Sacred Womb, and of her becoming thereby the Mother of God. For this reason her tenderness increases towards 'em, and she intercedes the more willingly to her Son for them; from whom she obtains whatsoever she pleases. For what is it that a Son can refuse his Mother; especially such a Son, to such a Mother? This made Saint Bernard to cry out;

* If

* If there be one in the whole World, O Sacred Virgin, that can say you fail'd to succour him, after he call'd upon you in necessity, let him speak no more of your Mercy. Now if a recourse to the Blessed Virgin be very profitable in all our troubles and temptations in general, it must certainly be much more, in what relates to the Vertue of Chastity in particular. For the being her self most Pure, and Immaculate; and a Virgin by preeminence; she is particularly inclin'd to shew her care of those, who call upon her in order to maintain their Purity. Some Doctors speaking of the Baptist's extraordinary Purity, which he always kept free from the least stain of Sin, ascribes it to the Visit our Blessed Lady made Saint Elizabeth, and to her three Months stay with her. † This Visit, says Saint Ambrose, related no less to his Soul than to his Body; for the Blessed Virgins acquaintance with her Cousin Elizabeth, was not the only thing that kept her so long at Hebron, But the advantage so great a Prophet was to reap from thence, was partly the cause of her stay. For if upon the first arrival the Baptist was Sanctified, and leap'd for joy in his Mothers Womb; if upon the first Salutation Saint Elizabeth was fill'd with the Holy Ghost; what benefit do you think, continues Saint Ambrose, did three Months Presence, yield both to the Mother and to the Son? Father Avila says that he himself has seen several wonderful effects of this Devotion to our Lady in divers Persons, who us'd to say some Prayers in memory of that Purity, in which the Blessed Virgin her self was Conceived, and of that also, with which she Conceived and brought forth the Saviour of the World; for these Persons have been freed by this Devotion, from filthy Temptations, which had a long time tormented 'em. Wherefore those praises which the Holy Church Sings, in honor of our Lady are very proper for this effect:

God's Virgin Mother Chast,

Whose Meekness all surpass:

Our Sins being all Exil'd,

Render us Chast and Mild.

Whilst we thus celebrate her Virginity and Purity, we at the same time, do in a manner ask her to obtain Purity of Heart for us, that we may be the more pleasing both to her, and to her Blessed Son.

Devotion likewise to the Saints, and their holy Reliques is another excellent remedy. *Caesarius* relates a passage to this

* sileat misericordiam tuam Virgo beata, si quis est, qui invocatum te in necessitatibus suis, sibi meminerit deesse. Bern. serm. 4. de Assumpt.

† Non enim sola familiaritatis est causa, quod diu remansit, sed etiam sancti vultus prospectus. Ambros. l. 2. sup. Luc. c. 9.

M. Avila c. 4. super Audi filia, &c.

Post partum Virgo inviolata permansisti, Dei Genitrix intercede pro nobis. Virgo singularis inter omnes mitis, Non culpis solutos, Mites fac & castos.

Lib. 18. Dial. c. 68.

this purpose, and says, that he had it from the Person it happen'd unto, one *Bernard*, afterwards a *Cistercian* Monk, who whilst he was yet a Secular, being in a journey, had several impure thoughts suggested to his mind, which he did not so very soon endeavour to drive away from him, nor resist the Temptations with that speed he shou'd have done. Upon this a Reliquary, in which were some of the Reliques of Saint *John* and Saint *Paul*, and which he always us'd to carry about his Neck, began to give him several small strokes upon his Breast. But not knowing what it meant, and searching no farther into the matter, he still entertain'd his bad thoughts, till another object, which he met withal, diverted him, and made the others cease, which was no sooner done, but the Reliquary ceas'd striking him upon the Breast. Soon after, the same Temptation set upon him again, and the Holy Reliques began to renew their strokes, thereby to mind him of banishing these impure thoughts out of his Heart. Here he began to enter into himself, and with the assistance of God's Grace, he courageously overcame the Temptation.

'Tis also a Devotion no less commendable, than powerful against unchast thoughts, frequently to prostrate before the Blessed Sacrament, and to beg God's Grace to be able to overcome them. But above all, there is nothing contributes so much to the obtaining of this Grace, as frequent Communion; since our Saviour himself, * *Has prepar'd that Table against all those who Persecute us*. And all Saints and Holy Writers agree, that the Blessed Sacrament is not only an extraordinary remedy against all Temptations in general, but particularly soverain against impurity; it restrains and abates Concupiscence the fuel of Sin, and quenches our sensual desires, as Water do's Fire. And hence it is, that Saint *Cyril*, with some other Holy Fathers (as I have already observ'd in another place) apply that passage of *Zachary* to this adorable Sacrament of the Altar, † *Wherein do's it's goodness and beauty consist, but in it's being the Bread of the Elect, and Wine that produceth Virgins?*

* Parasti in conspectu meo mensam adversus eos qui tribulant me.
Psal. 12. 6.

Fomes peccati.

† Quid enim bonum ejus est, & quid pulchrum ejus, nisi frumentum electorum, & vinum germans Virgines?
Zach. 9. 17.

C H A P. VII.

*That Penance and Mortification of our Flesh,
is a very good remedy against all Tempta-
tions to Impurity.*

† **W**E are, says Saint Hierom, to quench the
Fiery Darts of the Devil by rigorous
Fasts and long Watchings. Thus he did
himself, thus did Saint Hilarion, who,
as the same Saint writes of him, when
he found himself troubl'd with any Temptation of the Flesh,
or any bad thought that inclin'd that way, he presently grew
into a rage against his own Body, and thus spoke to it,
wretch that thou art, Ile soon put a stop to thy Rebel-
lion, Ile punish thee with hunger and thirst, lay many a
heavy load upon thee, and by exposing thee to violent
heats and colds, teach thee rather to think of necessities
than sensuality. The Saints very earnestly recommend this
remedy to us, some by their Words, some by their Practices,
to the end that the Flesh may not Rebel against the
Spirit.

We Read in the Chronicles of Saint Francis, that a
Secular Man ask'd a good Religious, why Saint John
Baptist, having been Sanctifi'd in his Mothers Womb, shou'd
live in the Desert, and lead such a strange kind of Penitential
Life as he did? The good Religious answer'd him, by first asking
this question, pray why do we throw Salt upon Meat that
is fresh and good? To keep it the better, and to hinder it
from Corruption, reply'd the other. The very same answer
I give you, says the Religious, concerning the Baptist; he
made use of Penance as of Salt, to preserve his Sanctity
from the least corruption of Sin; and as the Holy Church
Sings of him, * *That the Purity of his Life, might not be tar-
nish'd with the least breath of reproach.* If in time of Peace
and when we have no Temptation to fight against, 'tis very

Tom. III.

F f

much

† Ardentes
diaboli sagittæ
ieiuniorum, &
vigiliarum ri-
gore extingui-
endæ sunt.
Hier. Ep. ad
Euriam.

In the Hist.
of the Ord.
S. F. 1. p. 6. 7.
chap. 32.

* Ne levi sal-
tem macula
vitam Famine
posses.

3. Thom. 2. 2.
q. 155. art. 1. &
3.
Arist. 1. Ethic.
cap. 15.

much to our purpose, to Exercise our Bodies by Penance and Mortification, with how much more reason, ought we to do so in time of War, when encompass'd with Enemies on all sides? Saint Thomas following Aristotles opinion, says, that the word Chastity, is deriv'd from Chastise, forasmuch, as by Chastising the Body, we subdue the Vice opposite to Chastity; and also adds, that the Vices of the Flesh, are like Children, who must be whipp'd into their duty, since they cannot be lead to it by reason.

* Melius est
eis stomachum
dolere, quam
mentem.
Hier. ubi. sup.

But suppose we shou'd by this ill treating of our Body, by Fastings and other Austerities, prejudice our Health, Saint Hierom says, * *'Tis better the Body shou'd be Sick than the Soul*; and that our legs shou'd rather shiver and tremble with weakness, than that our Chastity shou'd stagger and be ready to fall. Notwithstanding this, discretion is to be us'd in this point. Mortification is to be measur'd by our strength, and squar'd, accordingly as the greatness of the Temptation, and danger shall require. When the Temptation is neither great, nor scarce dangerous, then we need not employ all our forces against it. But if this intestine War be so violent, as to threaten destruction to our Chastity, then without question we are not to spare our Body, but treat it as an Enemy and resolutely risque all, to save our Soul. Physicians say, † *That violent Distempers must have violent Remedies*: If they practise this upon Sick Bodies, we ought in like manner, and with more reason to practise it upon the Feavers and Distempers of our Soul; since they are sometimes more violent, and always more dangerous than those of our Body.

† Extremis
morbis extre-
ma adhibenda
sunt remedia.

Spiritual Men, handling this matter, observe two causes or sources, from whence these Temptations proceed. Sometimes they arise from the Body it self, and by it are communicated to the Soul, as it commonly happens in Young People, and such as live at a good Table, and enjoy a perfect health. In this case, the Body is to be Mortifi'd and rudely dealt withal; because the want thereof is the source of the Evil. Sometimes also they proceed from the Soul, the Devil being not a little instrumental therein, and communicate themselves to the Body. And this may be known diverse ways. First, when we find that we are more troubl'd with bad Thoughts and impure Representations, than with the Rebellion of the Flesh; or when we never have this Rebellion, but totally dependant of such previous thoughts,

Thoughts, which sometimes are very quick and lively, even in the most Mortifi'd Bodies. And therefore Saint *Hierom*, tho' his Body was much extenuated by age and Penance, had frequent Ideas of the *Roman* Ladies, who yet had never permitted himself to assist (tho' but in fancy only) at their Ball's and other Divertisements. Besides, when these Thoughts happen without any occasion given, or when we least desire them, without respect either to time of Prayer, or to the holiness of the place we are in; when they are so strange, so lively and impetuous, as that a Man never before heard or imagin'd the like; lastly, when we think that they speak to us interiorly a language altogether unknown, we are to suppose that they do not proceed from our selves, but from some other cause, and look upon it as a Persecution of the Devil; who makes our Flesh the Theater of this War, so that we are to use some means to free our selves. And here it is, that we are to make use of remedies, much different from the first; and all Saints recommend some laudable diversion or employment, as an excellent remedy; for by a vigorous application of our mind thereunto, we shall soon blot out all the former filthy Representations, which those ill Thoughts had form'd in our Mind. For this very reason Saint *Hierom*, as he himself owns, apply'd himself to learn *Hebrew*, in which he became so great a Proficient.

The same Saint *Hierom* tells us of a Young *Grecian*, who was Religious in a Monastery in *Egypt*. This Young Man much troubl'd with Temptations of the Flesh, and having in vain endeavour'd by Fastings and other Austerities to overcome them, discover'd at last to his Superiour the state of his Soul, who after he had comforted him, took this expedient to cure him: He gave this Commission to an Ancient, grave and severe Monk, that he shou'd make it his business very frequently to contradict this Young Monk, and to chide and reprehend him very severely, and after this, to come and complain to him, as if the other had offended him. This Old Man letting no occasion slip of quarreling with the Young one, acquitted himself of his charge extreamly well. Besides this, he wou'd carry to the Superiour not only his own complaints, but also those of other Religious, who fail'd not to say, according to the item given them, that the Young Monk was in Passion: Whom the Superiour always severely reprehended, and impos'd some

*Hier. Ep. 4. ad
Rust. Men.*

hard Penance upon him, as if he had been really faulty. This happening every Day, the Young Religious was extremely troubl'd, to see himself thus roughly dealt withal, and so many false Testimonies daily rais'd against him. He therefore continually had his recourse to Almighty God, and laying all his Miseries before him, begg'd with Tears, that he wou'd take him into his Protection, since all the World forsook him, and did nothing else but Persecute him. Notwithstanding this, all the Religious still continu'd, so to torment him, that there was no mischief done in the House, which was not immediately charg'd upon him, by two or three Witnesses, in such sort that he had every Day new Reprehensions and Penances given him.

This having lasted about a Year, one of the Religious ask'd him how he found himself as to those Temptations of the Flesh, which formerly us'd to be very irksome to him. * *What, says he, 'tis scarce permitted me to Live, and can you think that my thoughts can be employ'd upon Sinful Pleasures?* 'Tis a great while since all those ideas have been quite worn out and lost: Thus it was that the Superiour cur'd him, by finding a means how to banish the old ideas, by introducing new ones, which were more troublesome and less dangerous. Here Saint *Hieron* takes occasion to praise our Living in Communities, for had this Young Man, says he, been alone, who wou'd have help'd him to overcome this Temptation? In other places he speaks of the advantages those Religious who live together, have above Hermits, and add's these reasons why 'tis better to live under the Obedience of a Superiour, † *Because here, says he, you do not do your own Will, you Eat what is set before you, you take such Cloaths as are given you, you do the task that is set you, you go weary to Bed, and are oblig'd to rise before you have Slept enough.* Thus whilst Obedience finds you with continual Work; bad thoughts will find no room in your Heart, and you will not have time to think upon any thing, but what Obedience appoints you.

Saint *Francis* sayd, he knew by experience, that the Devils fled from those that led severe and Penitential Lives; and on the contrary, willingly set upon those that pamper'd their Flesh. And Saint *Athanasius* writes, that Saint *Antony* us'd to say to his Monks, * *Believe me Brethren, the Devil is affraid of the Prayers of good Men, he dreads their Watchings, Fasts and Voluntary Poverty.* Saint *Ambrose* applying

* *vivere mihi non licet, quomodo fornicare licebit?*
Hieron. ibid.

† *Ut non facias quod vis, comedas quod iuberis, vestias quod acciperis, & operis tui penum perfolvas, lassus ad stratum venias, nec dum expleto somno surgere compellaris.*
Id. Reg. Monac. quam colligit scriptis D. Hieron. Lupus de Ovis veto. c. 2.

In Chr. S. Frau. l. p. l. 7. c. 7.

* *Mihi credite, dicebat, fratres, pertimescit Satanas piorum vigiliis, orationibus, jejuniis, voluntariam paupertatem.*
Athanas. in vita S. Anton.

to this subject, these words of the Psalmist; * *I have covered my Soul with Fasting, and my Cloathing is Hair-cloth.* says, that Fasting and other rigors us'd to the Body, are very good defensive Weapons, against all the assaults of the Devil. Our Saviour taught us the self same Doctrine; for having cast out the unclean Spirit, which his Disciples could not do, he told 'em, † *This kind of Devil cannot be cast out but by Prayer and Fasting.* You see how he joyns Fasting with Prayer, as the most proper means to terrifie the Impure Spirit. In the same manner, when we find our selves press'd by Temptations to Impurity, 'tis not sufficient to fall immediately to our Prayers, and there make Acts and Resolutions opposite to the Temptation, but we must add thereunto Mortification, Exercise, or some severity upon our Flesh; yet so, as that we do nothing in this kind, without the direction of our Confessorious, or Superiour.

A Religious Man that was much troubl'd with such Temptations as these, one Day asking Holy Brother *Giles*, how he might be freed from them: He gave him this Answer, pray Brother what wou'd you do to a Dog that's going to bite you? I wou'd take up either a Stick or a Stone, says the other, and not leave beating and pelting him, till I made him run away. Very well, reply'd the good Brother, do the same to your Flesh, which is always a barking at you, and the Temptation will soon fly from you. This kind of remedy is so efficacious, that the least Pain or Mortification you put your self to, will suffice sometimes either to drive the Temptation quite away, or at least to divert it. For Example, you need do no more then hold your Arms stretch'd out in form of a Cross, kneel down, beat your Breast, pinch your self, give your self a dozen strokes with a Discipline, stand upon one Leg, or the like.

'Tis sayd in the Life of Saint *Andrew*, that whilst he was at *Corinth*, one *Nicolas*, an Old Man, came to him, and told him that he had led a most dissolute Life, and that very lately he went to an Infamous Publick-house, with an Intention to offend God, having the Holy Gospels about him: The Courtisane to whom he made his address, thrust him rudely from her, and desir'd him not to come nigh her, for she saw something extraordinary in him which affrighted her very much. The Old Man added that this accident made him enter into himself, and that now he

was

* Operui in
jejunio ani-
mam meam.
& posui vesti-
mentum me-
um cilicium.
Psal. 68. 12.

† Hoc genus
in nullo potest
exire, nisi in
oratione &
jejunio.
Marc. 9. 29.
Chron. 5. Fro-
1. p. 1. 7. c. 7.

was come to him for a remedy against his frailty, and against that vicious habit in which he had grown Old. The Saint mov'd with his sad condition, betook himself to Prayer, Fasted five Days together, beseeching God that he wou'd Pardon this Poor Mans Sins, and make him Chast for the future; when the five Days were done, which he had spent in continual Prayer for this effect, he heard a Voice from Heaven say to him; I grant your Petition for the Old Man, but my Will is at the same time, that as you have Fasted for him, so he Fast also for himself, and afflict his Body if he desires to be Sav'd. The Apostle in Obedience to this Voice, injoyn'd the Old Man to Fast, and all the Christians to Pray for him, who returning home distributed all his Goods to the Poor, macerated his Body, and Fasted six Months upon Bread and Water. Having perform'd this Penance he died, and God reveal'd to Saint Andrew, who at that time was not at Corinth, that he had shewn him Mercy.

We Read in the *Spiritual Meadow*, that an Hermit addressing himself to one of the Old Fathers of the Desert, discover'd unto him how violently he was tormented with a thousand Impure Thoughts, whereupon the Old Father told him, that he had never found any trouble of that Nature. This Answer scandaliz'd the Hermit, who presently departed without saying a word more. But finding another of the Ancient Fathers, he sayd thus to him, I cannot but tell you what such a one sayd to me, which was, that he was never troubl'd with any Impure Thoughts, at which I cannot refrain from being scandaliz'd, for I think this a thing impossible, and absolutely above the force of Nature. Since so great a Servant of God has sayd this, reply'd the other, without doubt he has his reasons for it; and therefore go back to him again, ask his Pardon, and he'll satisfie you in the matter. The Young Hermit follow'd his Counsel, and meeting with the Holy Man, begg'd his Pardon for his late rude departure, and desir'd at the same time to know, how it was possible that he shou'd never have been tormented with Impure Thoughts. The reason is this, says the Holy Father; because, since I came to the Desert, I have liv'd upon Bread and Water, nor did I ever Drink or Sleep any more, than what was barely necessary to support Nature.

but never enough to satisfy it's desires. Upon this account God has been pleas'd by a special priviledge, to exempt me from those Temptations, which you feel so tormenting.

CHAP. VIII.

Of several other Remedies against Temptations to Impurity.

SAINTE Gregory says, that Temptations to Impurity, and wicked thoughts which often torment Men, are sometimes the effect of a wicked Life, and remain as a Punishment of those vicious habits, which they had before contracted. Wherefore this kind of Fire, is to be quench'd by Tears, and by bitterly Weeping and Bemoaning our past follies. Saint Bonaventure says, that 'tis a very good remedy against these Temptations, to look upon em as a due Chastisement for our past disorders; and by an Humble and Patient submission to them, say with Josephs Brethren, * *We deserve to suffer all this; because we have Sinned against our Brother.* God is mov'd with Mercy, when Man acknowledges that he deserves the Punishment, which the Divine Justice inflicts upon him; the same Father also observes, and Holy Scripture tells us, that the People of Israel, made frequent use of this means, to obtain their Pardon from God. Another admirable means to obtain Gods Assistance in all our Temptations, and particularly in Impure ones, and to make us come off always Conquerors; is to distrust our own strength, and put all our Confidence in God. I have already spoken of this, and I shall speak more hereafter, when I come to treat of the fear of God: So that at present it shall suffice to say, that generally speaking, Humility is a sovereign Antidote against all manner of Temptations. The Vision which Saint Antony saw is very common and famous. Thus it was. One Day he

Greg. l. 9. Moral.
c. 30. & 31.

Bonav. pregr. 4.
relig. c. 13.

* Merito hæc
patimur, quia
peccavimus in
fratrem
nostrum.
Genes. 42. 22.

Dan. 3. 28. &
9. 5.

Ruffin. l. 3. vit.
33. PP. n. 291.

saw

* Custodiens
parvulos Do-
minus, humi-
liatus sum, &
liberavit me.
Psal. 114. 6.

saw in Spirit, the whole Earth cover'd with Snares, and all of 'em were so dexterously laid, that being affrighted at the Vision, he cry'd out, Lord who is he that can escape all these? And presently it was Answer'd him, the Humble of Heart: Be you therefore Humble, and God will deliver you from these tempting Snares of the Flesh. * *God has a particular care over little ones, says David, I my self was humbled and he deliver'd me.* The highest Mountains suffer most from Storms; a Tempestuous Wind breaks and roots up the tallest Oak; whilst such little shrubs as the Rose and Willow Tree, by yielding and plying to the Wind, return to their old posture, as soon as the violent blast is over.

According to this, one of the advantages that we are to draw from these Temptations, is to Humble our selves before God, acknowledge our misery and frailty to him, and say; you see, O Lord, what I am, what can be expected from filthy Clay, but poisonous exhalations? Who can hope for any thing else from an Earth that you have Curs'd, but Thorns and Briars? It can produce nothing else, unless you cultivate it by your Grace. Here is matter enough for our Humiliation. If a poor coarse Coat, which is an exterior thing, serves as the Saints take notice, to Humble him that wears it, what must an infinity of shameful thoughts, which every moment pass throu' our Hearts, wherein they make so much havock, do to us? Holy Brother Gales, compar'd our Flesh to a Hog, that takes pleasure in wallowing continually in the Mire; and to a Beetle that always lives in Dirt. This consideration ought to prevail so far upon us, as not to give any attention to Impure thoughts. For commonly 'tis better not to stay upon, or to combat the objects which the Temptation presents, but immediately turn our Eyes from them, and contemplating our own condition, say with an Humble Heart, certainly I am a very wicked Creature, since so many bad thoughts as these come into, and fill my mind: By this we evade the stroke, intended by the Devil, and so put him to Confusion. 'Tis also very profitable, when we are surpris'd with bad thoughts and evil motions, to conceive as much Confusion for them as if we were really faulty, for hereby, we shall be very far from consenting to them. The Devil, the first Author of Pride, cannot see so much Humility without being in a fury. And you cannot spire him more, nor sooner oblige him to let you alone, than by turning

In the History
of the Order of
Saint Francis
2. p. 6, 7. c. 7.

turning those very means by which he design'd to ruin you, to your own good and advantage. Moreover this holy confusion is a sign, that the Will is very far from consenting to any Sin, and consequently brings along with it great confidence and satisfaction.

It may sometimes also stand us in stead, to give the Devil hard words, and to revile him in these kind of terms; get thee behind me thou unclean Spirit, vile Wretch as thou art, hast thou lost all shame? Certainly thou art the filthiest of Creatures, since thou presentest me with such filthy imaginations. For the Devils Pride will sooner quit the place, than suffer such a reproach and contempt. Saint *Gregory* has a story of one *Dacius*, a holy Bishop of *Milan*, who going to *Constantinople* pass'd by *Corinth*; where finding no other lodging, but one, in a House which no body had liv'd in for a long time; by reason of it's being haunted with Spirits. Here he and his retinue lodg'd. About mid-night the Devils in the shape of divers kinds of Beasts, began to make a terrible noise. Some of'em roar'd like Lions, others hiss'd like Serpents, and others bellow'd like Bulls. The Bishop awak'd with this noise, and looking upon them with scorn and indignation, spoke thus to them, yee are come finely off indeed, yee who desir'd to be like God, have transform'd your selves into Beasts; in whose shapes yee best shew what you are. This raillery, says Saint *Gregory*, so confounded the Devils, that they immediately disappear'd, forsook the House, and never return'd to it any more; so that it became inhabited again. Saint *Athanasius* writes, that when Saint *Anthony* was much troubl'd with Temptations to Impurity, a little filthy ugly Black, that even turn'd his Stomack, came one day and threw himself at his Feet, saying, I have subdu'd many thousands, but you are the only Person I cannot overcome. The Saint ask'd him who he was, he answer'd, the Spirit of Fornication; very well reply'd the Saint, since thou art so despicable, I am resolv'd hereafter to contemn thee more than I have done yet, whereupon he disappear'd. Our Saviour also, as Saint *Luke* relates, call'd the Spirit of Fornication, the unclean Spirit, saying, * *When the unclean Spirit is gone out of a Man.* Wherefore to treat the Devil thus, and to despise him as he deserves, is the way to free our selves from him. Not, that 'tis always necessary to speak, or to discourse with him, no, it may be sufficient sometimes to discover our contempt of him, by any other exterior sign.

Tom. III

G g

CHAP.

Lib. 3. Dial. 4.

In the Life of
Saint Anthony,
chap. 3.* Cum im-
mundus spiri-
tus exierit de
homine.
Luc. 11. 14.

C H A P. IX.

*That the fear of God is the most soverain
remedy against Temptations to Impurity.*

† Cum metu
& tremore
vestram salu-
tem operami-
ni.
Philip. 2. 12.

* In veritate
didici, nihil
æque efficac
esse, ad gratiam
promerendam,
retinendam, re-
cuperandam ve-
quam si omni
tempore co-
ram Deo inve-
niaris non al-
tum sapere,
sed timere.
Bern. in Cant.
serm. 14.

† Beatus ho-
mo, qui sem-
per est pavi-
dus.
Prov. 28. 14.
* Sapiens ti-
met, & decli-
nat a malo.
Prov. 14. 16.

† habemus
autem thesau-
rum istum in
vasis fictilibus
2 Cor. 4. 7.

WORK your Salvation with fear and trembling, says the Apostle. To live in fear, to diffide in our selves, and to fix all our confidence in God alone, conduce very much to maintain a pure Spirit, and to continue in the Grace of God. * I have found by experience, says Saint Bernard, that there is nothing more proper to obtain the Grace of God, to preserve it when obtained, or to recover it when lost, than never to think, or presume too much of our selves, but always walk before God in holy fear; according to these words of Solomon, † Happy is the Man that is always fearful. On the contrary, too much self confidence, and a want of this fear, has been the cause why several great Saints have fallen. And therefore the Holy Ghost by way of advice tells us, * That a Wise Man always fears, and so avoids danger. He that carries a precious Liquor in a Glass, and will not take the precaution of being very chary of it, do's not know how brittle the Glass is; and so upon the first occasion the Glass will be broke, and the Liquor lost. But he who knows the nature of Glass, will use all possible precaution; and consequently the Liquor will be much more secure in his hands, than in the others. The same thing happens to all Men, in respect of Divine Grace. † We carry that great Treasure in Earthen Vessels; which are easily broken, and so much the sooner; because sometimes we are driven to and again as in a crowd, and every moment very much shaken with the Winds of Temptation, which the World raises against us. Those that are not sensible of the weakness and frailty of their Nature, take no care of themselves, but perish by a supine security, into which they are lull'd as it were asleep, by not knowing themselves. But
those

those who know themselves well, and walk in fear, are always upon their guard, and by this means are more secure; for if there be any security in this Life, they must infallibly have it.

How comes it to pass, says Saint Bernard, that some Christians, who liv'd very Chast in their Youthful Days, in the midst of all those violent Temptations, which that Age is usually subject unto; have fallen afterwards into the greatest Vices of the Flesh; and so desperately too, that they have even been astonish'd at themselves? The reason is this; they spent their Youth in humility, and in the fear of God, and then seeing themselves every moment in danger of falling, they continually had recourse to God, who never fail'd to succour them. But having liv'd long Chast, they hereupon grew proud, and when they presum'd too much upon themselves, God withdrew his Hand which sustain'd 'em, so that being left to themselves, they were captivated by reason of their own weakness, and led into Sin. Saint Ambrose attributes the fall of several great Men to the same cause: who after they had serv'd God a long while, made his Law their Daily and Nightly Meditations, Crucifi'd their Flesh, restrain'd the heat of Concupiscence, and suffer'd great afflictions and outrages with a generous Patience, fell at last from the very top of a perfect and elevated state, into an Abyss of misery and disorder. They began at last, says he, to set too great a value upon their good Works, and to presume too much upon their own forces; so that the Devil who was not able heretofore to seduce them, by all those imaginary baits and allurements, which sensuality has, nor overcome them by the violence of Persecution, has now undermin'd 'em by their own pride and presumption, and hereby insensibly wrought their ruin.

Holy Scripture and the Works of the Holy Fathers, furnish us with infinite Examples of this kind. * *I tremble*, says Saint Austin, *when I think of so many great Men, which we have seen and heard spoke of, who after their Vertues had plac'd 'em amongst the Stars, and almost fix'd their habitation there, have miserably fallen into most grievous Sins, and Dy'd Impenitent. We have seen Lord, the great Lights of your Church fall from Heaven, being pull'd from thence by the Infernal Dragon; and on the other side*

animas eorum in malis obstupuisse.

Vidimus stellas de cælo cecidisse ab impetu serientis caudæ dra-

Bern. de Ord.
Vit. & Mor.
infir.

† Vidimus
multos, & au-
divimus à pa-
tribus nostris,
(quod sine
magno tremore
non recolo)
ascendisse pri-
mitus usque
ad cælos, &
inter sidera ni-
dum suum col-
locasse, post-
modum autem
recidisse usque
ad abyssos, &

conis, & eos
qui jacebant
in pulvere ter-
ra, à facie
sublevantis
manus tuæ,
Domine, mi-
rabiliter ascen-
diffe.
Aug. Solil.
cap. 29.

Lipoman. in
the 3. tome of
the Life of
Saint James
the Hermit.

some that lay as it were groveling upon the ground, wonderfully elevated all at once on a sudden, by the power of thy Almighty Hand. How often have we seen those who for a great while Eat of the Bread of Angels at your Table, fall afterwards to feed upon Husk's with Swine? How many have we known that for many Years liv'd Pure and Chast, and afterwards plung'd themselves into all the filthiness and beastliness of Lust and Uncleanneſs.

Who can Read in *Lipomanus* the unhappy fall of *James* the Hermit, and not be seiz'd with wonder and amazement? This Man was threescore Years Old, forty of which he had spent in continual Austerities; he was very famous for the many Miracles he had wrought, and God had given him the power of casting out Devils. Having one Day cur'd a Young Woman, who was posselt by the Devil, and finding that the Persons that brought her to him, were afraid to take her home with 'em, for fear the Devil shou'd repossess her; he consented that she shou'd stay some time with him. Now because he was too confident and presum'd too much upon his own strength, God permitted him to fall into the Sin of Fornication with her. And as one Sin ordinarily draws on another, fear of being discover'd made him Murder her, and throw her Body into a River. To conclude all, despairing of God's Mercy, he left his Solitary way of living, went into the World again; and gave himself over to all manner of wickedness, till at last entering into himself, he Merited by a severe Penance of ten Years, to be restor'd to the state and Perfection from which he had fallen, and to be Canoniz'd for a Saint after his Death.

Who is it that is not likewise astonish'd, at what happen'd to another Hermit, of whom Saint *Anthony* speaks in these terms? This very Day, Brethren, one of the greatest Pillars of a Religious Life is fallen. Who is he that do's not tremble to hear it? Who is he that dares confide in the Holiness of his Life or Profession? Consider, says Saint *Hierom*, that Persons far more eminent for Vertue than you are, and once great Favorites of Heaven, have fallen. * You are not Holier than David, Wiser than Salomon, nor Stronger than Sampson, and yet all these have fallen; one of the twelve Apostles fell likewise, tho' fortified by the Example, by the good Instructions, and by the Miracles of his Divine Master. *Nicolas*, who was chosen by the Apostles, to be

* Nec tu sanc-
tior David
nec sapientior
Salomone,
nec Samsone
fortior.
*Hieron. in reg.
Mon. cap. de
castit.*

be one of the seven Deacons, and upon whom the Holy Ghost Descended, as well as upon the other six, became not only an Heretick, but the Author of a new Sect, and a Father of Hereticks. Who is there, continues Saint Hieram, that can think himself secure from the malice of the Old Serpent? When he remembers how by Pride he drove Adam out of Paradise, who had care of that place, and was endow'd with Original Justice. We cannot believe, says Saint Austin, that ever Man would have been deceiv'd by the Devil, if he had not first left God by Pride. 'Tis a truth taught us in Holy Scripture, and therefore not to be doubted of, that, * *Pride goes before Humiliation, a haughtiness of Mind, is a forerunner of our ruin, † And the Heart of Man swells and grows big, before a dejected submission.*

If these Examples do not move us, let us ascend to Heaven, and take a survey of the Glory from which so many thousand Angels, fell by their Pride and Arrogance. * *Behold those who ascend upon him are not stable, he has found his Angels faulty: With how much more reason shall those that dwell in Houses of Clay, and have only Earth for their Foundation, become Moth-eaten like Cloath? From Morning till night, they shall be cut down like Grass that is Mow'd.* Saint Gregory in his Morals upon Job, applies these words very handsomly to our present subject. If, says he, God found so little stability and permanency in the Angelical Nature, if he met with so much drops in such fine Gold; what will become of us who live in Houses of Clay, which may be destroy'd in one moment, and so easily run to decay of themselves? How can a Soul that is penn'd up in a Body, which breeds Worms to it's own destruction, be free from fear and solicitude? How can those presume upon themselves, who carry the source and origin of their own ruin about them? Job says, continues Saint Gregory, *That they shall be Consum'd by Worms,* and the comparison is exact. For as Moths, which destroy Cloath, are bred in it; so our Flesh, with which our Soul is Cloath'd, engenders a kind of Worm, I mean, Carnal Concupiscence, which daily Wars against us, and when it overcomes us, then we are properly consum'd by the very Worms which breed in our Bodies. Besides as Moths spoil Cloath, and Eat it throu', without making any noise, so the Worm of our deprav'd Inclinations, and Concupiscence, the Fuel of Sin, which we carry about us, destroy us so quietly and insensibly,

Memento
quod paradisi
colonum de-
fecit de para-
diso.
Id. Ibid.

Aug. l. 1. c. con-
trovers. leg. &
Prophet. c. 16.

* Contritione
precedit exalta-
tionem, & ante
ruinam exalta-
tur spiritus.
Prov. 16. 18.
† Antequam
contratur,
exaltatur cor
hominis.
Prov. 18. 12.

* Ecce qui
serviunt ei
non sunt sta-
biles, & in
Angelis suis
reperit pravi-
tatem. Quanto
magis hi qui
habitant do-
mos luteas,
qui terrenum
habent funda-
mentum, con-
fumentur ve-
lut à tineâ, de
mane usque ad
vesperam suc-
cidentur. Job.
4. 18. to. & 20.
Greg. l. Moral.
c. 28. & lib. 11.
cap. 25.

Job. 4. 18. to. & 20.
Greg. l. Moral.
c. 28. & lib. 11.
cap. 25.

Job. 4. 18. to. & 20.
Greg. l. Moral.
c. 28. & lib. 11.
cap. 25.

insensibly, that the evil is sometimes committed, even before we perceive it; and if those pure Spirits, that had no Flesh about 'em, as we have, to engender Corruption in them, did not persevere in good; which of us dare be so bold, as to confide in own strength, since he knows, that he continually carries about him, a sufficient cause of his ruin?

Let us learn from these sad Examples, to live in a continual restraint and a holy fear, and wo be to him that do's not. We may very well at present mourn for him, for he certainly will fall. 'Tis the Holy Scripture, not I, that advances this truth. * *If thou dost not Live as it were fix'd in the fear of God, thy House will soon be turn'd topsy-turvy.* That is, if you do not behave your self with a great deal of circumspection and fear, if you do not take care to keep out of harms way, by avoiding all occasions of danger, by suddenly suppressing evil thoughts, and preparing against the Day of Temptation, you will infallibly soon fall into some disaster. Do not flatter and abuse your self, by thinking that you are not subject at present to such kind of Temptations; that motions to Impurity make no impression upon you; and that moreover, you think that frequent Visits and Conversation with People of the World, are not at all dangerous for you, nor do you any hurt at all: Do not trust to this; 'tis an artifice of the Devil, who thus wheedles you now into this false security, that he may the more easily surprise you hereafter, and cast you headlong into Hell, when you least suspect him. 'Tis on the contrary, the opinion of Holy Men, that the more favor and Grace you receive from God, so much the more you are oblig'd to stand upon your defence, for then it is, that the Devil is most of all nettled, and most active to destroy us. † *He loves to feed upon choice bits,* says the Prophet, he had rather, as you'll see in those Examples which lie set down by and by, procure the fall of one of God's Servants, of a Religious Person that aspires to Perfection, than of a thousand others, who live in the disorders of the World. This made Saint Hierom in one of his Epistles to the Holy Virgin Eustochium, admonish her not to neglect her self, by relying too much upon the holiness of her state of Life. * *Your good resolutions,* says he to her, *must not make you proud, but humble and diffident: You carry a great sum of Gold about you, take care not to lose any high way Men: This Life is a Race for all Mankind,*

* Si non in timore Domini tenueris, cito subvertetur domus tua. Ecclesi. 7. 4.

† Cibum eius electus. Hab. c. 1. 16.

* Nolo, tibi venire superbiam de proposito, sed timorem, o multa incedis auro, latro tibi vitandus est. Stadium est.

Mankind, we run here, to obtain a Crown hereafter in the other World, and how can you hope for peace and quiet in a World, which produces nothing but crosses and afflictions? There is nothing certain in this Life; we are in a continual Warfare; and therefore ought to be upon our guard Day and Night. We sail in a Tempestuous Sea, in a poor Leaky Vessel, the Rocks threatening us on every side, and the Devil who aims at nothing else but our destruction, never ceases to increase the Storm, to drown us therein if he can. Hence it was that the Apostles gave this precaution even to the Virgins, * Watch ye Fast and be upon your guard against Sin, and he that think he stands firm, let him have a care lest he fall. Certainly if there be any means to prevent our ruin and to place us in a secure state, it must necessarily flow from a diffidence in our selves, and from the fear of God.

I have heard a passage upon this Subject, which happen'd about the beginning of our SOCIETY, and He tell it you just as I heard it. When *Mary Infanta of Portugal*, went into Spain, to be Married to the Prince, who was afterwards Philip the second King of Spain, the King of Portugal appointed Father *de Pêre* and Father *Araoz*, to go along with her to the Court of Spain, from which time our Fathers of the SOCIETY, grew into great Vogue and Reputation in that Court. These two, tho' they were but Young, (for at that time there were few or none Old in the SOCIETY) heard the Confessions of most of the Women of Quality. They led a Life very Angelical, and behav'd themselves with so much Prudence and Moderation, that all were astonish'd, to see such rare Examples in so Young Men, and in such dangerous occasions. The Prince himself admir'd 'em also as much as his Courtiers, and one Day treating with Father *Araoz*, he spoke thus to him; they say Father, that those of your SOCIETY carry an Herb about 'em, which has the virtue in it to preserve Chastity; is it true? The Father being a Man of good Parts, told him that it was certainly true. But what Herb is it, reply'd the Prince? The Father answer'd, 'tis, may't please your Royal Highness, the fear of God; this is the Herb with which our SOCIETY uses to preserve itself Pure and Chast: From hence proceeds what all the Court wonders at, and 'tis what God has blest us withal. 'Tis this fear of God that has Vertue in it, to drive away Devils,

hec vita mortalibus: hic contendimus, ut alibi coronemur. Pacem arbitramur in terra quaerere. huius generalis, & semper in Hieron. 29. ad Rom. 12. et

* Vigilate: iusti, & nolite peccare. 1 Cor. 13. Qui se exultant stare, videat, ne cadat. 1 Cor. 10. 12.

In the fifth Book of the Life of Saint Ignatius chap. 13.

ad Rom. 12. et Hieron. 29. ad Rom. 12. et

Devils, as the Liver of that Fish had, which *Toby* took with him, when he Travell'd with the Angel *Raphael*.

† Timor Domini non occurrent mala, fed in tentatione Deus illum confervabit, & liberabit a malo. *Eccles.* 11. 1.

* Timor Domini expellit peccatum. *Eccles.* 1. 17.

† In timore Domini declinatur a malo. *Prov.* 16. 6.

† Serva timorem illius (Dei) & in illo veterafce. *Eccles.* 2. 6.

† Bestius homini qui femper est pavidus. *Prov.* 17. 14.

This, may still be confirm'd out of Scripture: † No Evil shall happen to him that fears God, God will defend him in time of Tribulation, and deliver him from Evil. * The fear of the Lord expells Sin: † By fearing the Lord we decline from Evil. This is the Herb therefore we are always to carry about us, as an Antidote against the Temptations of the Flesh: And as long as we have not this holy fear before our Eyes, our Chastity can never be secure; 'tis by the fear of God, that every one declines and avoids evil, nor can any Vertue or Sanctity be rely'd upon without it. Therefore the Holy Scripture, to shew us that we are never to be without this Holy fear, adviseth us to * Live in this fear and grow Old in it. For 'tis not only proper for beginners, but also for those who are well advanc'd in God's Service; and the Just themselves have reason to fear as well as Sinners. These must fear because they are fallen, the other must also fear to prevent their fall. The memory of a fall that is past, ought to make the one tremble; and the uncertainty of what's to come, cause the other to do so too. † Happy is the Man that always lives in the fear of God.

CHAP.

C H A P. X.

Of the advantages which flow from the Fear of God.

THAT we may have a greater value for this wholesome fear, and even force our selves more and more to conserve it in our Hearts, Ile touch upon some of the benefits, which it brings along with it. First, it do's not in the least destroy our confidence in God, nor abate our courage: But on the contrary, it strengthens and relieves us, and like true Humility, makes us distrust our selves, by placing all our hopes in God alone. Saint Gregory upon these words of Job, † *Where is your Fear, that gives you so much Courage?* Declares admirably well what we have already sayd. Job had reason, says he, to joyn Fear and Valour together; for God's proceedings, differ much from ours. Amongst Men Courage makes us Stronger; and Fear makes us Weaker. But here Courage makes us Weaker and Fear Stronger, if the Wise Man be not mistaken, who says, * *Courage and Confidence consists in the Fear of God.* And the reason is this, he that truly Fears God, has nothing else to fear; all things else are below him, and too mean to make him apprehend any danger from them. † *He that Fears the Lord,* says the Scripture, *shall not be affraid of any thing else, he fears nothing; because the Lord is his Hope.* Now fear being an interior submission, to the thing we are affraid of, as for Example, to a thing that has power to hurt us. Therefore those who Fear God most, fear nothing else, for by putting all their Confidence in him alone, they do not know what 'tis to fear the World, Tyrants, Death, Devils, no nor even Hell it self; for none of all these can hurt 'em, or discompose one Hair of their Head,

Tom. III.

H h

without

Greg. l. 9. Mor.
c. 33. in Job.
† Ubi est timor tuus, fortitudo tua?
Job. 4. 6.

* In timore Domini fiducia fortitudinis.
Prov. 14. 26.

† Qui timet Dominum nihil trepidabit, & non pavebit, quoniam ipse est spes ejus.
Eccli. 34. 26.

without God's permission. The force we receive from this holy disposition of mind, exceeds all force and power of Mankind united together. For 'tis God that is our strength, according to the Royal Prophet; * *God is the strength of those that Fear him.*

* Firmamentum est Dominus timentibus eum.
Psal. 14. 14.

Nor do's this holy fear bring any bitterness or trouble along with it, it do's not disturb the mind, nor proves the least inconvenience to it; but on the contrary fills it with joy and sweetness. The fear, which some have, of losing their Honor or Fortune; as also the servile fear of Death or Hell, do's really afflict and torment those who have 'em; but a filial fear, such as good Children have to displease their Father, entertains the Soul with a Holy satisfaction, and makes the Heart languish with such Acts, of the Love of God, as do here follow, which it continually produces: Dear Lord, never permit me to be separated from thee: Let me Dye a thousand times rather than once offend thee. † *The Fear of the Lord, says the Scripture, is an accumulated Glory, and a most accomplish'd Joy. The Fear of God Rejoices the Heart, and brings Pleasure, Content, and long Life with it. The Man that Feares God shall meet with Blessings towards the End of his Life, and he shall be blest and happy at his Dying Day.*

† Timor Domini gloria, & gloria, & letitia, & corona exultationis. Timor Domini delectabit cor, & dabit letitiam, & gaudium, & longitudinem dierum. Timentis Dominum benè erit in extremis, & in dei defunctionis sue benedicetur.
Eccl. 1. 11. & seq.

You see with what a great deal of Rhetorick and variety of expression, the Wiseſts of Men describes the pleasure and satisfaction, which the Fear of God brings along with it. It do's not make us tremble like Slaves, for fear of a Bastinado, 'tis a fear engender'd by Love, and the more we Love God, the more we fear to offend him. A docile Son, the more he Loves his Father, the more he endeavours to please him. And a good Wife the more kindness she has for her Husband, the more careful she is, not to give him the least cause of discontent.

In a word, all those praises and advantages, which Holy Scripture allow's the Humble, it equally gives to those who Fear God, and almost in the same terms.

For

For if it says, that † God fixes his Eye upon the Poor and Humble; it also says, that * The Eyes of the Lord Watch over those that Fear him. If it says, that † He Exalts the Humble and fills them with good things; it also says, that * His Mercy shines upon those that Fear him, from Generation to Generation; and that, † Those that Fear him shall be great with him in every thing. Nor do the Saints attribute more to Humility, than to the Fear of God. When they say, that Humility is the Guardian of other Vertues, and that there can be no solid Vertue without it, for they say the self same of fear, and call it with the Prophet *Isay*, * God's Treasure; for in effect it preserves all other Vertues, and is the source of Grace. And they also add, that as a Ship can never Sail securely without Ballast; because the least Wind would overset her; so a Soul can never Sail prosperously through the Sea of this World, unless Ballast'd with the Fear of God, which is the only thing that can keep it steady, amidst the Tempestuous blasts of Pride and Prosperity. Let it be never so Richly loaden with Vertues and Talents, if it wants this Ballast of fear, it will be in very great danger of suffering Shipwrack. Saint Gregory says, † That the Weight of the Fear of God is the Anchor of our Soul. Saint Hierom makes, Fear the preserver of Vertues; and too great a Presumption the high-way to ruin. * Fear is the foundation of our Salvation, according to Tertullian; if we Fear, says he, we shall be cautious, and if cautious we shall be Sav'd, for care and solicitude, bring at last a certain security.

To conclude; all that Salomon says, of the Excellency of Wisdom, is ascrib'd by him to the Fear of God, in these words; † The Fear of God is true Wisdom. Job speaks after the same manner, saying, that * The Fear of God is Wisdom it self. So that you see whatever is said of Wisdom, may be justly apply'd to this wholesome Fear. Nay, it has something more in it than the other, for Salomon own's, that † The Perfection of Wisdom consists in the Fear of God:

Sapientia est timere Deum.

Ecclesi. 1. 20.

H h 2

And

† Ad quem respiciam, nisi ad pauperem, & contritum spiritum?
Is. 66. 2.

* Oculi Domini super mentes eorum.
Ecc. 1. 5.
† Exaltavit humiles, et scientes implevit bonis.

Luc. 1. v. 53.
* Misericordia ejus a progenie in progeniem timentibus eum.

Luc. 1. 50.
* Qui timent te magni erunt apud te per omnia

Judith 16. 19.
† Timor Domini ipse est thesaurus ejus.
Is. 33. 6.

† Anchora cordis, pondus est amoris. Timor virtutum custos est. Hieron. ep. ad Fab. de mansio. Timor fundamentum est salutis: timendum cavebimus, cavendo salvi erimus. Qui sollicitus est, is verè poterit esse securus. Tert. lib. de cultu famul. c. 2.

† Sapientia, & disciplina timor Domini.
Ecc. 1. 34.

* Ecce timor Domini ipsa est sapientia.
Job. 28. 28.

† Flenitudo

* Quam
magnus qui
invenit sa-
pientiam
& scienti-
am: sed non
est super
timentem
Dominum.
Timor Dei
super
omnia se-
superposit.
Beatus homo,
cui donatum est habere timorem Dei: qui necesse est, ut ei assimiletur.
Timor Dei in
eternam electionis ejus. Reg. 15. 13. 14. 15. 16.

And in another place, having first cry'd out, *How great is he that has found Wisdom and Knowledge?* He presently adds, *He is not greater than he who fears God. The fear of God is above all things. Happy is the Man whom God has blest with this fear! To whom shall we compare him that Possesses it in his Heart? The Fear of God is the beginning or origin of his Love.*

The Fear of God is the beginning or origin of his Love. This is the first of the three things which are the foundation of the Christian's life. The first is the Fear of God, the second is the Love of God, and the third is the Hope of God. The Fear of God is the foundation of the Christian's life, because it is the beginning of his Love. The Love of God is the foundation of the Christian's life, because it is the beginning of his Hope. The Hope of God is the foundation of the Christian's life, because it is the beginning of his Faith.

The Fear of God is the foundation of the Christian's life, because it is the beginning of his Love. The Love of God is the foundation of the Christian's life, because it is the beginning of his Hope. The Hope of God is the foundation of the Christian's life, because it is the beginning of his Faith. The Fear of God is the foundation of the Christian's life, because it is the beginning of his Love. The Love of God is the foundation of the Christian's life, because it is the beginning of his Hope. The Hope of God is the foundation of the Christian's life, because it is the beginning of his Faith.

CHAP.

To conclude, all that believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, are called by him to the Fear of God. In this world, the Fear of God is the foundation of the Christian's life. The Fear of God is the foundation of the Christian's life, because it is the beginning of his Love. The Love of God is the foundation of the Christian's life, because it is the beginning of his Hope. The Hope of God is the foundation of the Christian's life, because it is the beginning of his Faith.

applied to the whole of his Fear. Now, as his Fear is applied to the whole of his Fear, so his Love is applied to the whole of his Love. The Fear of God is the foundation of the Christian's life, because it is the beginning of his Love. The Love of God is the foundation of the Christian's life, because it is the beginning of his Hope. The Hope of God is the foundation of the Christian's life, because it is the beginning of his Faith.

C H A P. XI.

The Confirmation of what has been sayd by Examples.

IN the *Spiritual Medow*, we find the following relation of an Hermit of *Thebais*, that was the Son of a Heathen Priest, who related to several Fathers of the same Desert, how that when Young, he us'd always to go along with his Father to the Temple, and see him offer Sacrifice. But one Day, as he told 'em, he got privately into the Temple, where he saw the Devil seated upon a high Throne, with all his black Courtiers round about him, and one of the chief of 'em made up towards the Devil, and Ador'd him. To whom Satan sayd, from whence come you? He answer'd from such a Country, where I have rais'd Sedition, made a War, put all to Fire and Sword, and now I come to give you an account of it. Satan ask'd him how much time he had spent in the performance of this enterprise, the other told him a whole Month. Satan judg'd him to have spent too much time in so small a matter, and therefore commanded him to run the Gantler for an hour. After this another Devil presented himself at his Throne, and likewise Ador'd him. Satan ask'd this as he had done the former, from whence he came, and what he had been doing. I come from Sea, says he, where I rais'd violent Storms, in which many Vessels and Men were lost, and I am come to acquaint you of it. How much time have you employ'd in this, sayd Satan, twenty Days reply'd the other, whereupon he was also condemn'd to the same Punishment as the former, and for the same reason. A third then presented himself, of whom Satan inquir'd concerning the place where he had been, what affairs he manag'd there, and how soon he had dispatch'd 'em. This Devil told him he came from such a City, where he had made several Marriages, been the author of several quarrels, in which some were Murder'd, and amongst

Tom. 2. *Medow*.
33. pp.

others even the Bridgroom himself; and that in ten Days he had done all this. Notwithstanding he was likewise condemn'd as the former, for having done so little, in so long a time as ten Days. Lastly in comes a fourth, who having pay'd his Adoration, was ask'd the same questions as the former, to which he thus reply'd, I come from the Desert, where having Tempted an Hermit for these forty Years in vain, and this very Night I brought about my design, and made him commit a Sin of the Flesh. Upon these words the Prince of Darkness rose from his Throne, imbrac'd him, put a Crown upon his Head, made him sit down by him, and then highly commended this his Action. When I saw this, says the Hermit of *Theriac*, I concluded with my self, that a Solitary Life had something very extraordinary in it, and that Hermits very much exceed other Men, and therefore at that very time I resolv'd to quit my Fathers House, and retire into the Desert. Here you may observe by the by, that the Hermits fall was the occasion why this Young Man set such a value upon a Solitary Life, and afterwards imbrac'd it; whereas now a Days, the World is come to that pass, as to have a censorious Eye, upon the failings of a Religious Man, and not only condemn their Actions, but himself too, and even his Order also, together with it's way of living. Saint Gregory has a story in his Dialogues much like this, I have now related to you.

Lib. 3. Dialog.
cap. 7.

We read in the *Lives of the Fathers*, that a Holy Hermit being brought into a Monastery, where there were many Religious, he had a certain Vision, in which he saw many Devils continually going to and again all over the House, which did nothing else, but go from one place to another. The Angel that had conducted him thither, carried him also into a City not far from this Monastery, where he was very much struck, to see only one Devil, and to see him sitting still at one of the Gates, as if he had little or nothing to do. The Hermit wondering at this difference, ask'd the reason of his Angel, who told him, that in the City every one did what the Devil put him upon, so that one was sufficient to work mischief amongst the Citizens, but in the Monastery all the Religious us'd their best endeavours, to resist all Temptations, and therefore a great number of Devils was necessary to tempt, and draw them into Sin.

Palladin

Palladius has a very strange Story, which is also in the *Legends of the Fathers*. 'Tis this; an Hermit after a long practise of all sorts of Mortification, when he was come to a high pitch in Vertue, grew hereupon so Proud, that God permitted him to fall into a most dreadful Sin, which was as follows. Whilst this Hermit was mightily puffed up, and swell'd with a great opinion of his Sanctity, the Devil appear'd to him in the shape of a very handsome Woman, who pretended she had lost her self in the Desert. He receiv'd her into his Cell where he entertain'd her; and giving himself up to wicked desires, he put all things in readines to accomplish 'em, when at the same instant, this Woman with a horrid out-cry, broke from his Arms and disappear'd. After this, different Voices were heard in the Air, some laugh'd at him, others insulted over him with these bitter taunts, O brave Hermit, you who were just now at Heaven Gates, are now fallen as low as Hell; know hence forward, that he that Exalts himself shall be Humbl'd. But this unhappy Man did not stop here, for tho he pass'd all that Night and the following Day in mourning and tears for his Sin, yet despair at last so far overcame him, as to make him leave his Solitude, and return to the World, where he led a most lewd Life, in all manner of Debauchery.

Pallad. in Hist. Lausiac. c. 44. Or Ruf. in Vit. S. Eusep.

The fall of that other Hermit, whom we spoke of in the ninth Chapter, is also very remarkable. His Vertue was so admirable that even the wild Beasts acknowledg'd it by obeying him; Yet for all this he fell, and 'tis probable Saint *Anthony* foresaw his Fall, for one day speaking of him, he compar'd him to a rich Vessel at Sea, adding, God grant, says he, that he arrives safe to his Harbor, and soon after the unhappy Man split upon a Rock, and was lost. He who before had commanded wild Beasts, says Saint *John Climacus*, is now become a Prey to his own Passions, more fierce and cruell than the wildest Savage. He that fed upon the Bread of Angels, now lives upon Filth and Ordure. After his fall, whilst he was yet lamenting it, some other Hermits came and visited him, whom he conjur'd to desire their Father Saint *Anthony* to obtain of God ten Days for him to do farther Penance in. And now it was that the Saint cry'd out, as we have already told you, this very Day, Brethren, one of the greatest Pillars of Religion is fallen. He sayd no more, being unwilling to particularize the fault, for

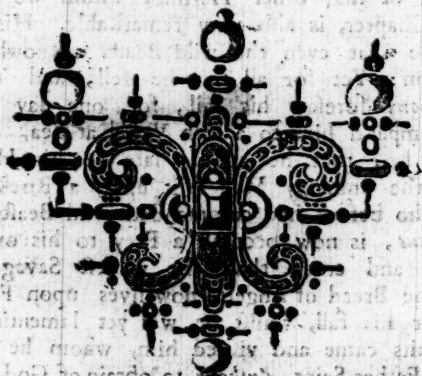
Climac. grad. 15. cap. 9.

for he knew it was a Sin of Impurity. The Hermit Dy'd five Days after, leaving behind him a lively Example of the frailty of those, who depend too much upon their own Strength, and an admirable Lesson of Humility for Proud Men.

Tom. 3. Epist.

Father *Avila* says, that a certain Hermit, to whom God had reveal'd, the great danger he was expos'd to in this Life, was so interiorly mov'd with it, that for ever after he us'd to cover his Head and Face in such a manner, that he cou'd not see any thing but the ground, nor wou'd he speak to any body, but continually bemean'd the dangers of Human Life. Those who now and then gave him a Visit, were extremely surpris'd, to find him in this condition, and when they ask'd him the reason of so sudden a change, and of such an extraordinary way of living, he wou'd never answer more than this, pray let me alone; for I am a Man. Another Saint deploring the unhappy condition of Mankind, had got a custom of crying out, alas, O how unfortunate am I! Since I am still capable of offending God Mortally!

Bernard. serm.
de dupl. Bapt.



THE

THE FIFTH TREATISE OF OBEDIENCE.

CHAP. I.

Of the excellency of this Vertue of Obedience.



O you think that God wou'd have you
Offer him *Victims and Holocausts*? No he
wou'd rather have you Obey his Commands.
Because Obedience is far better than *Victims*,
and 'tis better for you to comply with
his Will, than to Offer him the fat of
Rams. This is what *Samuel* told *Saul*,
when that Prince had preserv'd the best

and fairest Flocks of the *Amalecites* for Sacrifice, contrary
to the expresse Command that God had given him, which was
totally to destroy the *Amalecites*, and all that belong'd to
them. Holy Fathers take occasion from this, and severall
other places of Holy Scripture, which declare the Excellence
and Merit of Obedience, to enlarge very much upon the
praises of this Vertue. Saint *Austin* in severall of his works,
inquires why God forbid *Adam* to Eat of the Tree of

Fom. III.

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† Numquid
vult Dominus
holocausta &
victimas, &
non potius,
ut obediatur
voci Domini?
Melior est e-
nim obedi-
entia quam vic-
timas, & au-
cultare magis
quam offerre
adipem ariet-
um.
† Reg. 15. 22.

¶ Numquid vult Dominus holocausta & victimas, & non potius, ut obediatur voci Domini? Melior est enim obedientia quam victimas, & aucultare magis quam offerre adipem arietum.
¶ Reg. 15. 22.

the Knowledge of Good and Evil, and amongst others he gives the following reason for it; saying, that it was,
To teach Man how great a good Obedience is of it self, and how great evil arises purely from Disobedience. For it was not the Fruit of the Tree that wrought all those Evils which follow'd upon *Adam's Sin*; because the Tree had nothing that was bad in it; since God himself, † *Says all his works to be Excellent and Good*, nor is it to be presum'd, that he wou'd permit any Evil thing to grow in Paradise. Disobedience therefore, and a breach of God's Prohibition, was the cause of all the Evil. And for this reason Saint *Austin* says, that nothing discovers the malice of Disobedience more, than the Punishment inflicted upon *Adam* for eating the forbidden Fruit, which was harmless and innocent in it self, independant of the Prohibition. Let those who easily dispense with Obedience in small matters, learn from hence to see their Error, and to correct it. For the Sin do's not arise from the Nature of the thing, but from the Disobedience, which always vitiates the Act, let the thing be of never so great or small importance. Saint *Austin* giving another reason why God layd the foresaid Prohibition upon *Adam*, says, that since Man was Created to Serve God, it was necessary to restrain him in some one particular, to make him sensible of his dependance upon a superiour Power; for otherwise he wou'd not so easily have known his Duty. And therefore God try'd him by Obedience; an Act, whereby he was not only to acknowledge his Creator, but also Merit, if he had pleas'd, an Eternal union with him as his last End. This holy Father after a long praise and encomium of this Vertue, concludes thus in it's commendation, that one of the reasons, which mov'd the Son of God to take Human Nature upon him, was to teach us Obedience by his own Example. Man, says he, was Disobedient even to Death, that is, Death was the deserv'd Punishment of his Disobedience: And the Son of God made himself Man, that he might be Obedient even to Death. *Adam's* Disobedience shut Heavens Gates upon us, *CHRISTS* Obedience set them open. * *For as by the Disobedience of one Man, many Sinned; so, by the Obedience of one, many were Justif'd.* Nor can there be a greater argument of the Merit and Excellency of this Vertue, than the glorious reward which God has given to the Sacred Humanity of his Son *JESUS CHRIST*,
 * *Who*

* Ut ipsius per se bonum obedientie, & ipsius per se malum inobedientie monstretur.

Aug. l. 1. contr.

ad Iet. c.

Proph. c. 14. c.

l. 2. de peccat.

meritis & remiss.

c. 21. c. 18 sup.

Gen. ad litt.

† Vidit Deus

cuncta quæ

fecerat, &

erant valde

bona.

Gen. 1. 31.

Lib. 8. sup. Gen.
ad litt.

* Sicut enim per inobedientiam unius hominis, peccatores constituti sunt multi: ita & per unius obedientiam iusti constituentur multi.
 Rom. 5. 19.
 Aug. l. de Inc. Verb. c. 13. de Trin. cap. 17.

* *Who was Obedient to Death, even the Death of the Cross: For which, says Saint Paul, God has Exalted him, and given him a Name above all other Names, the Holy Name of Jesus, at which, all the Powers of Heaven Earth and Hell do bend their Knees.*

Holy Fathers wonderfully extol this Vertue of Obedience, and are very copious in the praises of it; but Ile here confine my self to one of the good qualities they assign it, and only treat of it, as of the chief Vertue in a Religious Man. Saint *Thomas*, who in all his questions, stands up for the rigorous principles of the Schools, inquires whether Obedience be the chief and principal Vow made in Religion; and having answer'd himself in the affirmative, he proves his assertion by these three following reasons, no less profitable than solid. The first, is drawn from the Offering in self, which we make by the Vow of Obedience, which in dignity far excel's the other two Vows. By the Vow of Poverty we Sacrifice our Riches, by that of Chastity, our Body, but by Obedience we offer up our Will and Understanding; and intirely Sacrifice the whole Man to God: Which questionless is the noblest Sacrifice of the three. Saint *Hierom* speaking of the difference, † *Bevixit Sacrificing our selves, and our Riches, is of the same Opinion*, and says, *that a consummated Vertue, is not requisite to forsake our Riches, since those who are only Novices in Perfection, are capable of it; Antisthenes and other Heathen Philosophers have done it before us, but to Sacrifice our selves to God, is only proper to Christians and Apostolical Men.* Saint *Thomas* of *Aquin* makes the same observation, upon what *CHRIST* sayd to his Disciples, concerning the Reward he had in store for them; he did not say, * *Ye that have left all*, but, *ye that have follow'd me*; for all Perfection lies in following *CHRIST*. *Verily I say unto yee, yee shall sit upon twelve Thrones.* Here it was, says the same great Doctor, that *CHRIST* exhorted us to Obedience, and layd down this Evangelical Council; for Obedience is nothing else, but the following of the Sentiment and Will of another.

The Second reason why Obedience has the preference of Poverty and Chastity, is; because it really comprehends and includes 'em both; for, tho' most Religious make two particular distinct Vows of Poverty and Chastity, yet both these obligations are contain'd in the Vow of Obedience, by which they are oblig'd in general to observe all that shall

* Factus obediens usque ad mortem, mortem autem crucis. Propter quod & Deus exaltavit illum, & donavit illi nomen, quod est super omne nomen; ut in nomine Jesu omne genu flectatur, caelestium, terrestrium, & infernorum. *Philip. 2. 8. 9. 10.*

S. Thom. 2. 2. q. 186. art. 3.

† Aurum deponere incipientium est, non perfectorum. Fecit hoc Crates, Thebanus fecit Antisthenes. Scipium offerre Deo, proprium Christianorum est, & Apostolorum. *Hier. Epist. ad Lucin. Epist.*

* Vos qui secuti estis me, sedebitis super sedes duodecim. *Matth. 19. 28.*

1. Promitto
obedientiam
secundum re-
gulam.

be commanded 'em. This truth is so evident, that the *Benedictine* and *Carthusian* Monks, make no other Vow but that of Obedience, each of 'em only at their Profession, saying
* *I promise Obedience according to the Rule.* And both of these holy Orders declare, as well by their Constitutions as Practice, that Poverty and Chastity, are sufficiently contain'd in the foresaid words.

The third reason is this, the nigher any thing comes to the End, for which it was Instituted, and the more it unites us to that End, the more Perfect it is. All this is perform'd by Obedience, in a most Perfect manner: And that we of the SOCIETY may obtain the end for which we were Instituted, Obedience prescribes us to labour not only for our own, but for our Neighbours Spiritual Advancement also, it commands us to give our selves to Prayer and Mortification, to imploy our selves in hearing Confessions, to Preach the Word of God, and Exercise our selves in all those Functions, which conduce to the helping our Neighbours and saving their Souls. In like manner it prescribes all other Religious Mediums, how to arrive happily at the End for which they were Instituted; and by consequence this Vow of Obedience, is more excellent and Perfect than the other two.

S. Th. ubi. sup.

Saint Thomas draws a conclusion from hence, of very great consequence, viz. that the very Essence and Soul of a Religious Life, consists chiefly in the Vow of Obedience. For suppose one thou'd live in voluntary Poverty and Chastity; or even ingage himself to such a Life by Vow, this wou'd not make him a Religious Man, nor wou'd he be in the Perfect state of Religion, if he thou'd not add the Vow of Obedience to the other two. For where there is no Vow of Obedience, there can be no Religious Man; and the latter cannot subsist without the former. Saint Bonaventure is of the same sentiment, and says, that the Perfection of a Religious Man, consists in denying his own Will, and following the Will of another; and that the Vows of Poverty and Chastity, by which we renounce Riches and sensual pleasures, are only helps to disingage us from Temporals, and from the allurements of the Flesh; that we may be in a better capacity, to comply with our main obligation, which is Obedience. And therefore he add's, that 'twill signifie nothing to have renounc'd all the Goods of Fortune, unless

In specul. discip.
p. 1. c. 4.

unless we deny our own Will also, and intirely submit to all the Injunctions of Holy Obedience.

Surin in the Life of Saint *Fulgentius*, who was first an Abbot, and afterwards Bishop, amongst many other remarkable things recounts this, that when ever he spoke of Obedience, he always used to say, † *That those were true Religious Men, who having mortified and broken their own Wills, liv'd in a holy indifferency to all things, and gave themselves totally into the Hands of their Superiours, by neither willing or not willing any thing of themselves; but by following their Abbots Council and Commands in all things.* Take notice that he do's not fix Religious Perfection, in Austerity and Mortification of the Body, nor in continual Labour, nor in profound Learning, or in a good Talent in Preaching, but only in a submission of our Will to our Superiours, and in Self-denial.

You may gather out of what has been sayd, that Obedience is the Vertue, which essentially constitutes Religion, and properly makes a Religious Man. 'Tis this that pleases God more than all the Sacrifices we can make him; 'tis this, that comprises not only Poverty and Chastity, but all other Vertues also. For admit that you be truly Obedient, you cannot fail of being Poor, Chast, Humble, Modest, Patient, Mortified, and in a word, Master of all Vertues. This is no exaggeration, 'tis a solid truth. Vertuous habits are got by a frequent Exercise of their particular Acts, and this is the way that God is pleas'd to bestow them upon us, when they are Supernatural. Obedience puts us upon this frequent Exercise; for all that our Rule prescribes, or our Superiour Commands, is always reduc'd to some Vertue. Take Obedience along with you for your guide, and imbrace all the occasions which it shall present you, and you need do no more. Sometimes you'll meet with an occasion to exercise your Patience, sometimes Humility, sometimes Poverty, at other times Mortification, and now and then Temperance and Chastity; and thus, as you improve in Obedience, so will you advance in all other Vertues. This is the Opinion of our Holy Founder, who speaking to his Children, says, that according as Obedience shall flourish amongst yee, so all other Vertues will also equally flourish with it, and produce in your Souls the Fruit which I desire. All Holy Men agree in this one Point, and for this reason call Obedience the Mother and Source or origin of all other Vertues. Saint *Austin* call's

† Illos quoque veros Monachos effe dicebat, qui mortificatis voluntatibus suis; parati essent nihil vellet, nihil nolle sed Abbatis tantummodi consilia vel precepta servare.
Sur. in Vis. S. Fulg. tom. 1. men. Januar.

Ingen. Epist. of Obedience.

it

* Quæ maxi-
ma virtus est,
& ut ita dixe-
rim, omnium
origo mater-
que virtutum,
Aug. l. 1. contra
ad. leg. &
Proph. c. 14.

† Obedientia
sola virtus est;
quæ cæteris
virtutibus menti
ingerit, & in-
sertas custodie.
L. 33. Hier. c. 10.

Greg. lib. 2. de
ord. vit. c.
Mor. infir.

* Vir obedi-
ens loquatur
victoriam.

Prov. 25. 23.
† Hæc est via,
ambulare in
ea, & non de-
clinabis, neque
ad dexteram,
neque ad fini-
tram.

Isai. 30. 21.
* O felix &
abundans gra-
tia: in obedi-
entia (summa
virtutum clau-
sula est. Nam
simplici gressu
hominem du-
cit ad Christi.

Hieron. in reg.
Mon. cap. 6.

Climac. c. 4. de
Obedientia.

Serm. 31. 20
Bibl. 55. PP.
tem. 3.

Serm. 31. 20
Bibl. 55. PP.
tem. 3.

Serm. 31. 20
Bibl. 55. PP.
tem. 3.

Serm. 31. 20
Bibl. 55. PP.
tem. 3.

Serm. 31. 20
Bibl. 55. PP.
tem. 3.

Serm. 31. 20
Bibl. 55. PP.
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Serm. 31. 20
Bibl. 55. PP.
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Serm. 31. 20
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Serm. 31. 20
Bibl. 55. PP.
tem. 3.

it, * The greatest of Vertues, and likewise the Mother and Source of all Vertues. † This is the only Vertue, says Saint Gregory, that plants other Vertues in our Mind, and pre-serves them after they are once planted. The same Saint Gregory as also Saint Bernard, in their explanation of these words of the Proverbs, * The Obedient Man shall speak Victory, says, that an Obedient Man shall get not only one, but even many Victories, and with them make himself Master of all Vertues.

If you therefore desire a short and easie way, to make a great progress in Vertue, in a little time, and thereby grow to great Perfection, be Obedient: † That's the way, you need only follow it without turning either to the Right or Left; and you shall soon come to the place you wish for. Saint Hierom speaking of Obedience says, * O great and abundant Happiness! O extraordinary Grace? For Obedience is an Epitome of all Vertues, because it leads directly to JESUS, CHRIST, and if we follow the way, which it points us out, we shall soon be Perfect Men.

Saint John Climacus came one Day to a Monastery, in which he saw many Ancient Venerable Religious Men, who were always ready upon the least sign given 'em, to do whatsoever was Commanded 'em, and he says, that some of 'em had been list'd under the Standard of Obedience for above fifty Years. Who desiring to know of 'em what benefit they had found by this their submission; some of 'em answer'd, that they were hereby come to a most profound Humility, and by that means had de-feated the Devil, in several dangerous attempts he made upon 'em; others sayd, that it had taken from them all resentment of any injury or contempt offer'd 'em. Thus we see how much Obedience helps to acquire all other Vertues. And therefore the Ancient Fathers of the De-sart, look'd upon an Hermits submissive Obedience to his Ghostly Father, as an infallible surety that he wou'd one Day become a very Perfect Man.

Saint Dorathens tell's us that his Scholar Dositheus was of a good Family, and of a very tender Constitution, and that whilst he was in the World, he was struck with a lively apprehension of Judgment, in which he was one Day to give a rigorous account of himself; God fulfilling

in him the Royal Prophets, demand; † *Pierce my Flesh with a Fear of thee; for I Tremble at thy Judgments.*

† Configiti-
more tuo car-
nes meas; à
judicijs enim
tuis timui.
Psal. 118. 120.

Dofithens that he might the better answer for himself at that great Day, became a Religious Man, but finding that his Health, wou'd not permit him to rise at Mid-
night to Mattins, nor Eat the ordinary Diet, nor com-
ply with the ordinary observances of the Community,
he resolv'd to Devote himself intirely to Obedience, and to
serve in the Infirmary, in the most vile Offices, and do
whatsoever was Commanded him there, tho' never so
base and mean. Having done this for five Years he
Died of a Consumption, and God Reveald to the Ab-
bot of the same Monastery, that *Dofithens* had Merited as
much as Saint *Paul* and *Anthony* the Hermits had done.
Which when the other Religious heard, they began to Mur-
mur and Complain, saying, where is God's Justice? If a
Man that never Fasted, and that always Eat of the best,
be equal to us who undergo all Duties of Religion, * *And*
bear the heat and burthen of the Day. What are we the
better for all our Austerities? Our continual Labour and
Pain signifies nothing. Whilst they were thus Complaining,
God gave them to understand, that they did not know
the Worth and Excellency of Obedience, and that it was
of so high a value in his sight, that *Dofithens* had Mer-
ited more by it in a short time, than several of 'em had
done by their long and rigid Mortifications.

* Pondus dici,
& arduus.
Matt. 23. 12.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Of the necessity of Obedience.

*In Regula quæ
collegit ex eius
scriptis. Lupus
de Oly.*

*Et particidio
dedicatur.*

** Omne reg-
num in se di-
visum, desola-
bitur, & do-
mus supra do-
mum cadet.
Luc. 11. 17.*

*Grues quoque
unam sequun-
tur ordine li-
terato.
Hier. ubi sup.*

SAINTE Hierom, exhorting all Religious to submit to the Obedience of their Superiour, brings down many Examples, to prove the absolute necessity of Obedience to one supreme Head, in every condition or state of Life. In Civil Government, says he, all are subject to Kings, Emperors or their Lieutenants and Deputies. *Romulus* to Build *Rome*, slew his Brother, and *Pounded the City in Blood*; to shew us, that two Kings are things inconsistent in one Kingdom. *Jacob* and *Esa* struggl'd in their Mothers Womb, for primogeniture. In Ecclesiastical Government, all People Obey the Bishops in their respective Diocess, and the Bishops themselves are subject to his Holiness, who is the Head of the Church, and *CHRIST*'s Vicar upon Earth. Nor is there any state of Life whatsoever, where this subordination is not absolutely necessary. The greatest Army submits to the Authority of one General. One Captain Commands a Man of War; there wou'd be nothing but disorder and confusion aboard a Ship, if every Man were Master, and God knows when she wou'd get securely into the Haven, if every private Seaman had full power to steer her as he pleas'd. Every Family, every private House and poor Cottage, has always one whom the rest Obey, and indeed there is neither House, Congregation, City nor Kingdom that can long subsist, without it. * *Every Kingdom and House that is divided, shall become desolate and ruinous.* This order is not only practis'd amongst Men, but even amongst the Angels themselves, where one Hierarchy is subordinate to another, nay, irrational Creatures do likewise observe it. *Bees* have their King, and *Cranes* in their flight, form this Letter Y, having always one to Head 'em and Command the rest. What shall I say more? *Saint Hierom* goes on, do not the Heavens follow, and wait upon the motion

tion of the *Primum Mobile*, or *First Mover*? But not to trouble you with any more Examples; all that I pretend to by those which I have already alledg'd, is only to make you sensible how beneficial it is, to live under the Conduct and Obedience of a Superiour, in the Company of other Servants of God; whose end and design is the same with yours, and who by their Example, may help and assist you very much to obtain it the more easily.

Tho' 'tis Saint *Ignatius's* intention, that all Vertues shou'd flourish in our SOCIETY, yet he most particularly and frequently recommends to us Obedience, hereby to signifie, that as other Orders are distinguish'd, some by their extream Poverty, others by great Austerities, others by Quire-duties, and others by perpetual Inclosure; so he desires that Obedience shou'd be our distinctive Mark and Character; as if all our advancement in Vertue, totally depended hereupon. The great End of our SOCIETY is first to attend to our own Perfection and Salvation, and then to our Neighbours; and therefore we must always be in a readiness, to go to any part of the World, where our Superiours shall imploy us in the Salvation of Souls. And for this reason the Profess'd Fathers of our SOCIETY, oblige themselves by a fourth Vow, to go in Mission wheresoever his Holiness the Pope shall please to send 'em, whether it be amongst Catholicks Hereticks or Infidels; without pretending any excuse to the contrary, or asking a farthing to maintain them in their Journey. Nor must they be thus perfectly Resign'd, and intirely Obedient only to his Holiness, but also to their other Superiours, both as to any place of abroad, as well as employment; or in whatever else they shall think fit to injoyne them. There is great variety of employments in the SOCIETY, and several Offices and Functions of all sorts, both high and low, which necessarily require a great stock of Obedience in a Man, whereby he may be equally dispos'd for all or any of 'em, according as Superiours shall ordain. Here we may justly admire, the wise Conduct and great foresight; which Saint *Ignatius* had, when he desir'd that Obedience shou'd be the proper Badge and peculiar Mark of the SOCIETY; since he certainly foresaw that we shou'd be imploy'd in many things no less difficult, than painful to Flesh and Blood.

A Father of our SOCIETY, sayd, (and I wish we cou'd all say the same) that he was not afraid of being commanded any thing against the grain; for he was still ready

Tom. III.

K-k

for

In Vis. Ig-
na. l. 2. c. 18.
3 p. conf. c. 1.
8 24. reg. 31.
sum.

for any injunction of Obedience. And 'tis a certain truth, that a Religious Man, who is thus resign'd and totally indifferent as to any command, never troubles himself with what is appointed him, nor withes to pay his Obedience rather to this Superiour, than to that. For true Obedience do's not consider, nor depend upon this or that Person, or this or that thing commanded; for if it shou'd, it wou'd be but a weak and lame Obedience, and bring great fear and apprehension along with it. † *Have you a mind not to stand in fear of Men in Authority?* says the Apostle, *Do well, and you shall be commended for it, but if you do ill, then you have reason to fear 'em.* High way Men and others, that by their Crimes deserve Death, fear every moment to be seiz'd upon, and tremble at the sight of a Justice of Peace. * *Yet, as Saint Chrysostom observes, 'tis neither the Prince, nor the Law of the Land, that fill's 'em with these apprehensions, but they proceed from an ill Conscience, and their own Wickdness.* The same holds in Religion; for the fear you have, do's not come from the Superiour's Authority over you, but from the sense you have of your want of Mortification and Submission. If you therefore wish to live easy and void of this fear, be always ready to comply with Obedience, and be still resign'd to any thing your Superiour shall injoyne you: He that shall do this, shall injoy a perfect peace and quiet of Mind, and Religion shall be to him a Paradise upon Earth.

† Vis non timere potestatem? Bonum fac, et habebis laudem illa. Si autem malum feceris, time. Rom. 13. 3. & 4.

* Timorem enim non facit princeps, sed vestra malitia. Chrys. sup. loc. Apost. sup. cit.

C H A P.

C H A P. III.

Of the First degree of Obedience.

SAINTE *Ignatius*, speaking of this Vertue in the third Part of his Constitutions, says, that 'tis much to our purpose, and very necessary for our Spiritual advancement, to propose to our selves a perfect and intire Obedience. And afterwards, declaring in what this Obedience consists, says, that we are not only to Obey in the Exterior, that is, in barely doing what is Commanded us (which is the first degree of Obedience) but we must also Obey Interiorly, by making the Superiours Will our own: And this Conformity of our Will, is the second degree of Obedience. But the Saint not thinking this enough, bids us advance still farther, and conform our Judgment also to our Superiours; making his sentiment ours, and believing all to be good and just which he commands; in which consists the third degree of Obedience. When our Exterior Action, when our Will and Judgment all agree, and equally conform with what is commanded, then Obedience is most perfect and intire; which it can never be, so long as any one of these three conditions are wanting.

To begin with the first degree: A great diligence and exactness is requir'd in the performance of what Obedience prescribes us. Saint *Basil* says, that we are to act in this, as a Man that is extremely hungry, do's in regard of his Victuals; or as a Man that is much in Love with his Life, in things relating to the preservation of it. Nay says the same Saint, we ought to shew far more earnestness and zeal, than these others do, since Eternal Life, which is the Reward of our Obedience, is infinitely more noble and excellent, than this present Life is, which the others are so careful to preserve. Saint *Bernard* gives us this description of an Obedient Man; † He do's not know what 'tis to delay, and put off the business till to Morrow, he is an

*Fasti. in reg.
brev. interr.
166.*

† Fidelis obediens nescit moras, fugit procrastinum, ignorat tardita-

K k 2

Enemy

tem, præcipit
precipientem,
parat oculos
visui, aures au-
ditui, linguam
voci, manus
operi, itinere
pedes, totum
se colligit, ut
imperantis
colligat, vo-
luntatem.
Bern. serm. de
obed.

6. p. conf. c. 1.
§. 1. reg. 13.
sum. reg. 13.
comm.

* Hoc signum
magni regis
est, camus, &
offeramus ei
munera, au-
rum, thus, &
myrrham.

I ib. 4 de inst.
renaut. c. 12.

In reg. S. Ben.
cap. 5.

Enemy to all kinds of demurs, he prevents his Superiour, and his imposing Obedience, and even gets the start of his Superiours commands. His Eyes and Ears are still open to the least sign, given him; all his other Senses and every part of him, faithfully wait the motion of his Superiour. He does what he is bidden, goes where he is commanded, and is always ready to receive and execute every order of Obedience.

Our Holy Founder speaking of the punctuality, with which we ought to Obey, says, that when the Clock strikes, or the Superiour commands, we must be as ready to Obey as if JESUS CHRIST himself call'd upon us, and at that very instant give over what we are doing; and even leave a Letter of a word, which we have begun, unfinished. This Rule doubly instructs us, first to look upon the striking of the Clock, or a word from our Superiour, as the real Voice of God himself. To do this the better, we may Piously consider, and represent to our selves that disposition of Mind, which the Eastern Sages had, when they saw the Star; and say with them, * *This is the sign of the great King, let us go pay him Homage, and offer Gold, Incense and Myrrhe to him.* This is the Voice of God that calls upon us, let us make haste and Obey it. Secondly, it instructs us to quit at that very moment, the employment we are about, and even leave a letter half form'd. We cannot do better than to follow in this Point, the Examples of some Ancient Fathers, whose Obedience *Cassian* recommends to us. Who speaking of what they did, says, they were continually employ'd. One writ Books of Devotion, another Meditated, some translated Spiritual Books, others were employ'd in Manual Works. And they no sooner heard the Clock strike, or the Superiour's call, but they even strove who should be first out of his Cell; and their haste was so great, that he who was writing, would not allow himself time to finish the letter he had begun: Thus you see how they preferr'd Obedience before all other Duties whatsoever, even their Spiritual Reading, Prayer, Meditation, and all other works of Piety. Here you see, what it was that made 'em such critical and exact observers of Obedience; you see here their punctuality and readiness, such as if God himself had given the Word of Command. Saint *Benedict* recommends this kind of Obedience very earnestly in his Rule, and 'tis from him and other Ancient Fathers, that our

Holy

Holy Founder took his perfect model of Obedience, set down in his Constitutions.

God has been pleas'd to shew by Miracles, how pleasing to him this exactness in Obedience is. There was a good Religious Man, imploy'd in Copying out some written Paper; he was no sooner set to it, and had made only one letter, but the Clock struck, he to comply with the call of Obedience, left it in that manner, and when he return'd, found it all writ in Letters of Gold. Our Saviour himself appear'd once to another Religious Man, in the shape of a little Child, who was no sooner come, but the Bell rung to Vespers, with which call the Religious Man complying, he left little JESUS all alone. At his return he found him still in his Cell, to whom the Divine Infant spoke thus: Your going is the cause of my stay, if you had stay'd I thou'd have gone away. *Rusbrochius* tells us of another Religious Man, who being favor'd with the like Apparition, left the little Infant JESUS, to comply with Obedience, and at his return to his Cell found him, in the shape of a Young Man. To whom CHRIST, sayd, behold how much I am grown since you left me, and so much I am also grown in your Soul, upon the account of your punctual Obedience. The Devil on the contrary is such an Enemy to Obedience. and so jealous of the time we spend in it, that when he cannot rob us of all, nor cheat us into a total disobedience, he endeavours to deprive us of some part of it, by making us less punctual and observant. For Example, the Bell, that calls you up in the Morning, has rung and you heard it, but the Devil strives to keep you still in your Bed. When you are writing, the Bell rings again, to call you to some duty, and he endeavours to make you stay and finish the letter you had begun, and sometimes write out the whole line, if not end the period, or conclude your Discourse; under pretence of not forgetting some fine thought that offers it self. He is always desirous to have the first Fruit and Flower of our Actions; wherefore on the contrary, we ought to make it our business to give them all to God, the Blossom as well as the Fruit; and thus they will be the more acceptable to him. The first as well as the last part, nay even the whole Action, is to be given to God without reserve, if we desire to make him such a Present as may please him.

*Saint Catharine
of Sienna in her
Dialogues. c. 65.*

*In the History
of the Order of
Saint Francis,
6. p. 7. b. 19. c.*

*Rusbroch. tract.
de precip. qui-
busd. virt. c.
9. p. 245. Et
referit B. of
Mon. spir. c. 7.*

Saint

6. conf. c. 1.
9. 1. & reg.
34. sum.

† Verus obediens numquam preceptum expectat, sed solum præfati voluntatem, sciens vel venturum exequitur pro præcepto.
Alb. Mag. 1. de virt. c. 3.

Cass. ubi sup.

* Præcipit præipientem.
Bern. ubi sup.

Saint Ignatius would have this Exterior Obedience extend it self yet farther, and desires that we should not only Obey the Bell or the Superiours Voice, with that exactness we have now spoke of, but also, even the least sign or intimation of his Will. Let every one, says, this great Doctor of Obedience, make it his care and concern, to signalize himself in the practise of Obedience, and not only in things of precise Obedience, but in others also, when they have only a hint of the Superiours Will, without any express order from him. † *He that is truly Obedient;* says Albertus the great, *do's not wait for a command, but as soon as he judges that his Superiour would have it done, he immediately falls to work, without any further orders.* And he add's, that this was what our Saviour himself practis'd, for knowing that it would be grateful to his Eternal Father, if he should dye for our Salvation, he turn'd that knowledge into a command. Cassian speaking of the Ancient Hermits, says, that their Obedience was so zealous and exact, that they did not only Obey the Superiours Voice, but even the least sign of his Will; which made him think that they sometimes foresaw what was to be done; they frequently preventing their Superiours command, and performing what he had only design'd, but not declar'd to them. From hence Saint Bernard took the description of an Obedient Man, which we cited above, where he says, * *That he gets the start of a command, and even prevents his orders by a prompt Obedience.*

Our Holy Founder tells us of three sorts of Obedience. The first is, when we comply with a precept of Obedience, and this we are oblig'd to. The second is, when we do a thing for the least word speaking. This Obedience is more perfect than the other, for he that Obeys at one single word, is certainly more Humble and Submissive, than he that expects a command in Vertue of Holy Obedience. The third is, when we perform the Superiours Will upon the least sign, of it, and without being spoken to. The Saint add's that this last is the most perfect Obedience of the three, and most grateful to God. A Servant who upon the least hint given him, sets himself to work, certainly pleases his Master better, than another that will do nothing without bidding. So in Religion he that is ready to Obey upon the least sign given him of his Superiours Will, is most agreeable to God and Superiours.

Superiours. Saint *Thomas* says, that our knowledge of the **Superiours Will**, is a tacite order, and that our performance of it, is no small proof of a prompt Obedience. This is the Obedience we are to aim at, and the rather; because sometimes, the Superiour will not lay an expresse command upon us, being desirous to treat us mildly, and not give us too great a Mortification; or for fear we shou'd not relish the command. So that suppose you shou'd know, the Superiour to be thus inclin'd, you wou'd do ill in not preventing him, and offering your self to perform, what he secretly wishes you shou'd do. When God design'd to send a Messenger to the People of *Israel*, he spoke so, that *Isay* might understand his pleasure, * *Whom shall I send, or who will go as from me?* The Prophet took the thing immediately, and offer'd himself upon the spot; *Here I am Lord, please to send me.* In the same manner, we ought to present our selves to our Superiour, upon the least notice or signification of his Will.

I cou'd produce many Examples, to shew the readiness and exactness, with which we ought to Obey, but I'll content my self with two. The first is of *Samuel*, who in his Youth waited upon the High Priest *Heli* in the Temple. The Scripture says, that one Night, as he slept in the Temple, where the Ark of God was kept, the Lord call'd upon him, and he immediately got up and ran to *Heli*, saying, † *You call'd upon me, here I am.* But *Heli* told him, * *That he did not call him, and bid him go to Bed again.* He did so, and was no sooner fallen asleep, but the Lord call'd him again. Up he got, went to *Heli* and sayd, † *You call'd me, here I am.* To whom *Heli* answer'd as before; * *Child I did not call thee, go and sleep.* He Obey'd, and God calling him the third time, he got up and went again to *Heli*, saying, as he had done before, *You call'd me, behold I am here.* Upon this, *Heli* understood that it was God who had call'd upon *Samuel*, and therefore bid him, † *Go back and sleep, and if any shou'd call him again, say, speak Lord for thy Servant hears:* *Samuel* return'd and layd down again, and God appearing to him call'd twice upon him, to whom he answer'd in *Heli's* words, *Speak Lord for thy Servant hears.* Upon which God told him, that the Punishment he had threaten'd *Heli* withal, shou'd very suddenly be inflicted upon him. Now let us consider a little *Samuels* very exact and ready Obedience.

3. Thom. 2. 1.
q. 164. ar. 2.

* Quem mit-
tam, & quis
ibit nobis?
Isai. 6. 8.

Ecce ego, mit-
te me. *Ibid.*

† Ecce ego:
vocasti enim
me.
* Non voca-
vi: revertere,
& dormi.

† Ecce ego:
quia vocasti
me.
* Non vocavi
te, fili mi:
revertere, &
dormi.
Ecce ego: quia
vocasti me.

† Vade & dor-
mi, & si dein-
ceps vocaverit
te, dices: Lo-
quere, Domi-
ne, quia audie
servus tuus.
† Reg. c. 3. v.
5. & seq.

bedience. Tho' *Heli* himself tells him he did not call him, and bid him go take his rest, yet for all this *Sammuel* never dreamt of any other Persons. calling him there in the Temple, excepting the High Priest; and therefore he got up three several times, and went to know his Commands. Such ought to be our Obedience towards our Superiours. Our Minds must, like his, be equally dispos'd at all times, for any thing, which we think our Superiour wou'd have us do.

The Second Example is *Abraham*, whose readiness to Obey, when Commanded by God to Sacrifice his only Son, is an admirable model of Punctuality and Obedience.

* Igitur *Abraham* de nocte confurgens.
Gen. 22. 3.

Abraham got up in the Night, says the Scripture, he wou'd not stay till it was Day-light. Upon the receiving his orders (which were very severe for a Father of an only Son) he put himself in a readiness to execute 'em, without the least demur. The Scripture also observes, that he wou'd not permit his Servants to wait upon him to the place of Sacrifice, but bid them stay for him at the foot of the Hill; for no other end, without doubt, but that they might not hinder him from a punctual and faithful compliance with God's Command.

CHAP.

C H A P. IV.

Of the Second Degree of Obedience.

THIS second degree of Obedience, consists in an intire Conformity of our Will to our Superiours, by really making his Will ours. And this is what no Religious Person can be ignorant of, since they are all receiv'd upon this condition. At their first coming this is propos'd to them, and layd down as the first great Principle they are to act by. And when they are bid to consider, that they are come to Religion, not to do their own, but anothers Will; they never fail to answer, that they knew this very well before they came. Thus they are sincerely told their obligation before hand, for 'tis most certain, that 'tis Obedience that makes a Religious Man. Saint *John Climacus* calls * *Obedience the Tomb of our Will, wherein it lyes Dead, and in which a provocation to Humility Lives*. For certainly the very moment we enter into Religion, our Will ought to Dye unto our selves; and by Obedience Live only to our Superiours. Saint *Ignatius* add's, that we must always be ready to execute our Superiours orders, tho' never so difficult and repugnant to Nature. This he calls the Feast of prompt Obedience, for, as other Saints observe, true Obedience is best known in difficult commands: Since Obedience is not easily discern'd, when the thing commanded pleases, and is according to our inclination; which sometimes may prevail more upon us in order to a compliance, than a real submission to the Will of God. But when the command is harsh and very repugnant, and we notwithstanding zealously imbrace it, there's no doubt but that our motive is good, since we are assur'd we do not seek our selves, or our own satisfaction by it, nor aim at any thing but God, and the fulfilling of his Will. Hence we may deservedly commend those Religious, who mistrusting themselves, and fearing to be surpriz'd by Self-love, are really troubl'd when they are put into an

Tom. III.

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employment,

* Obedientia est sepulchrum propriæ voluntatis, & excitatio humilitatis.

* Grad. 4. art. 3.

S. Ign. in reg. 13. c. 31. sum.

employment, that Naturally pleases 'em. They think that they shall find nothing here to do, but to follow their own inclination, and consequently have no Merit; and thus they remain uneasy, till they have acquainted their Superiour with their apprehensions, and the causes of them. On the contrary when they are Commanded a thing, to which they have an aversion, they are glad of it, being satisfied that they do not seek their own Will, but God's. Saint Gregory says, * *That our Will ought to have a part in the Obedience, and something of it's own, when the Command is harsh and troublesome, but nothing at all, when 'tis easy and agreeable.* For instance, our Will ought to have nothing of it's own, when Obedience lays an honorable Command upon us; then 'tis to be purely passive in imbracing the charge; because our Superiour Commands, and because God will have it so. On the contrary when we are appointed to do an Action not only painful, but also mean and contemptible, then our Will ought to have a large share therein, by a ready compliance with it, and perform it with no less Zeal than Love. He that shall do thus, in things which are a little repugnant, will have no reason to distrust the motive of his Obedience in those things, to which he has an inclination. Whereas he that do's not Obey as readily in mean and low Offices, that he has an aversion to, as well as in others that are better, has reason to suspect that his Obedience has more of that satisfaction which he finds in the latter, than of submission of his Will to God. By this means we shall easily know, whether we seek God or our selves in what we do.

Hence it follows, that those who wish for such Commands from their Superiour, as they like themselves, who use little Arts to make him condescend to their Will, and who love to do nothing but where they find a satisfaction, are very ill dispos'd in order to Obedience, or rather have no Obedience at all. Saint Ignatius says, that we are deluded and blinded by Self-love, if we think we practice Obedience, when we endeavour to incline our Superiour, to appoint us what we our selves wou'd have, and he alledges these words of Saint Bernard for what he says; † *He that either openly or covertly endeavours to have his Superiour Command him, what he has a mind to himself, is much deceiv'd, if he pretend any Merit due to such an Obedience: For in this case he do's not Obey his Superiour; but his Superiour,*

* Debet obedientia in adversis ex suo aliquid habere, in prosperis ex suo aliquid omnino non habere.
Greg. l. 35.
Mor. cap. 10.

† Quisquis vel aperte, vel occultè satagit ut quod habet in voluntate, hoc ei spiritus illis pater injungat, ipse se seducat, si forte sibi quâsi de obedientia blandiatur: neque enim in ea se ipse Prælato, sed magis ei Prælatum obedit.
Bern. serm. de trib. ord. Eccles. ad Patr. in ca. titulo.

rather rather Obey him. There is nothing more odious, or more approv'd of in Religion, than this Maxim; yet for all that, we must not pass it over too lightly, since 'tis at the same time, one of the chief and principal Points to be treated of in this matter. One of the things which a Religious Man ought to fear most, is when he has an imployment given him of his own seeking, or when he has made a difficulty to accept of another, which they wou'd have put him upon. For perhaps he may imagine himself afterwards to have done wonders, by the great pains he took in the sayd imployment, and to have Merited much in the sight of God; yet in the end he'll find himself very much deceiv'd, and that he has Merited nothing towards Eternity; because his own Will and not God's prevail'd in all he did. The Children of Israel sayd thus to God, † *Why hast thou not look'd down from Heaven upon us who have Fasted? We have Humbly'd our selves before thee O Lord, and thou seemest not to take notice of us.* And he Answer'd 'em, *Because yee are Glustred with your own Will upon your Fasting Days; that is, in your Fasts you do nothing but what you Will your selves.*

Saint Bernard, having apply'd these words of *Isai* to the same purpose, adds, * *That Self-will must needs be a great Evil, which renders even our good Works so unprofitable and of no service.* Speaking also of Saint Pauls Conversion he treats this Subject, at large, and observes that the first thing Saint Paul did or sayd, after the Light from Heaven had open'd the Eyes of his Soul, was to know God's Pleasure in these words; † *Lord, what wou'dst thou have me do?* This was a sign, says Saint Bernard, of a true Conversion, and an Argument that he had for ever Renounc'd this World, and was fully determin'd to follow JESUS CHRIST, by desiring to know, *What God wou'd have him do.* A short sentence but very comprehensive, pithy, expressive, full of energy, and worthy of all commendation! How few are there now a days, as Saint Bernard complains, that tend to this Perfection in Obedience? How few are to be found now, who intirely Renouncing their own Will, with never to do any thing again, of their own accord, and only desire with Saint Paul, that God's Will may be accomplish'd in them: By saying, *Lord what wou'dst thou have me do?* Or with the Prophet, * *My Heart is ready O my God, my Heart is ready; to do all*
L. 1. 2. you

† Quare jejnavimus, & non aspexisti, humiliavimus animas nostras & nescisti? Ecce in die jejunii vestri invenitur voluntas vestra. *Isai.* 58. 3.

* Grande malum propria voluntas, quæ fit ut bona tua tibi bona non sint. *Bern. serm. 71. sup. Cant. Id. serm. 1. de conversione. Apostoli Pauli.*

† Domine, quid mevis facere? *Act. 9. 6.*

* Paratum cor meum Deo, paratum cor meum. *Psalm. 56. 80.*

* Quid tibi
vis faciam?
Luc. 18. 41.

† Verè cæcus
ille, quia non
consideravit,
non expavit,
non exclama-
vit; absit hoc
Domine. Tu
magis dic,
quid me facere
velis; sic enim
debet, sic om-
nino dignum
est, non meam
à te, sed à me
tuam queri &
fieri volunta-
tem.
Idem Bern.
ubi sup.

you please to command me. But alas the Blind Man in the Gospel, has more proselytes than Saint Paul! The Saviour of the World ask'd the Blind Man, * *What wou'dst thou have me do to thee?* In which words we may admire the Mercy of God, and his Humility in forgetting his Dignity, by stooping thus low to a Poor Man. Where was there ever a Master that desir'd to be inform'd of the Will of his Slave, in order to execute it? † *'Tis clear this Man was Blind, and wanted both reflexion and fear, since he did not cry out upon it, far be such an Action from me O Lord, 'tis I that desire to know thy Will and Pleasure concerning me. 'Tis not fit O my God that thou shou'dst ask, to know my Will and to do it, it is my duty to inform my self of thine, and perform it, tho' with never so much difficulty.* Here says Saint Bernard, you have a portrait of most Religious of these Days. They must, like this Blind Man, be ask'd, *What wou'd you have me do to you?* The Superiour must continually imploy his thoughts in finding out, what every one will soonest Obey in, and accommodate himself to every Mans particular humour; whereas on the contrary, they ought to know his Will, and prevent it by Obedience; since they are come to Religion, not to the end the Superiour shou'd conform and submit to their desires, by only commanding 'em what they please; but rather to live in an Humble submission of mind, ready to perform the Superiours Will, without which there is neither Obedience nor Religion.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

Of the Third Degree of Obedience.

THE third degree of Obedience, consists in a Conformity of our Judgement to our Superiours; in such sort, that as our Will must be one with his, so our Judgement also ought to be the same. So that we ought to look upon all his commands as reasonable and just: And lastly we must submit our Understanding to his, as to the square and rule of our Actions. To understand the necessity of this third degree, you need only call to mind, what has already been sayd; namely that without this, Obedience can never be perfect and intire. This Doctrin agrees with the Opinion of Holy Men, who term Obedience a Perfect Holocaust, in which the whole Man, by the Hands of those whom God has put in Authority, is intirely offer'd up to God, in the Fire of Charity. We find this difference in the Old Law, betwixt a Holocaust and other Sacrifices: In a Sacrifice, one part of the Victim, was Burnt to God's Honor; and another part, was kept for the use of the Priests, and such as serv'd in the Temple; but in a Holocaust, the whole Victim was Burnt, and totally consum'd, without any reserve. In like manner, your Obedience can never be a Holocaust, unless you submit your Understanding as well as your Will; nor can it be intire or perfect, as long as you fail to Sacrifice your Judgement, which is the noblest Power of the Soul. This made Saint Ignatius say, that those who submit their Will, but not their Judgement to Superiours orders, have only one Foot in Religion.

Saint Bernard, in his first Sermon upon Saint Pauls Conversion, is very copious in laying down and declaring, what this Obedience of the Understanding ought to be; and for this effect, assigns it different qualities, which he applies according as different circumstances do require. When Saint Paul was struck with a Light from Heaven, and seiz'd with

As before in
chap. 3.

In the 3. Ign.

l. 5. c. 4.

to the 3. Ign.

to the 3. Ign.

to the 3. Ign.

to the 3. Ign.

to the 3. Ign.

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to the 3. Ign.

to the 3. Ign.

to the 3. Ign.

to the 3. Ign.

† Ingredere
civitatem, &
ibi dicetur tibi
quid te oportet
facere.
Ab. 9. 7.

* Apertisque
oculis nihil
videbat; ad
manus autem
illum trahentes.
Ab. 9. 8.
Hæc planè,
fratres, perfec-
tæ conversionis
forma est.
Id. Bern. ibid.

Climac. grad. 4.
art. 6. 7.

† Non de ma-
jorum senten-
tia iudices, cu-
jus officij est
obedire, &
implere quæ
iussu sunt di-
cente Moysè:
Audi Israël, &
tace.
Hier. epist. ad
Rufin Monach.
Rufin in constit.
Monach. c. 20.

with fear, he immediately cry'd out, *Lord what wou'dst thou have me do?* It was answer'd him, *† Go into the City, and there thou shalt receive thy Orders.* You came to Religion, says Saint Bernard, to know what you are to do.

'Twas for this end that Divine Providence so dispos'd that you shou'd be struck with a fear and dread of God's Judgments, which created an earnest desire in you of serving him, and inspir'd you with a design of entering this holy City of Religion, the School of Vertue and Piety. Here it is that you may learn his Will and Pleasure in all things. The Scripture add's says Saint Bernard, that Saint Paul,

* *Saw nothing, tho' his Eyes were open, when he enter'd the Town, and that those that were with him led him by the Hand.* Here Brethren, continues the same Saint, yee have a lively Figure of a true Conversion, and an exact model of Religious Obedience, which chiefly consists in seeing nothing, tho' your Eyes be open; and in not determining any thing by your selves; but giving your selves totally up into the Hands of your Superiour, and by letting him lead yee where he pleases. Take care, least like Adam and Eve, yee see too clear; whose Eyes were open'd as soon as they had Sinn'd, and they saw themselves Naked and were ashamed. Some may ask me if they were not Naked or did not see clear before their fall? To whom I Answer in the affirmative: But we by an humble submission and by living in that purity and simplicity which they forfeited by Disobedience, may preserve our sight: Never having our Eyes open, to the Faults of our Neighbour, tho' they be never so visible; and by always having em shut in every thing that relates to Obedience.

Saint John Climacus speaking of the necessity we ly under, in order to a restraint in this point, says, *† That we must believe our selves, when our Thoughts and Sentiments thwart Obedience, just as we wou'd do in Temptations against Chastity or our Holy Faith; that is, not stay upon em, but take occasion from em, the more we Abuse and Humble our selves.* Saint Hierom writing to a Religious Man, concerning his conduct in Religion, recommends this Submission of Mind very particularly to him. Do not concern your self, says he, by judging of the orders which your Superiour gives out, nor in examining the reason why they lay such Commands upon you; tis your duty to Obey and Execute their Orders, as Moses declares. *Hear Israël and*

be

be Silent. Saint *Basil* proposes to Religious Men the Example of an Apprentice, whilst he learns his Trade under his Master, as a pattern of their Obedience. He has his Eyes continually upon his Master, he Obeys him in every thing without contradicting, without interposing his Judgment, or without ever inquiring the reason of this or that command, and by thus doing, in a little time he becomes a Master himself. *Pythagoras* his Scholars, had so much submission for him, that his bare Authority was so convincing a Reason to them, that all Controversie was silenc'd, by an *He sayd it.* How much deference then ought Religious Men to have for their Superiour, who is far above *Pythagoras*, and holds the place of *CHRIST*? Ought they not in all questions and doubts of Obedience, to think they have a sufficient reason to submit their Judgments, and believe whatever is commanded 'em, is most convenient for them?

*Pythag. l. 3.
apud Diog.
Laert.*

Ipsè dixit.

Enschinus the Historian tells us of a very good Law amongst the *Lacedemonians*, which forbid all Young People, to meddle with the Government of their Common-wealth, or to Examin whether their Laws were good or bad, or to inquire into their inconveniences, shewing by this, that the Veneration they had for their Ancestors, who had handed these Laws down to them, might suffice to make them believe 'em as just and holy, as if the Godes themselves had made them. And in case any of the Old Men shou'd judge any thing to stand in need of Reformation (because forms of Government change frequently with the times) the Law ordain'd, that this proposal shou'd only be made before the Old Senators, who were to be the only Judges of it; thereby to take away all occasion, of Young Mens losing their respect and veneration for the Laws, which shou'd it once happen, might give a dangerous blow to their Common-wealth. If these wise Heathens wish'd all People to have a respect and esteem, for the 'Laws of their fore-fathers, which were only grounded upon Natural Reason, and look'd upon, only as a means to preserve their Government; with how much more reason ought we Christians and Religious Men, to have the highest veneration and respect for the commands of our Superiour, which are not founded upon bare Natural Reason, but upon the Light of Faith, and the Holy Gospels? Saint *Ignatius* in that admirable Letter which he writ of Obedience, proves clearly, that without this Obedience of the Understanding,

*Euseb. Caesari.
in preparat.
Evang. ex Plat.*

*S. Ignat. in his
ep. of Obedience.*

the

the Will can never perfectly or long Obey, nor perform a command with that exact Perfection, which Obedience requires. He also sets down several inconveniences, which arise from a want of this Obedience of our Understanding, and submission of our Judgement.

CHAP. VI.

Of Blind Obedience.

OUR Holy Founder says, that as there are two ways in God's Church to Salvation; one of which lyes in an observation of the Commandments, and equally concerns all Christians; the other in a practise of the Evangelical Counsels, over and above the Commandments, relating only to Religious Persons: So in like manner there are two sorts of Obedience in Religion; the one is general, common and imperfect; the other perfect, shewing the force and Vertue of Obedience; and teaching us how far a true Religious Man may advance in Perfection. The imperfect Obedience, says this Saint, has Eyes, to it's own disadvantage; the perfect is Blind, and in this Blindness Wisdom and Perfection are clearly perceiv'd. The one discusses every command, the other Obeys without reasoning upon any Point. The first is always more inclin'd to one thing than another, and is never indifferent upon the matter: The second is like the tongue of a Ballance, which without leaning this or that way, still remains in the same equality of mind, and is indifferent to the most different and difficult commands. The first, complies in the the Exterior, by executing the orders, given, but resists interiorly, whereby it disobeys, and consequently do's not deserve the Name of Obedience: The second, is, not only content to do, what is appointed, but even submits both Will and Understanding to that of the Superiour, always concluding that he has reason for what he do's; nor do's it seek out reasons to Obey, nor so much as permit it self, to be led by those which do occur:

The

The bare consideration of the Superiours command, is the only motive why he Obeys, and this is properly blind Obedience, which the Saints and Spiritualists so constantly recommended to us, and have left behind 'em so great Examples thereof in their own Practice. When they call this Obedience blind, they do not pretend to an undiscerning submission to every thing commanded, for instance, when the thing is unlawful. This wou'd be a very dangerous Error, as Saint Ignatius observes. Their meaning therefore is, that in all things, where there appears no Sin, we ought not to argue the case, but to Obey with a Holy simplicity of Heart; concluding our Superiours command, to be conformable to the Law of God; and making the sayd command, and even Obedience it self, the sole motive and reason why we Obey. Cassian calls this an Obedience, † *Without discussion or examination*, for in the first place, we ought to perform down right what is commanded us, and not put our selves upon finding out reasons for it, and afterwards examin 'em. Saint John Climacus, says in the like manner, * *That Obedience is an Act of the Will, without any previous discourse or examination thereof. He calls it also a voluntary Death, a Life void of curiosity, and a depositing or placing of our own judgment in it's safe treasury.* Saint Basil upon these words of CHRIST, † *Feed my Sheep*, which were spoken to Saint Peter, and in him to all Ecclesiastical Superiours, says, that as Sheep follow their Shepherd and are led by him to what place he pleases; so a Religious Man ought to be guided by, and follow his Superiour, by Obeying him blindly, without canvassing or disputing his orders.

Saint Bernard says, * *That Perfect Obedience, especially in beginners, ought not to ask, what? Or wherefore? But endeavour to execute faithfully and submissively, what is commanded.* † *True Obedience*, says Saint Gregory, neither examines the Superiours's command, nor his Intention therein; for he that has once given himself intirely over to the Command of his Superiour; never finds greater satisfaction, than in Obeying his orders. He that knows how to Obey well, do's not know how to interpose his own judgment; since he knows Obedience to be his greatest good. The questioning God's Prohibition, cost our first Parents very dear. Their ruin and ours, took it's date from hence. By this the Devil wrought

3. p. Conf. c. 1.
§. 23. & 6. p. 1.
§. 1.

† Sine discussione, sine examine.
Cass. l. 4. de inst. renunt. c. 10. 24. 25.

26. 41. & lib. 2. de spir. sap. c. 32. & col. at. 18. c. 2. 10.

* Obedientia est inexaminitus atque indiscussus motus: spontanea mors: vita curiositate carens; discretionis depositio; interdictas discretionis. Clim. grad. 4. ar. Basil. in cons. mon. c. 28. † Palce oves meas. Jo. 21. 17.

* Perfecta verò obedientia est, maxime in incipiente, indiscrcta... Hoc est non discernere quid, vel quare precipiatur, sed ad hoc tantum nititur, ut fideliter fiat, quod à majore precipitur. Bernard ep. seu tract. de vir. scilicet ad frat. de monte Dei, & lib. de ord. vitæ, & mor. 1. 1. 2. † Vera obedientia judicium quilibet perfectæ reg. c. 4.

entia, nec præpositorum intentionem discutit, nec præcepta discernit: quia qui omne vitæ majorem subdidit, in hoc solo gaudet, si quod sibi præcipitur, operatur: nescit enim judicare, sed se didicisse obedire: quia hoc tantum bonum putat, si præceptis obediatur. Greg. l. 2. reg. c. 4.

Idem & Cass. ubi sup.

Tom. III.

Mm

their

* Cur præcep-
tit vobis De-
us, ut non
comederitis de
omni ligno
paradisii?
Gen. 3. 1.
Ne forte mori-
amur. Ibid.
† In quocun-
que genim die
comederis ex
eo, morte
morieris.
Gen. 1. 27.

* Nequaquam
moriamini:
eritis sicut dii,
scientes bo-
num & ma-
lum.
Gen. 3. 4. 5.

† Timeo au-
tem ne sicut
serpens Evam
seduxit astutia
sua, ita cor-
rumpantur
sensus vestri,
& excidant a
simplicitate,
quæ est in
Christo.
2 Cor. 11. 3.

* Novitium
prudentem, in-
cipientem, sap-
ientem in
cella diu posse
consistere, in
congregatione
durare impos-
sibile est.
Bern. ep. ad
frat. de monte
Dei, col. 6.
† Scilicet fiat,
ut sit sapiens;
& hæc omnis
sit ejus discre-
tio, ut in hoc
nulla sit ei di-
cretio, & hæc
omnis sapient-

their fall. * *Why, says he, has God forbid yee to Eat of all the Fruit that grows in Paradise? Eve answer'd him, That thereby they might avoid Death.* For God speaking of the Tree of knowledge of good and evil, sayd exprelly; † *The Day yee Eat of this Fruit, yee shall Dye;* and yet Eve began to doubt of the meaning of God's threat. She imagin'd that it was only to fright and scare them, which thought very much dispos'd her to be afterwards deceiv'd. For the Devil lay'd hold upon this advantageous occasion, and told 'em, * *Yee shall not Dye, but thereby come to the knowledge of good and evil, and become like God's your selves;* Thus he perswaded 'em, that God had layd the prohibition upon 'em; for fear they shou'd Eat, and grow as Wife as himself. Eve carried away with a desire of being rais'd above her present condition, gave credit to the Serpent, Eat of the forbidden Fruit, and made Adam Eat with her. Here you see how our first Parents, by doubting and expostulating, disobey'd; and thereby incur'd the Death of their Souls at the same moment, and made themselves subject also to the Death of the Body, and were for ever driven our of the Garden of Eden. This triek of the Devil against our first Parents succeeded then so well, that he has made use of it ever since, against us their Posterity. This made Saint Paul, who knew the Devils craft and cunning, forewarn us of it in these words, † *I fear lest the Serpent, who so artfully seduc'd Eve, shou'd corrupt your minds also, and make yee fall from that simplicity, which CHRIST demands of yee.* Have a care therefore you be not deceiv'd by this old Serpent, apply your self to what is commanded you, by a punctual performance, without ever examining the reasons or motives of it, and this kind of prompt and blind Obedience will serve you, as an infallible Rule, in every thing you do. 'Tis of great importance in the beginning, says Saint Bernard, to accustom our selves to a blind Obedience. * *For 'tis Morally impossible, that a Novice shou'd long keep in his Cell, or persevere in Religion, if he follows the Common Rules of ordinary Prudence; and if he desires to know the reason of every thing commanded him. What therefore must he do, how must he behave himself? † Let him become a Fool, that he may become Wise; let all his Discretion be to have none at all whilst he Obeys; and let his Wisdom and Prudence never appear in matters of Obedience. It belongs to the Superiour to examin and consider well of things, before he Commands;* but

but the Subjects duty, is to execute 'em with Humility, Confidence and Simplicity, when once commanded. In fine the Superiour is to reason the case, and the Subject is to Obey.

tia ejus sit, ut
ia. hac parte
nulla ei sit.
Discernere su-
perioris est,
subditorum
obedire.
Idem ubi sup.

The remarks which the Apostle makes upon *Abraham's* blind Obedience, in doing his duty by preparing all things to Sacrifice his Son *Isaac*, are very fit and proper for our present Discourse. God had Promis'd to multiply *Abraham's* Posterity, like the Stars of Heaven, and Sands of the Sea; and to make him the Father of many Nations. Now *Abraham* had only one Son by *Sarah*, nor was there any hopes of having any more, by reason of their great Age; and tho' he might have expected more Children, yet this very Promise was made to him only in behalf of *Isaac*. God telling him expressly, * *Isaac shall raise Posterity to thee*. Yet notwithstanding all this, when God Commanded him to Offer up *Isaac* to him as a Holocaust, he made no demur, nor doubted in the least of God's fulfilling the the Promise made him; but put all things in a readiness, blindly to execute God's Orders: He took his Son, bound him, lay'd him upon the Altar, and had his Arm lifted up ready to Sacrifice him. † *He still hop'd*, says Saint Paul, *even against hope*, that he shou'd yet be the Father of many Nations. Natural Reason, told him that he had no more Children, when *Isaac* was once taken away; but a supernatural hope vanquish'd this diffidence of Nature; and *Abraham* without relying upon probabilities, firmly believ'd that God wou'd perform his Promise; either by raising *Isaac* from the Dead, or by some other way he did not know of; * *Distrust did not stop him*; because he was strengthen'd by Faith, giving Glory to God, and knowing most certainly, that God was able to fulfill the Promise he had made him. God was so pleas'd with *Abraham's* Obedience, that immediately upon it, he Promis'd him that the Messias shou'd descend Lineally from him, and by that means his Posterity shou'd be as numerous as the Stars, in these following words; † *I have sworn by my self, that since thou hast done this Action, and not spar'd thy only Son for my sake, that I Will bless thee and multiply thy Seed as the Stars of Heaven, and Sands of the Sea-shore. Thy Posterity shall be Masters of their Enemies Towns, and all Nations shall be bless'd in thy Seed; because thou hast Obey'd my Voice*. Consider, says, Saint Hierom upon this place, how much God was

* In Isaac vocabitur tibi semen.
Gen. 21. 12.

† Contra spem in spem credit, ut fieret pater multarum gentium.
Rom. 4. 18.

* Non haesitavit diffidentia, sed confortatus est fide dans gloriam Deo: scilicet quia quaecumque promissit Deus potens est & facere.
Rom. 4. 20.

† Per memetipsum juravi, dicit Dominus, quia fecisti hanc rem, & non pepercisti filio tuo unigenito propter me, benedicam tibi & multiplicabo semen tuum sicut stellas coeli, & velut arenam quae est in littore maris. Possidebit semen tuum portas inimicorum tuorum, & benedicentur in semine tuo omnes gentes terrae, quia obedisti voci meae.
Gen. 22. 16, & seq.

*Cum unico
non patit in
terris, stellas
pro filiis an-
numerare ju-
betur in coelis.
Hier. epist. de
vera circumcis.

pleas'd with *Abraham's* blind Obedience, since he rewarded it so generously, as, * *For one Son, whom he would have Sacrific'd upon Earth, to Promise him a Progeny equal in number to the Stars of Heaven.* The Ancient Fathers had so great a value for this kind of Obedience, and so constantly practis'd it, that whole Volumes are full of the Examples they have left behind 'em: And several of these Examples were ratifi'd from Heaven by Miracles, to make us the more sensible of the Merit of Obedience, and teach us how pleasing it is to Almighty God.

+Mortui es-
tis, & vita
vestra abscon-
dita est cum
Christo in
Deo.
Co. off. 3. 3.

Saint *Ignatius*, following these holy Men, as well in their Practice as Doctrin, instructs us in our duty of Obedience, by things very obvious to Sense; and makes use of the two following Comparisons, no less profitable than proper for that end. All those, says he, that live under Obedience, must know, that they are to suffer themselves to be led, and guided, as the Divine Providence shall Direct, by the Hand of their Superiour, just as a Dead Corps, which permits it's self to be manag'd and carried where you please. Saint *Francis* frequently inculcated this very similitude to his Religious, in the Words of the Apostle, † *Tee are Dead, and your Life is hid in God with CHRIST.* And indeed a good Religious Man ought to Dye to the World in this manner, since his entrance into Religion is a civil Death. Let us therefore Dye this happy Death. A Dead Carcase is Blind, it makes no reply, nor do you hear it grumble or complain. Let us in the same manner be Blind, in order to all critical observations upon our Superiours Actions; let us make no reply to the prescriptions of Obedience. Never grumble nor complain, when commanded contrary to our inclination. Linnen that has been much us'd and is almost worn out, commonly serves for a winding Sheet for the Dead. A Religious Man ought to wish to be treated after the same manner, no less in respect of his Cloaths, than in every thing else: To wear for Example an old torn Habit, and to have the worst and most ordinary things both in his Chamber and Refectory. He that has not a Will thus dispos'd, but frets and troubles himself when he meets with this kind of usage, is not truly Dead to the World, as becomes one of his Profession, but is totally a Stranger to the Spirit of Mortification.

Saint

Saint *Ignatius* says moreover, and 'tis the second comparison he makes use of, that we must be in the Hands of God and our Superiour, like a Staff, which we take in our Hand to walk withal. A Staff go's wherever you carry it; where you lay it down, there it stays; nor has it any other motion, but what it receives from the Hand that holds it. A Religious Man ought to be the same, he must give himself up into the Hands of his Superiour, when put in this or that Office; and whether it be great or mean, he must be content with it, and remain in it without shewing any repugnance at all. If a Staff shou'd once come to make any resistance; and carry it self to some other place, than that in which you layd it; or if it shou'd become rather inconvenient to you than serviceable; you wou'd certainly throw it away. So when you resist him who is to Govern you, and shew your dislike of the place or employment he has put you in; or when there is an opposition in your Actions, and in your Will and Judgment, to those designs he has upon you; it is certain that you rather inconvenience him, than do him the service you ow him. So that if you persist in this awkward kind of humour, you'll soon be thought a burthen, to every Superiour you live withal. No body will know how to deal with you, or how to make use of you; and at last every one will be glad to be rid of you; so that you will be continually toss'd from one House to another. There is no pain in carrying a Staff in our Hand; because it serves us for all uses we put it to; nor ought any Subject to give difficulty or trouble to his Superiour, in whose Hands he is; but on the contrary prove useful and agreeable to him, and give him occasion to say as the *Centurian* did; * *I have Souldiers under me, and I say to this, go, and he go's; and to another come, and he com's; and to my Servant do this, and he do's it.*

* Habeo sub
me milites, &
dico huic:
Vade, & va-
dit; & alij,
Veni, & ve-
nit; & servo
meo, Fac hoc,
& facit.
Matth. 8. 9.

Saint *Basil*, treating of this Subject, makes use of another Comparison, which is also very proper. As a workman, says he, that is making a building, uses all the Instruments of his Art as he pleases, and never finds any of 'em disobedient to his Hand, or to resist the motions he gives 'em; so a Religious Man ought to be a serviceable Instrument, in the Hand of a Superiour, towards a Spiritual building; he is never to make resistance, but do what is appointed him. Moreover, as the Instrument do's not choose it's employment, so the Religious Man ought never to pick out any Office,

*Basil. in conf.
monast. c. 23.*

Office, but leave that and himself also, totally to the care of his Superiour. Saint *Basil* continues his Discourse and says, that as an Instrument do's not Act in the absence of it's Master; because it cannot move of it self, and consequently receives all it's motion from the Artist, who makes use of it; so in the same manner, a Religious Man is to do nothing without orders from his Superiour, nor to dispose of himself, *In the least, tho' for a Moment only*, but at all times, and in every thing wait his motion, and receive all impressions from him.

Ne ad punctum quidem temporis.
Basil. ubi sup.

Le P. Antoine,
Araoz.

Thus you have seen the strict obligation a Religious Man contracts by his Vow of Obedience. And I remember what one of our Fathers sayd, upon this matter, who had been a long time Superiour amongst us, that for fifteen Years together, he never thought of giving a reason of his commands, to any one of his Subjects, thinking that if he had done otherwise, he thou'd have done 'em an injury. Then it was, that they liv'd in such a holy simplicity and so profound resignation, that no body meddled with, nor question'd the Superiours orders. But as soon as the Word of command was given, every one submitted his Judgment so far to it, that he forthwith concluded the thing commanded not only just, but most suitable and best for him. We ought to propose this holy simplicity to our selves, and as the most Ancient in Religion are those who ought to give the greatest Example to others, so it chiefly belongs to them, to make it appear in their submissive Obedience; for they must not think, that their long standing in the Order, gives 'em any right to Examine the Superiours commands, and Priviledges 'em to find fault with their Ordinations.

In ejus vita.

'Tis recounted in the Life of Saint *Ignatius*, that he us'd frequently to say, when he was General of the SOCIETY, that if his Holiness thou'd command him to embark in the first Vessel he found at *Osia*, a Port not far from *Rome*, and to put to Sea without Mast, Sail, Oar, Helm, or any other thing necessary for a Sea Voyage, or for the maintenance of Life, he wou'd immediately Obey him, with a very great Interior satisfaction, and far from having the least uneasiness or repugnance. A Man of Quality hearing him say this, was struck at it, and told him there wou'd be no Prudence in such an Action. Prudence, reply'd the Saint, is more necessary for him that commands, than for him who Obeys in simplicity of Heart.

C H A P.

C H A P. VII.

Of Obedience in Spiritual matters.

TIS not only in things which seem to have affinity with Flesh and Blood, that we are to submit our Judgment to that of our Superiour, but even in those also, which have no relation at all to the Body, but are altogether Spiritual. Who wou'd not think that we might be permitted to swerve a little from the Will and Judgment of our Superiour, at least in these things, sooner than in the other? But this is an Error; for on the contrary, Submission and Obedience of the Understanding is far more necessary here than in the other; because Spiritual things, being of their own Nature Elevated far above the others, the danger is far greater, and the fall far worse, when we have none to direct us. This is a truth so evident, that *Cassian* says, the Devil makes use of nothing more, to Precipitate Monks into Sin, than to persuade them to contemn in Spiritual matters, the Advice and Counsel of the Ancient Fathers, and follow their own proper Lights. The same Author, as also Saint *John Climacus* tells us, of several Hermits who were much given to Prayer and Spirituality, and who also were well advanc'd in Age; yet these trusting too much to their own Lights, and becoming their own Directors, were at last deceiv'd by the Devils Illusions. The Devil prevail'd upon one, to Sacrifice his own Son that liv'd in the same Monastery with him. This Poor Man imagining that he shou'd, hereby become another *Abraham*, who had certainly put it in execution, had not his Son, by seeing him prepare the Cords and whet his Knife, suspected his design, and fled from him. He suggested to another, to throw himself from a Precipice, and made him believe that he shou'd obtain a Crown of Martyrdom by it, and go immediately to Heaven.

Cassian has another Example to this purpose, of *Heron* the Hermit, who was a Man of so great Abstinence, and so

*Cass. 2. coll.
c. 10. 11.*

*Idem ibid. c.
1. & seq.*

so extreemly retir'd, that upon Easter-day when all the Hermits us'd to meet and Dine together, having something allow'd 'em above their ordinary Commons, he stay'd in his Cell, and was abstemious to that degree, that he made no addition to his ordinary fare; which was only Bread and Water. This austere kind of Life made him so Proud, and wedded him so much to his own opinion, that he perswaded himself that he was a great Saint; that he needed not to fear any more danger in this Life, and that if he shou'd throw himself headlong into a Well, the Angels wou'd bear him up, and preserve him from being hurt. Full of this fancy, and not doubting, but that God wou'd work a Miracle, to make his Vertue and Merit known to the World, he threw himself one Night into a deep Well; from whence some of the Brothers, who ran thither upon the noise of his fall, got him out with much ado. half Dead. Notwithstanding this, the Illusions of the Devil had made so great an impression upon him, that for three Days, which he liv'd after it, neither his own unhappy experience, nor all they cou'd say to him wou'd disabuse him; nor was he capable to drive them so far out of his mind, as to think himself oblig'd to Repent his Fact. This is a clear evidence of the great danger there is, even for Persons advanc'd both in Years and Perfection, to rely too much upon their own Judgment, and not to submit to those whom God has plac'd as Guides over 'em. And therefore a holy Man had a great deal of reason, when he sayd, that one that is too confident of himself, needs not the Devil to tempt him, since he is become the greatest tempter and Devil to himself.

*Chrys. homil. 7.
sup. 1. ep. ad
Cor.*

Saint *Chrysostom* tells us, that he who depends altogether upon his own Judgment, tho' he be never so well vers'd in Spiritual matters, is in far greater danger of falling, than one who is a Novice in a Spiritual Life, that gives himself up to the conduct of another. He compares the first, to a skilful Pilot, who trusting to his Art and Abilities, puts to Sea in a Ship that has neither Sail nor Oar; and the second, to a Passenger who being altogether unacquainted with Sea affairs, imbarks in a light Vessel with an experienc'd Master. Wherefore let none deceive themselves by thinking, that in Spiritual Affairs, for Example, in the Spiritual Exercise, or the Practise of Penance and Mortification, they can dispense with Obedience, and guide themselves

selves by their own proper Lights. For, as *Cassian* well observes, a transgression of the Superiour's command out of a desire to Labour, is no less a Disobedience, than a breach of it by Idleness. * *Always remember this Maxim*, says *Saint Basil*, never to do any thing contrary to the advice, or without the knowledge of your Superiour; for these hidden doings are a kind of secret Theft and Sacrilege, they are also extremely prejudicial to you, nor can they ever turn to your profit. I know you look upon 'em to be good, if so, why do you conceal 'em? Why do not you ask your Superiour's leave to do them? He wishes you as well as you do your self, make your address to him, he will not deny you, and then God will bless all your undertakings. Do not expose your self for want of a little submission, to do that which is not only unprofitable, but also highly prejudicial to you; and take care, that God say not to you, as he sayd once to his People by the Prophet *Isai*, † *Offer me no more of your unprofitable Sacrifices*.

As no body must command what is ill, according to *Saint Gregory* and *Saint Bernard*, so no one must Obey in case of Sin. But when the business consists in a bare omission of a good Act, which Obedience prohibits, we are oblig'd to submit to Obedience. The Tree which God prohibited *Adam* and *Eve* to eat of, was not ill in it self, but on the contrary very good and excellent, yet God to give them a fairer occasion, of their Submission and Obedience to their Creator, was pleas'd to forbid 'em the use of a thing, tho' very good and lawful in it self; independent of this prohibition; for without that, they might have very innocently eat of it. A Superiour sometimes do's the same to his Religious that are under his care; he forbids 'em things, that are good of themselves, and this upon account, that at that time, they are either not convenient for them, or else to try their Submission and Obedience, and to give them the Merit thereof.

Saint Basil says, that the Perfection of Obedience has more lustre and beauty in abstaining from good, than from evil; especially when we are commanded the first. His reason is; because we have always an obligation to abstain from evil, independent of any particular prohibition; and on the other side, 'tis only by Vertue of a particular prohibition, that we abstain from what is good in it self; so that we may justly say, that Obedience appears far more

Tom. III.

N. n.

in

*Cassian, Collat.
4. Ab. Dan.
c. 20.*

* Hoc apud te
constanter te-
neto, ut nihil
omnino quid-
quam præter
illius sententi-
am facias.
Quidquid enim
eo inciente
facis, id fur-
tum & sacrile-
gium est tibi-
que exitium,
non autem u-
tilitatem ap-
portat. Esto tu
id bonum ju-
dicet. Nam si
bonum est,
quid ita clam
sit, ac non in
aperto?
*Basil. serm. seu
exh. ad vilam
Mod.*

† Ne offeratis
ultra sacrifici-
um frustra.
Isai. 1. 13.

*Greg. 13. Mor.
c. 13.
Bern. de ord.
vite. c. Mor.
instit. c. 1.*

*Basil. serm. de
instit. Mon. c.
serm. 1. Exerc.
ad piet.*

in this, than in the other; because there is nothing but Obedience here that keeps us from acting. On the contrary, a want of submission in Spirituall, shews us to be of a stubborn and untractable disposition, and too much wedded to our own Will. In other things, for example in Silence, Modesty, Temperance and the like, satisfaction and pleasure have a part in the disobedience, whereas in matters purely Spiritual, and opposite to Flesh and Blood, nothing but a desire to do our own Will, and a proud haughty mind, can move us to disobey. So that whatever comes from hence, even those things we undertake for our Spiritual advancement, and to render our selves more pleasing to God, become hereby, even farther from Perfection, and more displeasing to God and Superiours. There is danger in riding upon a hard-mouth'd Horse, for he not feeling the Bit, a Man cannot command him; so that he is capable of running away with him, and throwing him down a Precipice. Wherefore as a Horse, to be good, must be soft-mouth'd, and yield to the Curb, or to the least check of the Bridle; in like manner, a Religious Man ought to be flexible, complying and easie to be govern'd; never resisting Obedience, but following it's conduct in every thing.

*Evag. l. 1. Hist.
Ecc. c. 13 & 14.
Theod. in Phil.
lot. c. 16. &
26. & refert.
in 7. Syn. ge-
neralis.*

We read in *Ecclesiastical History*, that Saint *Simon Steclites* chose for his retirement, to live upon a Pillar forty Cubits high, and practis'd such Penance there, as the like had never been known before. He was continually expos'd to all the injuries of heat and cold; he pass'd whole Lents without Eating or Drinking; and added so many other Austerities to these, that some thinking it impossible for a Man to undergo such very rigorous Penances, doubted whether or no he were really a Man. Several Fathers of the Desert hearing of this strange, and new way of living, met to consult about it; and the result of their debate, was to send a Messenger to him, in their Names, with this Embassy; what new kind of Life is this that you lead? Why have you forsaken the high-road, which so many Saints have chalk'd out to us, and taken this strange by-way, which never any Man trod before you? The Fathers of the Desert, from whom I come, have met in full Assembly about you, and command you to come down from your Pillar, to live like them, and to distinguish your self no longer by this particular odd way of living. This Messenger had also in his

his Commission, that, in case he shou'd not Obey these orders, he shou'd force him to a compliance; but if he shou'd Obey them, and be willing to leave his Pillar, he shou'd then declare to him, in their Names, that they permitted him to live there, and to continue his new rigid way of living; because they were satisfi'd by this Obedience, that God had call'd him to undertake it. He that had this charge given him, went to the Saint, and deliver'd his orders. He had scarce finish'd these words, *The Fathers of the Desert have ordain'd that you come down from your Pillar*, before the Saint had put himself in a posture of descending, and of obeying their orders. The Messenger seeing this great submission, put the second part of his Commission in Execution, and spoke thus to the Servant of God; *Take courage Father, and continue this sort of Life, with the same generosity you have begun to embrace it; 'tis God that has call'd you to it, your Obedience declares it, and all the Fathers of the Desert are of this Opinion.* Let us take notice here on the one side how readily *Stelites* Obeys, how soon he disingages himself from a holy Action, to which he really believ'd God had inspir'd him; and on the other, what a vast esteem the Ancient Fathers had for Obedience and Submission, since they really believ'd, that they needed no other proof of God's having brought him thither; and on the contrary they requir'd no other sign, but his disobedience to their orders, to conclude his Vocation was not from Heaven.

Confessours and Spiritual Directors take their measures ordinarily after the same manner, and discern by what kind of Spirit their Penitents are led, in those practices of Devotion, which they impose upon themselves. One, for Example, has a great desire to Communicate frequently, and his Confessor will have him not do it so often. Another is much given to Mortification, as Fasting, Disciplines and Hair-cloth; another will Sleep upon the bare Ground; another scarce allows himself any Sleep at all; and so of the rest. Without doubt all these desires of Penance and Mortification are very commendable, and of the two extreames, that which is contrary to the inclinations of our Nature, ought to be less suspected; because there is always reason of distrust, in those things which have an appearance of Self-love in them. But the best and surest way of all, is to give an account of all your Thoughts and Actions to your

N n 2

Superiour

Superiour or Confessour, and act according to their advice; there being no dispute, but that you'll Merit much more, and please Almighty God far better by doing so. This Doctrine ought to sink into our Hearts, it being no less good than infallible. For Example, if a Religious Man designs to impose some Mortification upon himself, and his Superiour, whom he has acquainted with it, forbids him to do it, I dare engage, that he shall by omitting it, be so far from losing the Merit of the good Action he design'd, that he shall make an addition to it, in case he Obeys his Superiour. For first he has the Merit of the good Work he had a mind to do, upon the account of his efficacious willingness to do it; and secondly, he has the Merit of his Obedience; by reason he acquiesces thereunto, and acts not what he himself design'd. Nay, sometimes it may happen, that this Obedience may be far more Meritorious, than the good Works themselves; upon account of the great resignation that is requisite, to abstain from doing what we so earnestly desire; and by submitting our Will and Judgment to that of our Confessour or Superiour. This is what was Reveal'd to Saint *Bridget* in this following manner. This Saint was mightily in love with great Austerities, and her Spiritual Director at once cut off several of those she practis'd, thinking fit to do so for her health sake. She Obey'd him in this, tho' with some difficulty, fearing lest it might retard her Spiritual progress. Being once thus piously uneasy, the Blessed Virgin appear'd to her and told her; Daughter, suppose two Persons agree to Fast one Day out of Devotion, and one of 'em, that is his own Master, performs the Fast, and has his reward for it; but the other living under Obedience, fails to Fast that Day; because his Superiour will not give him leave, certainly this last will receive a double reward; the one, for his real design to Fast, and the other, for his submitting to Obedience.

Lib 4. revel. S.
Brig. c. 26.

Plut. in vit.
Agel.

The Heathens were no Strangers to this sort of Obedience, as we may gather from the esteem they had of it. *Plutarch* says, that *Agessilaus* King of *Lacedemon*, having succeeded well in the War of *Asia*, by restoring the *Grecian* Cities to their Ancient Liberty, and being upon the point to carry his Victorious Arms into *Persia*, he receiv'd order from the *Ephori*, or supreme Magistrates to return home, whereupon he gave over his Enterprize, and put all things in readiness to Obey these orders. Now, if we may believe the same Historian, this Example of Respect and Obedience to his Native Country,

Country, was look'd upon as the greatest and most glorious Action, that ever this Monarch perform'd.

But we need not go so far to fetch Examples, since we have some of this kind, and those most admirable, very nigh at home. Witness the opinion our Holy Founder had of Saint *Xaverius's* Obedience, when he resolv'd to call him from the *Indies*, where he labour'd so profitably in Converting of Souls. Saint *Xaverius* was at this time in the very heat and prime of his Evangelical expeditions. He had Converted many thousands, and was upon the point of gaining whole Kingdoms to JESUS CHRIST. Notwithstanding all this, Saint *Ignatius* writ a Letter and only subscrib'd it with one single *I.* to give him notice to return, not doubting but that upon the receipt of it. He wou'd leave his glorious enterprises, and forsaking the Eastern World, appear forthwith at *Rome*, whither Obedience call'd him. And had not God call'd him to Heaven to receive the recompence of his Labours, before that Letter came to his Hands, he wou'd certainly have comply'd with it.

In his Life.
l. 6. ch. 8.

CH A P. VIII.

A Confirmation of what has been sayd in this Treatise, by several Examples.

TIS reported, that Abbot *Nisteron*, the Day he became Religious, spoke thus to himself;
† Now I make account that *I*, and the *Ass* of the *Monastery* are all one. He carries the burthen they lay upon him, let it be light or heavy, without murmuring or making any resistance. He equally suffers the blows they give him, as well as the contempt the World has of him, without the least resentment. He works continually, and yet is content to feed upon a little Straw. Such ought to be my disposition of mind; moreover, as a Carriers Horse go's not out of the Road when he pleases, nor lies down when he has a mind to't, but

† Ego & asinus unum sumus. Quidquid ei imponitur, hoc portat, & sine mora. In Vit. Patr. lib. de humi. p. 651. nov. imp.

* Ut jumentum factus sum jam apud te, & ego semper tecum.
Psal. 72. 22.

but Obeys his Master in every thing, so a Religious Man, ought to submit to all the orders of his Superiour: Since therefore the Horse do's not work, sleep or eat for his own convenience, but do's all for his Masters service; in like manner the labour, rest, sleep, yea every Action, and even the Life it self of a Religious Man, ought not to have any particular end in them, but be all intended for the advantage of his Order, and the glory of God: * *I am*, sayd the Royal Prophet to God, as a *Beast of Burthen before thee, but yet I am always with thee*. If you desire to be always with God, and profitably labour for your Spiritual advancement in Religion; strive to make your self like a Pack-horse, or a Beast of Burthen, by submitting to all things that shall be requir'd of you.

Surin, in the Life of Saint *Melania*, has the following Example, and he says, that he himself us'd frequently to tell it to his own *Carthusians*. A Young Man went into the Desert, and finding there one of the Ancient Fathers, he begg'd of him to admit him for his Disciple. The good Old Man, being willing to shew him what disposition of mind was requir'd, in order to have his Petition granted, bad him go and beat a Statue, which stood hard by his Cell. He did so: Upon which the Old Father ask'd him, if the Statue complain'd or resisted, to which he answer'd, no. The Father then bad him go and beat it again, and lay a heavy load upon it. After he had commanded him to do this three several times, he ask'd him again whether the Statue had shewn any sign of resentment or impatience. The Young Man told him that he did not take notice of that; because it was a Statue, and incapable of such Acts as these. Here the Man of God took occasion to reply, and to tell him, if you can suffer to be treated by me, as you have treated the Statue, without murmuring, complaining or resisting, stay in God's Name, and be my Disciple, but if you find your self untapable of suffering all this, go back from whence you came; for you are not fit to be a Religious Man.

Saint *Gertrude* liv'd under an Abbess, who tho' she was a Woman of a very Exemplar Life, yet she was but of a harsh and ill temper. One Day as the Saint was Praying that God wou'd sweeten her humor, and make it more agreeable, our Saviour spoke to her after this manner; why do you ask, that she shou'd be free'd from an imperfection, which

which gives her such frequent occasions of humiliation in my sight, upon account of those failings which her warm temper and impatience cause in her? Besides, what Merit wou'd you have in Obeying her, if she were of a sweeter temper? I permit this imperfection in your Superiour, for the exercise and improvement of your Obedience and her own Merit.

Blosius has also a Story of the same Saint *Gertrude*, very like unto this: One Day, says he, she offer'd up her Prayers to God, for a certain Superiour of a Congregation, and begg'd earnestly of him, that he wou'd please to free him from a fault, he was very subject unto. Whilst she was at her Prayers, our Saviour appear'd to her, and sayd, the same excess of Goodness and Mercy that mov'd me to Institute that Congregation, causes me to permit imperfections in those that govern it, thereby to increase the Merit of those, they have command over; for there is more Vertue in submitting to the orders of a Person, whose faults we know, than to one, whose faults we know not. When I permit Superiours to have their failings, and to forget themselves sometimes by reason of Temporal Affairs, which they must be employ'd in, 'tis to the end they shou'd from thence take occasion to Humble themselves the more, and that Subjects may at the same time increase in Vertue, by the defects of their Superiours. After the same manner, the faults, as well as the virtues of Inferiours, may serve sometimes to augment the Merits of Superiours. These words fill'd her with admiration, to see how God's Infinite Goodness and Wisdom, disposes all things for the advantage and good of his Servants; and that even those defects he permits in 'em, shou'd serve and help to render 'em far more Perfect.

Saint *Athanasius*, in the Life of Saint *Anthony*, says, that those Ancient Hermits that Consecrated themselves particularly to Obedience, ordinarily sought for harsh Superiours, who wou'd treat 'em rudely, and never shew any liking, of any thing they did for 'em; and the more difficult the Superiours humor was, the more readily they Obey'd him. The ordinary custom observ'd in those Days amongst 'em, was, that two Solitaries shou'd put themselves under the Conduct and Government of an Ancient Father, as his Scholars; and serve him in every thing as a Servant do's his Master; he having equal Authority to

Correct

Correct and Chastise them, as a Master do's his Servant, when he fails to do what is commanded him. And sometimes they treated these their Disciples very hardly, either out of a severe Nature, or else to exercise their Patience. As Saint *Pachomius* did to his Scholar *Theodosius*, to cure him of Vain-glory. And Saint *John Climachus*, says, that the suffering these hardships and injuries, was a tryal which lasted till they were thirty Years old.

Collat. 18. c. 14.

Cassian tells us of a Lady of *Alexandria*, who was so much in love with suffering, that not content with what God was pleas'd to inflict upon her, judging it too little, she most earnestly sought after more occasions of suffering and exercising her Patience. Wherefore the Church of *Alexandria* maintaining a great many Poor Widows in those days, this Person of Quality went to Saint *Athanasius*, to desire him that one of 'em might live with her; for whom she wou'd provide, hereby to ease the Church. The Holy Bishop very much commended her design, and appointed her one that was both Pious and good humored, whom she kept with her, and for some time took great care of her even waiting upon her her self. But this poor Woman being always praising the good Lady, and thanking her every moment for her care and goodness towards her, made the Lady address her self once more to Saint *Athanasius*, and to complain, that she had ask'd a Woman of him that might try her Patience, and and give her an occasion of Merit by serving her, and that he had not granted her request. The Bishop not well understanding at first what she wou'd be at, thought that they had not executed his Orders; but informing himself how the case stood, and finding they had given her a holy sweet temper'd Woman, he presently knew the reason of her complaint, and told her that he wou'd take care to redress the mistake. Whereupon he gave new orders that they shou'd choose out another, of a very harsh froward and even intollerable humor; which was very easily done. And they having pitch'd upon a testy, melancholy, stubborn, cholerick and peevish old Woman, they sent her to the Lady, who carried her home with her, making it her business to shew more Humility and care towards her, than she had done to the other. But for her recompence she now meets with nothing but ingratitude, affronts, curses and such like ill returns. For this ill Woman always contradicted her, and reproach'd

proach'd her every moment, that she had brought her to her House, not to treat her kindly as she pretended, but to put her upon the point of despairing; nay sometimes she was so very Passionate, that she was ready to fall foul upon her, and even to beat her. The good Lady suffer'd all this, without saying any thing to her; nay the worse she was treated, the more careful and ready she was to serve her, and finding great benefit to her Soul, from this continual Exercise of Patience and Humility, she went to return her most humble thanks to Saint *Athanasius*, for having given her one, that had so well try'd her Patience, and furnish'd her every Day with new matter of Merit. And this Lady having liv'd some time in this Charitable Practice of Mortification, Dy'd most happily in our Lord.

Abbot *Pemen*, Novice to Abbot *Joseph*, says, that this holy Man us'd to send him every Morning, to a Fig Tree that belong'd to the Monastery, to take his break-fast of green fig's; which was a very strange thing, considering the rigorous Abstinence these Hermits Profess'd. One Day Abbot *Joseph* according to his usual custom, bid him go to the Fig Tree, but it being Friday, he durst not Eat, being afraid to break a Fast, so Religiously observ'd by all the other Hermits. However this disobedience left a Scruple of Conscience behind it, which made him go to his Abbot and say, pardon me dear Father, and give me the liberty of asking a Question. Whence comes it that notwithstanding the strict Abstinence we Profess, that you bid me every Morning take my break-fast of green Fig's, and particularly upon a Friday too? I assure you, that the shame of not Fasting upon Friday, according to the general custom, would not permit to Eat any Fig's to Day; yet nevertheless I feel some Remorse, for not having Obey'd your Commands; since I am persuaded they are always Just and Reasonable. Son, says, the good Old Man to him, the Fathers of the Desert, do not at first command their Religious, things which seem feasible and reasonable, but on the contrary, such as are odd and extravagant, for a trial of their Submission and Resignation; and when they once perceive that they comply without difficulty or replying, they never more put 'em upon such experiments, but employ them in what is really necessary, according to the custom of their Order.

*Abba Pemen.
in vis. Patr.*

We read in the Lives of the holy Fathers, of a certain Vision which an Old Hermit had, in which he saw four distinct Orders, or Ranks of the Blessed in Heaven. The first Order, was of those who had been visited with long Sickness, but bore it Patiently, and Bless'd God for it. The second, consisted of those who had serv'd the Sick in Hospitals, or receiv'd Poor People and Pilgrims, and had been employ'd in such like Charitable Offices. The third, were those that had left all, and retir'd into the Desert to Pray, and to live in Poverty, Abstinence and a Mortification of their Senses. But the fourth, and highest degree was made up of those, who for the Love of JESUS CHRIST, had Dedicated themselves to Obedience, and totally subjected themselves to the Will of another. These last wore Chains and Collars of Gold about their Necks, and were far more-bright and glorious than the others. The holy Man surpriz'd to see this wonderful sight, ask'd why these that were last, had a greater share of Glory, than either the Hermits or the others had? To whom 'twas answer'd, that the Hermits and those others, that had exercis'd Acts of Charity, follow'd their own Will in what they did; Whereas those who had devoted themselves to Obedience, had Sacrific'd their Will to God, who esteem's no Sacrifice like that of the Liberty of our Will; Man having nothing more Noble or Precious to Offer him, and that those Collars of Gold were the Réward, due for their having yielded their Necks to the Yoke of Obedience.

This Story is much like that which is told of Abbot *Pambo*. There were four Hermits of extraordinary Vertue, who went one Day to pay him a Visit. The one afflicted his Body with continual Austerities; the other made profession of most rigid Poverty; the third was daily employ'd in Charitable Offices towards his Neighbour; and the fourth was one who had liv'd in a most submissive Obedience; for two and twenty Years. The holy Abbot prefer'd the last before the other three; by reason that in renouncing his own Will, he had made himself a Slave to another Mans, but the others had still follow'd their own Wills in the Practice of their Vertues. After this he added, that whosoever shou'd follow this Obedient Mans Example, and be constant in it to the last, might justly be styl'd a Martyr.

C H A P. IX.

From whence proceeds that opposition we find in our judgement, to the orders of Obedience.

IT ordinarily proceeds from a want of Mortification; but you'll perhaps tell me, that to say so, is not enough; for every one knows that the greater our Mortification is, the greater is our simplicity in Obeying: And 'tis the same, as if a Man shou'd tell another, that inquir'd into the cause of Pride, that it proceeded from a want of Humility. Wherefore since you do not rightly apprehend my meaning, I'll explain my first proposition thus. Our unmortifi'd Passions, our hankering after little Conveniences, our eye to our own Will, and a want of resignation to all the orders of Obedience, are the reason, why we find so many ways to colour our Disobedience, when we are commanded what do's not please us. Let any one seriously reflect and examin very well, from whence those Lights and Sentiments which are opposite to Religious Obedience do proceed, and he'll find that they come thickest upon him, when he has some repugnance to what is commanded; when he cannot be Master of what he wishes and desires; when he is mortifi'd and touch'd to the quick; but when the command is easie and agreeable, then no reason occurs to us to prove it unreasonable; nay we judge it as a thing most fitting, and applaud their Wisdom and Prudence that ordain'd it.

Saint Hierom writing upon these words, * *Ephraim is become as a Dove that is taken, and without Courage*, ask's himself the Question, why *Ephraim* shou'd be compar'd to a Dove, rather than to any other Bird? And answers, that all other Birds expose their Life to defend their Young ones: For Example when they see a Bird of Prey, or a Snake make towards their Nest, they flutter about it and make the best defence they can; and when they are not able to hinder the loss of their Young ones, they mourn for 'em

O o 2

in

* Et factus est Ephraim quasi columba seducta, non habens cor. Osee 7. 11.

† Sola colum-
ba ablatus
pullus non
dolet, non re-
quitit.
Hic, ubi sup.

in melancholy complaining Notes. 'Tis only the Dove, that uses no endeavours at all, to save her Young ones; † *She shews no concern for their being taken away, nor do's she endeavour to find 'em again.* This is the reason of the Comparison. When our Saviour bid us imitate a Dove, it was partly, to teach us to shew no resistance, to suffer without complaining, and to give no sign of grief, when we are depriv'd of our little ones; that is, of such things as we have the greatest inclination to, are most fond of. Thus you see, how this opposition of our Judgement to the orders of Obedience, proceeds from a want of Mortification in us, and from the repugnance we find, when we are commanded what is not according to our Will; and consequently the best remedy against this Temptation, is to Mortify our Passions, to Deny our Will, and to be so far resign'd, as to be really indifferent, to whatsoever Obedience shall command.

Hence you may learn why the Fathers of the Desert, those most excellent Spiritual Men, exercis'd their Scholars so much in Obedience, by commanding 'em, things in appearance unreasonable, to try their Submission, and habituate them to deny their own Will, and never interpose their own Judgement in what related to Obedience. Their commands, tho' they seem'd strange and odd, were by them esteem'd most Rational; because the Mortifying our Passions, and the annihilating (as it were) our own Will and Judgement by such holy Practices, is of far greater importance, than all we can gain by following other Methods. For by this we gain a great Victory over our selves, this helps also much to our Advancement in Vertue; when thus we lose our own Will and Judgement, and leave them in the Hands of our Superiour; thus we lose to gain, and gain by losing. When one undertak's, to break a Horse for Service, he sometimes makes him Pace, sometimes strikes him into a Gallop; rides him now and then the Ring, where he teaches him to turn upon a sudden; sometimes he runs him full speed, and stops him in the middle of his career; and all this is done, to accustom him to Obey, and break him of his bad tricks. 'Twas for this reason that great Spiritual Directors did the same, to those that were under their Tuition. Saint *Antony* made his Disciple *Paul*, first sow his Habit, and afterwards rip up the Seams; to make Baskets of Willows or Palms, and then pull them in Pieces. Others made their Scholars draw Water
out

out of a Well, and to throw it in again. And we read, that *Saint Francis* commanded *Friar Mace*, his Companion, to turn round in the highway, till he even fell down again for giddiness. He made also those that ask'd the Habit of his Order, plant Cabbage and Lettice with their Roots upwards; and did all this for no other End, but to try their Obedience, and even to rob them of their own Will and Judgement so far, as that no mark of either shou'd remain. I wish to God these practices, were in use at this Day more than they are. For if once Inferiours cou'd suffer without grumbling, to be commanded to undo what they have done well, they wou'd not take it ill when reprehended, for what they have done amiss.

But since the Mortification and Resignation we speak of, suppose a very rare and extraordinary Perfection, which is not got upon a sudden; we may try if we can obtain it, by even turning our want of Mortification to our advantage; by having a real sence of it, and attributing thereunto all these motions of our Will and Judgement, which are opposite to Obedience. Thus we shall prevent it's doing us any harm at all; for being once perswaded that the opposition we find comes from thence, we shall take little or no notice of it, and give no credit at all to it. One that knows himself to be really Sick, is satisfi'd that he must not have every thing he desires; for Example, that he must not drink as often as he is thirsty; and tho' bleeding be painful, and physick unpleasant, yet for all that, he admits of both as good for him: Because he do's not listen at all, to his own Inclination or Aversion, but wisely submits to the Doctor, complies with all his Prescriptions, and believes that every thing he ordains tends to his good. His being satisfi'd of his indispotion, makes him diffide in himself, and give himself totally up to one, that he knows can cure him. We are Sick of Self-love, and a thousand other disorder'd Passions, we desire what is bad for us, nothing will relish or go down, that is good for our Distemper. Wherefore since the case stands thus, let us imitate the Sick Man, who has a mind to recover; let us distrust our selves in every thing, and believe our Superiour, who is careful when we are Sick to find out means for our recovery. Let us persuade our selves that all his orders are Discreet and Rational; and that all our suggestions and hints to the contrary, are no other than the raving and odd fancies of a distemper'd Brain. By this means we shall not

not only receive no damage from our thoughts, and those little arguments that start up against Obedience, but even make our advantage of them, by conforming our selves so much more to the Practice of Obedience. For then you will immediately reflect that you are indispos'd, and have lost your Taste, and therefore you find an aversion to what may be most for your good. This very reflection ought to be a certain sign to you, that the aversion and inferior difficulties which you feel, prove the thing offer'd you, for Example your Superiours ordination, to be very good.

Nor is this only an admirable remedy against a Disobedient, but also against a rash and censorious Judgement of our Neighbour's Actions. Wherefore when your Brothers humor or proceedings shock you, you cannot do better, than turn your thoughts against your self, and lay your Brothers fault at your own door; saying certainly I deceive my self, 'tis my own Vanity that makes me judge thus rashly of others, and gives me the desire, I have that others shou'd square their Actions according to my Judgement. This blindness to my own failings, and this ill humor in me, makes me to interpret good for evil, and to take every thing in the worst sense. The fault is not my Brothers, but my own. Lastly, to know a Temptation, is an extraordinary remedy against it. A Hunts-man lays his Nets as privately as may be, and lets 'em scarce be seen, otherwise he wou'd take neither Bird nor Beast in them. So the Devil when he Tempts us, endeavours not to shew his Cloven Foot, but to disguise the Temptation with some fair pretence. * *He Transforms himself sometimes into an Angel of Light*, and casts a mist before our Eyes, to make us believe his dark Illusions, to be God's Inspirations. God deliver us from those Temptations which are thus disguis'd under a colour of good. For Example, when you have an ill opinion of your Brother, and at the same time are perswaded, that it do's not proceed from Passion or any other Temptation, and that 'tis the love of Truth, not any private Interest that makes you speak; and that all the World, had they been in your place, wou'd be of the same mind with you; 'tis then I say that the Temptation is dangerous, and the Remedy hard to be found; for there is nothing more to be fear'd than Evil, when 'tis thus disguis'd; and the Devil is also most to be suspected, when he turns Hypocrit. When you are Tempted fairly, and in open

* Ipse enim
Satanas trans-
figuratur se in
Angelum
lucis.
2 Cor. 11. 14.

open Field, you may several ways help your self in order to overcome it; but when you are set upon in the dark, and do not know that 'tis a Temptation, but on the contrary think it an effect of Justice and Reason, how will you be able to disingage your self from it? Or how will you defend your self against an Enemy you do not know, nay whom you suppose to be your Friend? A great Servant of God us'd to say, that he was not afraid of those faults, which he knew and detested in himself, but of those which he did not know, or at least excus'd, or made very little or no account of 'em.

But to return to our Subject; I say, that as often as we find our Judgement elath with Obedience, we cannot have a better Remedy, than to turn this opposition against our own selves; and attribute it all to Pride and an unmortifi'd disposition of Mind. We have but too much reason to do this; since we know, that our Flesh and sensual Appetite, never want a plausible pretence for what they like; and on the contrary find a thousand inconveniences for what they dislike. We are not ignorant that Passion and Self-love make things appear to us, otherwise than they are. For as one that is extremely thirsty, fancies Water the best of Creatures; because the circumstance he is in, bialses his Judgement too far; so those things which flatter a violent Passion in a Man, appear to him otherwise, than what in reality they are; because his present disposition of Mind, influences and over-sways his Understanding. Since then we know for certain, that we are not quite disingag'd from terrene Affections, and that we are as yet much subject to our Passions, the surest way is not to rely upon our own Judgement, but to look upon it, either as distemper'd and full of troubl'd notions, or else as an Enemy, against whom we ought to stand upon our defence.

Moreover we must not rest content, when we do not give way to this opposition of our Judgment against Obedience, but endeavour to draw profit from it, by making it the occasion of our greater Humiliation; and say, how can I be so Proud, or presume to prefer my own Judgement before my Superiour's? Did I not come to Religion to be every on's Foot-stool, how dare I then lift my self up above him, who is the Head and Superiour of us all? I did not come hither to Command, but I came to Obey; not to Govern, but to be Govern'd; 'tis above my Sphere

to

to be Judge of my Superiour, it belongs to him to be Judge of me. This remedy may be very serviceable to us; in all sorts of Temptations, and there is no better way to turn them to our advantage than this. For Example, when Pride or Vanity fill's our Mnds, then we are to make the best use can be made of 'em, which is to Humble our selves in the sight of God. And when the Devil endeavours to poison our best Actions with Vain-glory, and make us Proud even of an Act of Humility; we must then endeavour to turn his poison into an Antidote, and preserve our selves by it; by making our Pride, the Subject of our greater Humiliation, and Debasement; saying, how can I, who am nothing but Frailty and Corruption, be Proud? Is it possible that those things which ought to create shame and confusion in me, shoud puff me up and make me Vain? How can I think of gaining Men's esteem and praise, since I deserve nothing but their contempt? To know how to turn the Devils Arts, whereby he intends to ruin us, to our Advantage, is an admirable counter-battery against all his Attack's. 'Tis then that with *David*, we shall * *Draw safety from our Enemies, and from the Hands of all those that Hate us.*

* Salutem ex
inimicis nos-
tris, & de in-
nu omnium
qui oderunt
nos.
1. *Inc. 1. 71.*

There are also several other ways, to prevent harkning to our own Judgement, and of perswading us to a distrust of it upon all occasions. First, by considering, that if it be a part of Prudence, not to trust our own Judgement too far in all things we do, much more ought it to be so, when there is Interest in the case; it being a most approv'd maxim in Morality, that no Man is a fit Judge in his own cause. Self-love and Passion continually blind us, they deprave our Judgement in our own concerns, and therefore 'tis neither convenient nor good; to refer the matter to our own, but our Superiours Judgement; and believe his to be the best Standard of Reason and Equity. Secondly, by imagining that a Subject sees no farther than what his private Reason suggests; and that the Superiour sees this as well as he, and sees much farther than the Subject's sight can reach to. So that if we regard only the particular reasons of the Subject, perhaps it woud be better to comply with his Sentiment; but if we cast our Eyes upon the general Motives, and the common good which the Superiour is guided by, then we shall find it much

more

more expedient to perform his commands. This great truth do's not only hold in Spiritual Matters, but in all the Laws of Human Prudence. For certainly 'tis not only an indiscretion, but even a vast presumption, to Judge positively of our Superiour's orders, upon some small reasons, that present themselves to our mind, without reflecting, that he has examin'd the business as well as we, and that for several reasons of great importance, he has been oblig'd to pass by those very inconveniences we boggle at. Saint *Austin* discoursing upon this subject, furnishes us with this proper comparison, and says, the Soul animates the whole Body; yet it's chief Functions are seated in the Head, where the five Senses are lodg'd: None of which (Touching only excepted) is committed to the Body. For this reason, the Head has the highest and noblest place in the structure of Man, and the Body being under it, ought to submit to it's Conduct and Government, as to it's Superiour. What the Head is, in respect of the Body; that a Superiour is, in respect of his Subjects. For he being the Head, he has all the five Senses; but you being only one part of the Body, which he is the Head of, do only participate of the Sense of Touching. You only Touch, one Reason, the Superiour all: He Sees, Hears, and knows all that ought to be consider'd in the matter; and therefore 'tis very just that you shou'd Subscribe and Submit your self to the care and management of this your Head. 'Tis an ordinary saying, that an *Ignoramus* is clearer sighted in his own affairs, than a Wise Man in another's business. How much more insight will a Wise Man have in his own concerns, than he that meddl's with, and judges of 'em without knowing what they are? † *Do not Judge your Judge*, says *Salomon*, because he Judges aright. Consider how great a folly 'tis to Judge of any matter, when you are ignorant of all it's motives, circumstances and dependences, which you can never come to a knowledge of, nor is it fitting you shou'd. Another help toward this submission of our Judgement to our Superiour, may be drawn from a consideration of his care and superintendency over the general good of his Community and Order, whereas you being only a private Person, look no farther than your self, and your own particular conveniences. And who is it that do's not know, that the Publick good is to be preferr'd before the Private? We see this in Natural Causes, which sometimes cease to Act according to their proper Inclinations,

Toma III.

P p

and

† Non iudices contra iudicem quoniam an secundum quod iustum est iudicat. Eccl. 8. 17.

Propter perfectionem universi.

and even use violence to themselves. For the good of the whole, that's, for the Perfection of the Universe. Thus Water, to hinder a Vacuum, which Nature abhors, when on the sudden you turn a Bottle upside down, hangs for some time without falling, and even retires upwards till a sufficient quantity of Air is enter'd. Particular Persons ought to imitate Nature in this, when the general good is concern'd, they must forgo, and deny their own private Inclinations, and quietly yield to the Superiour's, who has a general care of the said publick good. Lastly, the experience we have, or at least ought to have of our selves, is a very proper means to prevent, our giving credit to our own Judgement. How many things have we believ'd, how many things have we given out for certain and infallible, when afterwards being disabasd, we have found them to be otherwise; and met with that Confusion, which rashness and too much credulity bring along with 'em? If another Person shou'd deceive us twice or thrice, we shou'd never trust him more; why therefore do we still trust our own Judgement, that has so frequently impos'd upon us? This experience of Man's Ignorance, and his being too easily deceiv'd by himself, is the reason why Old Men are slow and wary, in deciding those very things, which Young Men determine without the least hesitation.

C H A P.

C H A P. X.

The Explication of Saint Pauls three Arguments for Obedience.

OBET your Superiours, and be Subject to them; for they watch continually, being to give account of your Souls; and Obey them so that they may discharge themselves of their Office with joy, not sorrow; for that wou'd do you no good. These words contain the Apostles three Arguments, to persuade us to Obey our Superiours, in every thing where no Sin appears (as we have sayd already and shall suppose in what shall be sayd hereafter) 'tis the Holy Ghost that speaks in Saint Paul, and 'tis impossible that it shou'd dictate any thing which is not good and profitable for us. The first Argument is drawn from our Superiours, *Continual watching over us, as being to give an account of our Souls.* And without doubt this assurance of always doing well if we Obey, is one of the greatest comforts and blessings of a Religious Life. The Superiour may be sometimes faulty in commanding this or that, but the Subject can never be so, by his obeying; for God will only ask you if you have done what was commanded you, and if you can give a good account of your self in this point, you may be sure of your discharge; for you will not be ask'd, if what you have done was to the purpose, or the best thing you cou'd undertake; since this do's not belong to you; 'tis your Superiour that must give an account thereof, and not you. As long as you comply with Obedience, if any thing be amiss, God takes it off from your account, and places it upon your Superiours. And for this reason, Saint Hierom speaking of the advantages of Obedience broke out into these words, * *O sovereign Liberty, O happy and holy Security, which almost places us in the happy State of Sinning no more!*

† Obedite præpositis vestris, & subiacete eis. Ipsi enim pervigilant quasi rationem pro animabus vestris reddaturi, ut cum gaudio hoc faciant, & non gementes: hoc enim non expedit vobis. Hebr. 13. 17.

* O summa libertas, quæ obtemperanti vix possit homo peccare! Hieron. in reg. Mon. c. 6.

This assurance, that we always do the Will of God, is one of the greatest benefits, which we of the SOCIETY enjoys who are employ'd in charitable Offices towards our Neighbour. For tho' we had design'd to lead a good Life in the World, yet we thoud' still have been at a loss, in determining whether taking pains for our Neighbours Salvation, or the bare attending to our own, wou'd be most grateful to God. At present there is no doubt or difficulty in this case; because the Institute of the SOCIETY, which God has call'd us unto, is to labour and help toward the Salvation of Souls; and since we know that we execute God's orders by doing so, we must of necessity be very certain, that our labours are grateful to him. Had you remain'd in the World, perhaps you wou'd not have ventur'd to hear Confessions, but in case you had, there you'd still have remain'd this doubt, whether you had follow'd God's call, or your own choice in doing so; and whether it might at last turn to your good or harm. Whereas now you hear Confessions, and exercise the other Functions of the SOCIETY with an assurance, that you fulfil the Will of God by performing 'em. For 'tis not you, but your Superiour that has engag'd you in these duties; nor do's it belong to you to judge whether you be fit for them or no. That is the Superiours charge, who has pitch'd upon you, and is oblig'd to watch continually over you, since he must give an account of your Soul.

Clim. grad. 4.

Saint John Climacus is of the same opinion, who speaking of Obedience, says, that it do's excuse us before God. And 'tis certain, that if you answer Almighty God, when he asks you, why you did this or that; that you were commanded to do so by your Superiours, you'll need no other excuse, or discharge for so doing. The same Saint also call's it the making of a Voyage a Sleep, and the securest way of Sailing. For as a Passenger in a good Ship, Commanded by an able Seaman, has nothing to trouble his Head withal, but may Sleep securely, because the Commander is careful and vigilant: So a Religious Man that lives under the Yoke of Obedience, go's to Heaven Sleeping, that is, by totally depending upon the conduct of his Superiours, who are his Pilots, and no less careful and vigilant than the other. And surely 'tis no little happiness, to be carried in the Arms of another, throu' all the difficulties and storms of this Life; which is a favor that God

God vouchsafes to all those, who live under Obedience. 'Tis the Superiour that is charg'd withal, and who bears the burthen; Subjects need not concern themselves, whether this or that be fittest to be done, they have nothing else to do, but to live in repose, and rely upon their Superiour, who is their Guide.

The advantage which Religious People have, in being thus deliver'd from the difficulty and uneasie disturbance which Secular Persons find; and in knowing the infallible way to Heaven, has induc'd many Devout Persons to lift themselves under Obedience. For tho' they be never so well imploy'd in the World, they may still doubt, whether God call'd 'em to those employments; for every Man has not the same call, even to what is good; much less to such an Office, which perhaps he is no ways fit for; as for Example the care of Souls. This made a grave Doctor say, that he had rather pick Straws by Obedience, than do the greatest Charity imaginable of his own choosing. Because in the first, we are sure that we do God's Will, but our own choice renders the second suspected. Nor do's Obedience only give us this security, and free us from unquiet fears, in things, that relate to our Neighbour; but also in what concerns our own Spiritual advancement. For suppose I were now in the World, and had a desire to serve God, I shou'd perhaps often doubt whether I Eat too much or not enough, Slepe more or less than I shou'd do, perform too great or too small Penances; allowe too much or too little time to my Prayers, and so of other things. Whereas in Religion I am exempted from these inconveniences; for here I only Eat what they give me, Sleep only as long as my Rule permits, do what Penance is appointed me, and imploy all the time in Prayer that my Rule assign's me. All things are so well weigh'd and regulated by my Superiours, that I cannot doubt of my fulfilling God's Will; as long as I keep this high road of Obedience. But this is not all, the happy quiet of Religion, do's not confine it's Charity to the Soul alone, it go's farther, and extends it's care to the Body also; so that a Religious Man needs not trouble himself for Temporals, any more than he that embark's in a Ship, well furnish'd, with all Provisions necessary for Mans use. The Superiour continually watches over both Body and Soul. He provides for our Diet and Cloathing, to the end we may

Cassian. collat.
9. cap. 13.

may employ our selves more freely in the Service of God. Which is so considerable an advantage, that as *Cassian* accounts, it engag'd the Abbot *John*, after twenty Years Solitude, to put himself once more under the Obedience of a Superiour. This holy Man having liv'd in a Monastery thirty Years, retir'd himself into the Desert according to the practice of those Days; where he liv'd twenty Years, so much favor'd with Divine Consolation, and so absorb'd in Contemplation, that he seem'd almost to have lost the use of his Senses; and frequently forgot to give his Body some small Refreshment. Yet neither these extraordinary favors which God did him, nor all the sweet raptures of a Solitary Contemplative Life, cou'd divert him, after twenty Years spent in them, from resolving to return to his Monastery, and to live in Community as he had done before, under the Yoke of Obedience. He told his motive in these words; Tho', says he, Contemplation has more advantages in Solitude than in a Monastery, yet I find this inequality recompenc'd, by this happiness we find in a Monastery of *not being solicitous for to Morrow*. And indeed to be freed from all care of Temporals, as Religious are, must needs bring much peace and quiet along with it. But the certainty Religious Men have, of their Actions being grateful to God, and that as long as they are Obedient, they cannot displease him, is incomparably a far greater happiness.

*Nolite solliciti
esse in crastinum.*
Matth. 6. 34.

All Religious have, like the Children of *Israël*, a *Moses* that go's up to the Mountain, and declares the Will of God to them. They have a Prophet too like them, to clear their doubts; so that whensoever they have any difficulty they can say as the *Israelites* sayd in the like occasion. * *Let us go and Consult him that Sees*. They call'd their Prophet the *Man that Sees*; because he saw and knew the Will of God, and then declar'd it to the People. In this we have the same advantage they had, and can say in all our doubts and difficulties, *let us Consult him that Sees*, let us address our selves to him, whom God has given us for our Prophet, to him who holds the place of God himself, and can make known his Will unto us. Nay we may justly apply these words of *Barnab* to our selves; † *We Israelites are happy; because we know what pleases God*. For pray tell me, whether every Religious Person, do's not enjoy the same happiness? Since he assuredly

* *Eamus ad
Videntem.*
† *Rex. 9. 9.*

† *Beati sumus
Israel, quia
quod Deo pla-
cent manifesta
sunt nobis.*
Barnab. 4. 4.

surely knows, what God requires of him, and what will render him more pleasing in his Sight.

The second Argument which the Apostle makes use of, to perswade us to Obey Superiours, is, * *That they may discharge their Duty with Joy and not with Grief.* Saint Paul sensible of the great charge which Superiours have, do's out of Compassion, reccommend a prompt Obedience to their orders, thereby to render their burthen the lighter. Let us enter into this consideration with the Apostle, and since those that are in Superiority, have already so great a load upon them, as to render an account to God of both their own and our Actions, let us not add to their load, by any stubbornness or reluctance to their orders. A Superiour is certainly to be pittied, when he meets with difficult Persons, whom he cannot deal withal as he pleases, nor command 'em as he judges convenient; but on the contrary, has his thoughts continually upon the rack, whether his command will be welcom, or what reasons and difficulties they will alledge for a dispensation; and lastly how he must manage his orders, so as to make them agreeable to the humors of his Subjects. There is as much trouble in governing these kind of Persons, as there is, in making use of a lame Leg or Arm. For the pain even of removing a lame Leg, is sometimes so intense that we cannot advance one step, tho' never so much to our advantage, and the pain of the Arm is now and then so sharp, that we cannot so much as lift up our Hand to our Mouth to feed our selves. The reason is; because both parts are very ill, so that you cannot help your self by them without pain. The Comparison holds in an indocile Religious Man, who is a Member of that Order to which God has call'd him, for the whole Order, like the Church, is only one Body. Now if there be any one Member of this Order indispos'd, or stubborn and intractable, his Superiours can never employ him, without feeling pain themselves, tho' they have never so much need of his service. For when a Superiour sees that a Subject Obeys with reluctance and discontent, he is so sensibly troubl'd at it, that he dares not command this lame Member, tho' the business be never so pressing, and tho' great inconveniences follow upon it's being neglected.

This consideration may be serviceable in order to undeceive those, who fancy that 'tis a fine thing to be Superiour of a House, and to have so many Spiritual Children

at

* Ut cum gaudio hoc faciant, & non gementes.
ubi sup.

† Si sic futurum erat, quid necesse fuit concipere?
Gen. 25. 22.

* Non enim habemus pontificem qui non possit compati infirmitatibus nostris, tantum autem per omnia,
Heb. 4. 15.

at one's beck. *Rebecca* long'd mightily to have Children, and God comply'd with her desire, but when seiz'd with the pangs of Child-bed, and feeling the Twins dispute the right of Primogeniture in her Womb, she began to repent her longing, and say, † *What necessity was there of my Conceiving, if this was to follow upon it?* Superiours are much in the same case; for when they see their commands perform'd with regret, when their Subjects reply, complain and grumble, then it is, that they feel the grief, their Spiritual Children give them; then it is that they groan under their Burthen, and sigh that they are not so happy as to be in a Post, where they might have nothing else to do, but Obey Superiours orders; and making this complain; is this the advantage of Superiority? Is this the satisfaction our Spiritual Children afford us? 'Tis better to be without 'em than pay so dear for them. Only those who have made trial of Superiority, can know or expresse to the Life the trouble and difficulty of it. 'Tis an ordinary saying that he that wou'd be a good Superiour, must first be a good Subject, and this is highly necessary for every Superiour, that he may apply these words of Saint *Paul* to himself; * *We have a High Priest that can compassionate our Infirmities, he himself has gone throu' all sorts of Trials.* I must needs add here, and I think with a great deal of reason, that as an experimental knowledge of Obedience, do's much help to command others well; so in like manner an experimental knowledge of Superiority, and especially the difficulties of it, in meeting with troublesome Tempers, is very necessary in order to Obey aright; for then they will be extremely cautious, in doing so great displeasure to their Superiour, as to shew the least sign of Disobedience, In order to gain this experience, 'tis not necessary to have actually been a Superiour; but 'tis sufficient to have been in the occasion of commanding another. How often then did you forbear to command, for fear of being deny'd? And how often has it happen'd, that you your self, had rather have done the thing, than commanded it to be done by another? It is easie to gather from hence how much a Superiour suffers, when his Subjects think his commands hard, and shew their unwillingness in Obeying 'em. A Superiour that is brought to these straits, wou'd rather choose to do every thing himself, if it were possible, than command any thing; and for this reason he cannot but

but always groan under his burthen of Superiority. Nor do's his greatest trouble proceed from hence; his own frailty and tenderneſs is his greatest Affliction; for being a Father, he cannot chooſe but grieve, to ſee theſe failings in his Children. It touches him to the quick, to ſee how little they are in love with Vertue and Mortification; to ſee their reluctance in accepting of ſuch Humble Offices, as they ſhou'd be ready to embrace upon all occaſions; whereas now, when ever they are offer'd 'em, they immediately re- ply, repine, excuſe themſelves, and find ſome inconveniency or other in the thing Commanded. *Thomas à Kempis* ſays, that a luke-warm Religious, is always Sick and Indispoſ'd, to what he do's not like; and never wants his pretences to be diſpens'd withal, in what he has no mind to per- form. We are always faulty in reſpect of ſuch things as we do not deſire, but when they are according to our wiſh, tho' never ſo painful, they muſt be done. Which oc- caſion'd this excellent ſaying of Saint *Chryſoſtom*; † *The force of our Will muſt needs be very great, which gives us power to Act when we Will, and takes it away when we Will not.*

There is no Pain ſo ſenſible to Superiours, nor any Mor- tification ſo great, as when their Subjects are thus unmor- tiſ'd, and indispoſ'd in their Souls: Obey them therefore ſubmiſſively, do not give them this Affliction, hinder them from groaning under their burthen, * *For after all, this will do you no good.* Which is Saint *Pauls* third reaſon or argument to exhort us to Obedience. Conſider that this indocile humor of yours, can never turn to any account; that you will be the firſt that will ſuffer by it, as all People of the ſame ſtubborn diſpoſition have found to their coſt; that you will one Day groan under the burthen, as well as your Superiour; and that if you continue thus, your Life will be very uncaſy. Conſider that you will be look'd upon as a Sick Member, and as one unfit for any uſe; which certainly will not conduce to your Salvation. Laſtly, conſider that your Superiours, out of a condeſcendence to your humor, will let you do what you pleaſe, ſo that inſtead of doing God's Will, you'll do your own; than which nothing is more pernicious, nor is more to be dreaded by a Religious Perſon, as is al- ready declar'd elſewhere.

† Magna vis
eſt voluntatis,
quæ nos efficit
poſſe quod vo-
lumus, & non
poſſe illa quæ
nolumus.
Chryſ. ſerm. de
Zach.

* Hoc enim
non expedit
vobis.
Ubi ſu p.

C H A P. XI.

That 'tis an excellent means to obtain Obedience in Perfection, to look upon your Superiour as IESUS CHRIST himself.

ONE of the most proper means, and indeed the chief to acquire the Perfection of Obedience, is to behold God in your Superiour, and to make account, that 'tis God who commands you, and that you obey him, not Man. This great help towards Obedience, is extremely recommended to us by Saint Paul, in several of his Epistles; but particularly in that which he writ to the *Ephesians*, where he thus addresses him to Servants, † *Servants Obey your Masters with Fear and Respect, and with Simplicity of Heart, as you would Obey IESUS CHRIST himself.* If Saint Paul ordains, says Saint Basil upon this place, Obedience to be payd to higher powers upon Earth after the same manner as to IESUS CHRIST himself, and even those also who remain'd in Sin and Infidelity. If Saint Peter also wou'd have us obey, * *Not only the best, but even the worst of Masters*; with how much more reason ought Religious Men, to obey their Superiours, who desire nothing more of them, than to fulfil the Will of God? And therefore Saint Paul subjoyns in the same place, † *You must not serve 'em only when their Eyes are upon you, as if it were barely to please them; but like Servants of IESUS CHRIST, do the Will of God, by serving them readily and chearfully, as if it were CHRIST and not Man that you waited upon.* We are not to look upon the Person of our Superiour that commands us as Man, but as God; for we are not come to Religion to serve Man but God. Nor do we live with Men but God, since our Life is Crucifi'd with IESUS CHRIST. * *All that you do,* says the same Apostle in another place, *do*

† Servi obedite Dominis cum timore, & tremore, in simplicitate cordis vestri, sicut Christo. *Ephes. 6. 5.*

* Non tantum bonis & modestis, sed etiam discipulis. *1 Pet. 2. 18.*

† Non ad oculum servientes, quasi hominibus placentes, sed ut servi Christi, facientes voluntatem Dei ex animo, cum bona voluntate servientes, sicut Domino, & non hominibus. *Ephes. 6. 6. & 7.*

* Quodcumque facitis, ex animo operamini, sicut

it with a good Will, as if it were done for CHRIST not Men, being assur'd that he will reward you for it.

Our Holy Founder, grounded upon this Apostolical Doctrine, insists very much in his Constitutions, upon the same motive, and frequently recommends it to us. In one place, he tells us that in order to give our selves up totally to Obedience, we must of necessity look upon our Superiour, whosoever he be, to hold the place of CHRIST himself. In another place he tells us, that 'tis very necessary to obey, not only the General of the SOCIETY, or particular Superiour's of Houses; but also all those who have authority from them; and that we must not regard the Person of the Superiour whom we obey, but the Person of JESUS CHRIST for whose sake we obey; and to whom all the World ow's Homage and Obedience. This serves him as a secure and solid principle to discourse upon, in the sixth part of his Constitutions, where he treats expressly of Obedience; and says, that if you desire to come to a Perfection in this Virtue, † *You must continually have God himself our Creator and Redeemer for whose sake you obey, before your Eyes.* The following supposition will declare the efficacy of this means. Shou'd JESUS CHRIST himself appear and in his own Person, lay a Command upon you, how readily, how submissively, with what satisfaction wou'd you obey him? You wou'd not weigh or examin his Orders, nor have the least doubt of the equity of them, but blindly execute 'em; because 'tis God that Commands, 'tis God that will have you do it, and by consequence you can do nothing that is better. You wou'd think your self happy to be thus employ'd by Almighty God, and the hardest command wou'd be the greatest favor. This is exactly that efficacious means to obey well, which we here propose. Saint Basil lays down the same in his Rule, and to raise in us a just esteem of it, he says thus, * *Do not think that I advance this comparative proposition of my own Head, I take it from our Holy Faith, and the authority of CHRIST himself, who says, he that hears you hears me,* that is, he that obeys you, obeys me. All holy Fathers give the same Interpretation upon the same words, and do not understand 'em only of the Apostles, but also of all Superiours and Spiritual Directours. And this Doctrine was so generally receiv'd amongst the Ancient Fathers of the Desert, that they look'd upon the command of their Superiour,

Dñino, & non hominibus: Sciētes quod à Domino accipientis retributionem. Coloss. 3. 23. & 24.

3. p. Const. c. 1. §. 23. & 6. p. c. 1. §. 2. Reg. 31. sum. 3. p. c. 1. §. 24. reg. 38. sum.

† Versari autem debet oculos Deus creator, ac Dominus noster, propter quem homini obedientia præstat. 6. p. const. c. 1. §. 1.

* Nec enim ad hanc similitudinem inducendam mea sponte, sed divinis litteris inductus accessi. Basil. in constit. monast. c. 23. Qui vos audit, me audit. Luc. to. 16. Clem. 1. ep. ad Jac. frat. Dom. Benedict. in reg. c. 5. Bern. lib. de dispens. & precept. Cassian. lib. 9. Institur. c. 10.

to be the command of God himself. They do not consider their Superiour as Man; but as God; whose place he holds. Which consideration is expressly recommended to us by our Saviour himself in these words; * *The Scribes and Pharisees sit upon the Chair of Moyses; observe and do all they shall say to you, but do not do as they do.*

All therefore that we have to consider when we obey, is the Will of God; for whether it be declar'd to us by himself, by an Angel, or by never so ordinary a Man; we are always oblig'd to a submission to his orders, let the Instrument he uses to signify them to us be what it will. Saint Bernard handling this Subject, cites Saint Bennet's words, which are the same in substance with what we have already sayd, and are as follows; † *The Obedience which we render a Superiour is pay'd to God, who says, he that hears you hears me. So that all that, which Man, who holds the place of God, commands, supposing it be not evidently contrary to God's Will, is to be receiv'd by us, as if it came from God himself. For 'tis the same thing to know his Will either from his own, from an Angels, or from a Man's Mouth.* Saint Bernard also in the same place brings a Maxim, generally admitted of by all Holy Men. * *Let it be God himself or his Vicegerent that commands us any thing, we must execute it with equal care, deference and respect; so long as Man commands nothing that is repugnant to the Law of God.* Nor for the future must we expect, that God shou'd work Miracles for us; nor pretend, that he shou'd come in Person to declare his Will and Pleasure, † *He has already spoken to us by his Son.* * *The only begotten Son, who is in the Bosom of his Eternal Father, has told us what we are to do.* He left Heaven and liv'd with us upon Earth, to Instruct us when there was any necessity for it; but now those Days are past, God at present requires, that we shou'd Live and Act by Faith, and that those whom he has given us for Superiours, shou'd be the Interpreters of his Will.

Saint Austin says, that God intimated all this to us, in the order he observ'd in Converting Cornelius the Centurion. This Man was a Heathen as to his Religion, but otherwise, as we read in the Acts of the Apostles, a very good Man, and one that Fear'd God, a great Alms-giver, and one that Pray'd very much. God in order to Convert and Instruct him in the Catholic Faith, directed an Angel to him with this Message, † *Cornelius thy Prayers and Alms-deeds have ascended*

* Super cathedram Moysi sederunt Scribae & Pharisei. Omnia ergo quaecumque dixerint vobis, servate, & facite: secundum opera vero eorum nolite facere. Matth. 23. 2. & 3.

† Obedientia quae exhibetur maioribus, Deo exhibetur. Ipse enim dixit: Qui vos audit, me audit, me audit, unde quidquid vice Dei praecipit homo, quod non sit certum displicere Deo, haud aliter accipiendum est, quam si praecipiet Deus. Quid enim interit utrum ipse, aut per suos ministros, sive homines, sive Angelos, hominibus innotescat suum beneplacitum? Res. ex. 3. Bened. Bern. l. 3. de discipl. & precept.

* Sive Deus, sive homo vicarius Dei mandatum quodcumque tradiderit, pari prospectu obsequendum est curā, pari reverentia deferendum; ubi tamen Deo contraria non praecipit homo. Bern. ibid.

† Novissime diebus istis notum est nobis in Filio. Hebr. l. 1. 2. * Unigenitus Filius qui est in sinu Patris, ipse enarrabit. Joan. 1. 18.

† Orationes tuae, & ele-

sended to the Presence of God, and he is mindful of them; therefore dispatch a Servant to Joppa, for one Simon surnamed Peter. He lives in the House of one Simon a Tanner nigh the Sea, he will instruct thee and tell thee what thou art to do. Whence comes it, says Saint Austin, that God did not appoint this same Angel to Instruct him? * Was it because the Angel was not capable? Without question he was able to have done it. Norwithstanding God would have him make his address to Peter, he would not undertake it himself, nor Commission an Angel to do it, but commits him to Man's care; thereby to honor Mankind, for whose sake he himself became Man; and pay'd Obedience to Man, as the Gospel has it in these words, † And he was Subject to them. Saint Bernard makes the like remark upon Saint Paul's Conversion. Tho' CHRIST appear'd to him, yet he would not declare his Will himself, but remitted him to another, saying; * Go into the City, and there thou shalt be told what thou must do. † How admirable is your Wisdom O God, says Saint Bernard, upon these words, that so sweetly disposes all things to their End, you are pleas'd to send him, whom you spoke to your self, to a Man for farther Instructions, thereby to insinuate the advantage of a sociable Life. You address him to a Man, to honor Man the more, the better to shew his Authority; to make us respect him as your Vicegerent; and to oblige us to receive the orders of our Superiours, as coming from your own self.

Nor is our present condition inferior to theirs, whom God has vouchsafed to speak to in Person. On the contrary 'tis far better; because our Faith is most Meritorious when we Believe what we do not See; as our Saviour told Saint Thomas. * Thou hast Believ'd, Thomas, because thou hast Seen. Blessed are those who have not Seen and yet have Believ'd. The same reason holds good in Obedience; for if we look upon the command of a Superiour, to be a declaration of God's Will and Orders, we in some kind Merit more, than if we pay'd our Obedience to CHRIST himself in Person. Holy Doctors say the same of an Act of Charity, when done for the Love of God: And CHRIST taught this in the Gospel; † Verily I say to yee that what yee have done to the least of these my Brethren, yee have done it unto me. Which he confirm'd by ingaging himself to reward a Charity done to a Poor Body, as much as if it

were

moysen tuu, ascendunt in memoriam in conspectu Dei. Et nunc mitte viros in Joppam, & accersit Simonem quendam coram quo, cujus est domus juxta mare: Hic dicet tibi quid te oporteat facere.

Act. 10. 4. 6. Numquid non illum poterat docere Angelus? Aug. sup. Ps. 96.

† Et erat subditus illis. Luc. 2. 11.

* Ingredere civitatem, & ibi dicetur tibi quid te oporteat facere. Act. 9. 7.

† O sapientia suaviter verè omnia disponens: Cum quo tu loqueris, erudientem de voluntate tua minus ad hominem, ut socialis vitarum commendetur utilitas. Bern. serm. 1. de convers. sancti Pauli.

* Quia vidiisti me, Thomas, credisti. Beati qui non viderunt, & crediderunt. Joan. 20. 29.

† Amen dico vobis, quando fecistis uni ex his fratribus meis minimis, mihi fecistis. Matth. 25. 40.

were done to himself. And some holy Men pretend that he who gives an Alms to the Poor for CHRIST's sake, do's more than if he bestow'd it upon CHRIST himself. Just as when one receives one of his Friends acquaintance, and entertains him handsomly for his Friends sake, gives greater proof of his Friendship, than if he payd all this civility to his Friend himself; for it wou'd be look'd upon as due to the Person and Merit of his Friend; but when he do's the same to all that have any dependance upon him, or belong to him, as if it were to himself, he certainly gives a greater demonstration of his kindness. And this is what we do by an Act of true Obedience. This caus'd Saint *Bonaventure* to say, that 'tis a great Act to obey God, when he himself commands us; but a far greater to obey Man for God's sake. And the latter has often more Merit, and consequently a greater Reward annex'd to it; because when we obey Man for God's sake, we thereby more debase and humble our selves, and shew a greater denial of our own Will, by a perfect Resignation of it to God's. Shou'd God in Person command you any thing, no body wou'd admire your most ready compliance. But shou'd you for God's sake comply as readily with the command of a Man like your self, and submit your Will and Judgement to him with the same deference as to God, it wou'd certainly be an Act of the greatest Merit, and of an incomparable Value.

*Bonav. traß. de
gradib. virtut.
cap. 2.*

C H A P. XII:

*That we must obey our Superiour as CHRIST
himself, to become Masters of this Vertue
of Obedience.*

TO behold God in our Superiour is not only a proper means to obey well (as we have lately prov'd) but also a most necessary one, in order to possess this Vertue of Obedience. For he that obeys, if he do's not make account that 'tis God that commands and is obey'd by him, will not only fail in the Perfection of Obedience, but even in the very essentials of it: Which because 'tis of so great consequence I'll endeavor to demonstrate in this Chapter, and make this truth appear evidently to you. For if you consider nothing but the bare Man in your Superiour, you'll find no more in him than in your self, since you are no less a Man than he: And tho' he be never so Learn'd, Prudent or Holy, you will still say he is but a Man, and that his Knowledge do's not equally extend to all things, he may very well mistake in some one thing or other. This consideration will carry you on to think, that like other Men he has his by-ways, and particular inclinations; and that he do's not look upon you with so favorable an Eye, as upon some other Religious. But above all, if he commands you what is hard, painful and contrary to your desires, Self-love that is always extremely ingenious, will most certainly furnish you with a thousand arguments to oppose him; and thus you will live uneasy, upon account that you cannot intirely submit your Will and Indgement to his, for as long as you think that his Reasons are only Human; you will never want other Reasons to oppose against 'em, especially if they are not favorable, and do not make for you. On the other side, if you do not look upon your Superiour as a Man sub-
ject

* Obmutui &
non aperui os
meum, quo-
niam tu fecisti.
Psal. 38. 10.

ject to Error, but really consider the Person of CHRIST himself in him, who alone is soverain Wisdom, Goodness and Charity, and who can neither deceive others, nor be deceiv'd himself, then all your arguments and reasons are silenc'd, since Heavens orders admit of no reply. Therefore the Royal Prophet sayd, * *I was Dumb and open'd not my Mouth; because thou didst it.* How ready, how perfect wou'd our Obedience prove, were we but thus dispos'd like David? We shou'd no sooner hear the Superiour's Voice, but obey it as readily, as if CHRIST spoke to us himself. Tho' we had begun to form a Letter, yet we shou'd leave it in the same posture, and think we committed a great fault by the least delay in Obedience. How attentive, how careful shou'd we be to comply with his commands, by making his Will ours? In a word, there wou'd be no difficulty which this consideration alone, wou'd not make easie to us.

Hence a very profitable doubt, in this matter, may be easily solv'd. For some may desire to know why a Religious Man that has liv'd under Obedience several Years, and daily practis'd it, has not got the habit of it, that is, the Vertue it self in Perfection, since both Philosophers and Divines agree, that a Vertuous habit, is got by different Acts, and by a frequent practice of the said Vertue. To which I Answer: That a Vertuous habit is got by frequent Acts that are of the same Nature, and which suit with the Vertue; or to speak more like the Schools, Obedience is one of the Branches of the Vertue of Religion, God and his Divine Worship being the object of it. Now the Religious Man, concerning whom the doubt was propos'd, do's not attend totally to God in his Superiour, when he performs an Act of Obedience, and consequently he do's not obey, purely to to fulfil the Will of God, but rather do's it to content his Superiour, to be esteem'd the more, to decline a Penance or a Chideing which wou'd follow upon his Disobedience; or perhaps; because the command is to his Fancy, or upon the account of some civil usage of his Superiour, or lastly out of some other mean Temporal motive. And therefore such Acts of Obedience, are not Acts of Religious Obedience, since they want the very essentials of it, and by consequence he neither has, nor ever will acquire the habit of a Religious Obedience, unless he change his way of acting. 'Tis true he may get this way to be master of a Civil Political

Political Obedience, such as Souldiers pay to their General; or Seamen to their Pilot; or such, as is practis'd by any other Body of Men, towards their Head and Ruler; but will never acquire true Religious Obedience.

This made Saint *Ignatius* say, that we must not obey our Superiour; because he is prudent or holy, for upon account of any other good quality in him, but only; because he holds the place of God, and is the representative of the Almighty. And the same holy Doctor, speaking of Obedience, says, if you wave this consideration, and act upon motives barely Human, 'tis impossible, but that you shou'd quite destroy Religious Obedience. For by doing so, you do not exercise any one Act of Religion, but do just as Seculars do, when they follow the advice of any wise experienc'd Person. This wou'd be to live with Men, not God; and instead of obeying the latter, pay all your Obedience to the former. Besides you wou'd soon cleave too fast to Sense, direct your self by your own private Reasons, and consequently wou'd shake off the Spirit of God and true Obedience, to debase and submit your self to Man. The same Saint add's, in his General Examín, that we must not consider whether it be the Superiour, or one in Authority under him, that commands, since we obey God not them. He wou'd also have us obey all under Officers, with as much respect, readines and resignation, as the Superiour himself.

Saint *Francis* was come to this Perfection; when he sayd, that amongst many other favors, he had receiv'd this one from the Hands of God, that he cou'd as easily and readily obey the least Novice in the Convent, that thou'd be appointed his Guardian, as any Religious Man of very long standing, much Experience and great Wisdom. He understood this great art of Obedience admirably well, and therefore consider'd, that it was God alone, whom he obey'd in his Superiour. He sayd moreover that the Obedience which we pay to a Superiour, that has not such qualities as command respect, is most Perfect and of greatest Merit. 'Tis what is an ordinary saying amongst us, that he who obeys the lowest Officer in the House, gives a greater testimony of his Obedience, than if he obey'd Father Minister; and also in obeying Father Minister, than Father Rectour; and Father Rectour, than the Provincial or General. The reason is; because the lesser the Dignity is of the Person we obey,

Tom. III.

R. 1

the

In the fifth
Book and fourth
chapter of his
Life.

Chap. 4. Exam.
§. 29.

the more pure and elevated is our Obedience. For Obedience to a General, may be byas'd and tainted, by a consideration of the respect due to his Person and place, or by a desire to gain his Favor. Whereas the Obedience done to a private Religious, can have no other motive but God. And our Holy Founder, in confirmation of what has been sayd, adds, that he who will not obey and submit to the lowest Officer in the House, will never do it for those in higher Authority; since true genuine Obedience, do's not regard the Person whom we obey, but God for whose sake, we are equally to obey all other Persons in Authority. Therefore he that observes this distinction of Persons, and performs his Obedience with respect to them, fails in the most essential point of this Vertue: For did he obey for God's sake, he wou'd as soon obey a low, as a great Officer; since they both equally derive their Authority from God in what they command. And since he do's not obey the one, 'tis a great sign that the Obedience he pays the other, do's not terminate in God, but is grounded upon some Human motive, which destroys the Perfection of Obedience, which a Religious Man ought to aim at in all he do's.

C H A P.

C H A P. XIII.

Of other advantages which arise from obeying
the Superiour, as we wou'd CHRIST
himself.

THERE are several considerable advantages in looking upon our Superiour as CHRIST himself, and obeying him, as if CHRIST himself commanded. The first is; that this very consideration will give us new force, as also a strong hope of success, in the performance of what is commanded us. For there is this difference betwixt God's and Man's commands: Man oftentimes commands what we cannot perform, without giving us force or power to execute it. Whereas God never commands impossibilities, and always helps to the performance of his orders, by the assistance of his Divine Grace. In Religion we stand in need of this encouragement, which a confidence in God brings along with it, upon account of several difficulties we meet withal; and therefore nothing can be of greater advantage to us, than to consider that 'tis God that commands us, that 'tis God that has put us in this or that employment, and that he will infallibly give us such a strength, as shall be necessary to acquit our selves well of it. 'Tis one of the greatest comforts, that Missioners, who live in Heretical or Heathen Countries, can have, to consider amidst all their dangers and sufferings, that they undergo all in Obedience to God's commands; and therefore may say with the Psalmist, * *Save me O God for I am thine.* Saint Chrysostom upon these words of CHRIST to his Disciples, † *Behold 'tis I who send you, as if he had sayd, do not be afraid, 'tis I that send you, I am able to deliver you from danger, and give you Victory over all your Enemies.* This was the comfort which the Apostles had in the Laborious Conversion of the World, and we ought to find the like in all this im-

R r 2

ployments

* Tuus sum
ego, saluum
me fac.
Psal. 118. 94.
Chrys. hom. 34.
† Ecce ego
mitto vos.
Luc. 10. 3.

ployments and functions, in which we are engag'd by Obedience; saying, 'tis God that sends me, 'tis God that commands me, he will give me strength and courage to perform his commands, and to execute his Will. When God order'd *Habacuc* to take the Dinner he had prepar'd for his harvest People, and to carry it to *Daniel*, who was Prisoner at *Babylon* in the Lions Den, the Prophet answer'd,

* *Lord I never was at Babylon, nor do I know the Lions Den; and immediately an Angel took him up by the Hair of his Head, and carried him to Babylon, setting him at the Mouth of the Den.* This shews us, how ready and how willing God is, to assist us in the Execution of his commands.

* Domini, Babylonem non vidi, & lacum nescio. Et apprehendit eum Angelus Domini in vertice ejus, & portavit eum capillo capitis sui, posuitque eum in Babylonem super lacum. Daniel. ult. v. 34. & 35.

By obeying our Superiour as if he were *JESUS CHRIST*, we live in a continual submission and resignation to the Divine Will, which is another of it's benefits, and an admirable help to entertain our selves, with a constant and uninterrupted love of God, and in continual Prayer. For the producing continually Acts of Conformity to the Will of God, and the fixing all our content and satisfaction in doing it; must needs be a very profitable way of Praying, and an excellent manner of living constantly in God's Presence.

Moreover, he that do's thus, never troubles himself at what is commanded him; for he is only and always intent upon doing the Will of God. All his time is taken up in this, this is the Manna he lives upon, and in this alone he places all his joy and satisfaction.

Besides all this, how great is the peace and quiet he enjoys, who sees God in the Person of his Superiour, and looks upon himself as in the hands of God, who he is confident will take care of him? He can say with the Prophet, † *In this hope will I Sleep and Rest in Peace.*

* *'Tis God that takes care of me, I shall want for nothing.* I am in very good Hands; and 'tis certain that nothing can happen to me, which God wou'd not have happen, and which he do's not design for my good.

Did we but once accustom our selves to see God in our Superiour, and make account that we live with God not Men, we shou'd find a great increase in Vertue, and no less improvement, in the Riches of our Mind. But 'tis not a bare speculation that will make us thus happy. One who had liv'd long in Religion, sayd that he had liv'd therein

+ In pace in idiplum dormiam, & requiescam. Psal. 4. 9.
* Dominus regit me, & nihil mihi deerit. Psal. 124. 1.

therein above twenty Years, before he could comprehend what it was to obey his Superiour as **JESUS CHRIST**, or what it was to serve God and not Man in his Superiour; which perhaps many make you think, that he was then become Perfect. No, this do's not follow; for this speculation do's not suffice, we must put our Hand to work, and practice what I have sayd, and in the way I have prescrib'd, if we desire to be Perfect in Obediente, and enjoy all those Blessings which are annex'd thereunto.

C H A P. XIV.

That God looks upon Disobedience and Disrespect to a Superiour, as an injury done to himself.

WHEN we obey a Superiour we obey God, whose Representative and Vicegerent the Superiour is; and when we fail to pay the Respect and Obedience we owe a Superiour, we fail at the same time in our duty to God, and blemish the Obedience we owe him. The same Reason proves both, and therefore the Saviour of the World when he had sayd; * *He that hears you, hears me*, presently added, *and he that despiseth you, despiseth me*. Saint Paul in his Epistle to the Romans says the same, for having exhorted 'em to submit to higher Powers; † *Because all Power is from God*, he draws this consequence, *therefore he that resists lawful Power, resists God*. The authority of Holy Scripture in several places, confirms what I say. When the *Israelites* were in the Desert of *Sinai*, fear to Dye of Hunger, made them repent their departure from *Egypt*, and caus'd 'em to grumble against *Moses* and *Aaron*, who had brought 'em from thence by God's Orders. * *Moses and Aaron told the Children of Israel, we have heard your murmuring against the Lord; for who are we? That yee murmur against us. Know yee not that your*

murmuring

* Qui vos audit, me audit, & qui vos spernit, me spernit.
Luc. 10. 16.

† Non est enim potestas nisi à Deo. Itaque qui resistit potestati, Dei ordinationi resistit.
Rom. 13. 1. 2.

* Dixeruntque Moyses & Aaron ad omnes filios Israël... Audiui murmur vestrum contra Dominum. Nos vero quid sumus,

quia mustat-
tis contra nos?

... Nec con-
tra nos est
murmur ves-
trum sed con-
tra Dominum.
Exod. 16. 6.

Or leg.
* Non te ab-
jacerunt, sed
me, ne re-
gem super eos.

1. Reg. 8. 7.
† Numquid
parum vobis
est, molesto
esse homini-
bus, quia mo-
lesti citis &
Deo meo?

1/a. 7. 13.

Num. 16. 31.

5. Thom. 2. 2.
q. 93. ars. 2.

Exod. 32. 27.

1. Reg. 15. 23.
Greg. 1. Moral.
35. cap. 10.
Ber. de ord. vit.
& mon. insit.

1/a. 7. 13.

Num. 16. 31.

5. Thom. 2. 2.
q. 93. ars. 2.

Exod. 32. 27.

1. Reg. 15. 23.
Greg. 1. Moral.
35. cap. 10.
Ber. de ord. vit.
& mon. insit.

1/a. 7. 13.

Num. 16. 31.

5. Thom. 2. 2.
q. 93. ars. 2.

Exod. 32. 27.

1. Reg. 15. 23.
Greg. 1. Moral.
35. cap. 10.
Ber. de ord. vit.
& mon. insit.

1/a. 7. 13.

Num. 16. 31.

5. Thom. 2. 2.
q. 93. ars. 2.

Exod. 32. 27.

1. Reg. 15. 23.
Greg. 1. Moral.
35. cap. 10.
Ber. de ord. vit.
& mon. insit.

1/a. 7. 13.

Num. 16. 31.

5. Thom. 2. 2.
q. 93. ars. 2.

Exod. 32. 27.

1. Reg. 15. 23.
Greg. 1. Moral.
35. cap. 10.
Ber. de ord. vit.
& mon. insit.

1/a. 7. 13.

Num. 16. 31.

5. Thom. 2. 2.
q. 93. ars. 2.

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1. Reg. 15. 23.
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Ber. de ord. vit.
& mon. insit.

murmuring is against God himself not us. When the same People rejected *Samuel* out of a desire to have a King, like other Nations, God told *Samuel*, * *They have cast me off not you, and are unwilling I shou'd reign over 'em.* And in this sense they interpret these words of *Isay*, † *Do you think it nothing to trouble Men, that you are also some trouble some to my God?* Do you think it a small matter to oppose those Men, whom God has appointed to govern you? Know that it is a hainous crime, for it is God that you resist, 'tis God to whom you give the affront:

God has also severely punish'd murmurings and other offences done to Superiours, which proves how careful and tender he is of their Authority, by making their interest his own. What a horrible Punishment follow'd upon the grumbling of *Core*, *Dathan* and *Abiron* against *Moyse* and *Aaron*? To whom they objected their too much Power and Authority over the People? The Earth open'd and swallow'd 'em up alive, with all their Riches and Family; and Fire from Heaven destroy'd a hundred and fifty abettors of their Rebellion. Saint *Thomas* treating this Subject, observes that God chastis'd those that murmur'd against their Leaders, far more rigorously than those who only, and directly offended himself, by Worshipping the Golden Calf: For he only put part of the latter to the Sword, but for the former, he destroy'd some of 'em by Fire from Heaven, and the Earth swallow'd up the others alive: And all this shews, says Saint *Thomas*, how sensible God is of the injuries done to those who are in Authority, and hold his place.

Hence you may gather by the by, why *Samuel* in his speech to *Saul*, compares the Sin of Disobedience to Idolatry, * *To resist God's Orders, is like the Sin of Witchcraft, and not to submit, is like the crime of Idolatry*, Saint *Gregory* and Saint *Bernard* upon this place conclude, Disobedience to be a very enormous crime, since Holy Writ compares it to Idolatry and art Magick. The reason they give to prove the comparison, is drawn from the Nature of Idolatry and Witchcraft, which rob God of the Worship due to him, in the same manner, as Disrespect and Disobedience to a Superiour, deprive him of the honor and deference due to the Person he represents. Besides, as by Idolatry we Adore an Idol of Wood or Stone, instead of the

the True God, to whom alone that Adoration is due; so by the Spirit of Disobedience, we forsake the first and great rule of all good, which is God; and vainly follow a deceitful imagination of our own Brain; which causeth us to admire and worship the false maxims of the World.

But to return from whence we digress'd. The Children of *Israel* murmur'd another time against *Moyse*s and *Aaron*, upon which God immediately sent Serpents which kill'd a great number of them. And another time he had almost cut off at once, all that Disobedient Generation, for grumbling against the same Persons, upon the return of those that were sent to view the Land of Promise. Yet at *Moyse*s's Intercession, he granted a Pardon to all, except those who had been the Authors of the murmuration; † *And they were struck Dead before the Lord*, as Holy Writ declares; which, Saint *Paul* writing to the *Corinthians*, hinted at in these words, * *Do not murmur, as those did, who were struck Dead by the Exterminating Angel*. Nor was *Mary* the Sister of *Moyse*s exempt from Punishment, for speaking against her Brother, she was upon the fact cover'd over with a filthy Leprosie; nor wou'd God remit her Sin, or Cure her Disease, for all that *Moyse*s cou'd do or say, till she had been seven Days without the Camp, and separated from the rest of the People. He who had averred the Hand of Vengeance, stretch'd out to Destroy an Idolatrous Generation, cou'd not obtain Pardon for his Sisters murmuring, till she had done just Penance for it. Saint *Basil* practis'd this way of chastising murmurers and detractors in his Monasteries, from this separation of *Mary*. He wou'd not only have the Persons themselves, but all that belong'd to them separated from the rest of the Monks; nor wou'd he permit 'em to work together. But just as they do in time of the Plague, when they do not only separate the Infected from the Sound, but also their Cloaths and every thing about them, for fear of Infection. So Saint *Basil* wou'd have all murmurers serv'd after the same fashion, that is, separated from the Community like Excommunicated Persons: He wou'd have no body speak to them, no body to have any Communication with 'em, either in Eating, Drinking, Sleeping, Working, nor even in Praying; to the end that this great confusion might help to correct their fault, and cause an intire reformation in them.

Num. 21. 6.

Num. 14. 22.

† Mortui sunt atque percussi in conspectu Domini.
Num. 14. 37.
* Neque murmuraveritis, sicut quidam eorum murmuraverunt, & perierunt ab exterminatore.
1 Cor. 10. 10.

Basil. in quest. brevior. q. 20. 27. & 29.

Nico! I. circa.
ann. 864. leg.
Baron. rom. 3.
Concil. ep. 1.

Pope *Nicolas* the first, writing to the Emperour *Michael*, who had defam'd some Bishops, propos'd to him to do, what *David* did in his flight, to his Persecutor *Saul*; when he had him at his own disposal, within the Mouth of the Cave where he lay hid. *Saul* had frequently endeavour'd to Murther *David*, and at this very instant, he was in search of him; yet *David*, tho' he had him now in a place very convenient to have dispatch'd him, would attempt nothing against him. For he thought that he shou'd offend the Divine Majesty, by laying violent Hands upon the Lords Anointed, tho' at the same time, he was a reprobate to Heaven, and his Mortal Enemy. Wherefore he contented himself, only with cutting off a piece of his Royal Robe in secret, for which fact *David* was also afterwards very much concern'd, the Scripture telling us, * *That he strook his Breast, for having cut away a piece of the Hem of Sauls Garment.* Learn hence says this

* Percussit cor
suum David
quod abscidit
set oram chla-
mydis Saul.
1 Reg. 24. 6.

holy Pope, how a Christian, who ought to see God in his Bishops, shou'd act. He is not so much as to touch the Hem of their Garment; and if at any time he chance by negligence, Human frailty, or passion to cut off a piece from it, that is, if he shou'd speak ill of 'em, he ought immediately, like *David*, to enter into himself, and be sorry for having touch'd their Reputation. We ought not to employ a sharp Tongue, to rip up the actions of Superiours, tho' they may appear ill; because they are in the place of God, who honors 'em with the title of God's, and forbids all People to speak ill of them in these words, † *Thou shalt not speak ill of the God's.* Besides we are to consider that in Detracting from a Superiour; we lessen the esteem and affection his Subjects have for him, and give them an aversion to him. By which means their Obedience grows cold, and they reap no profit from any thing that comes from him, which is properly to put a stop to all the Spiritual good, they might have got by his means. And therefore we ought to take all manner of care, * *That no Root of bitterness, as Saint Paul calls it, springs up amongst us, to the prejudice of others Souls.* We can never be too careful in this Point; for tho' the thing be light and trivial in it self, which we say or do; yet we must reflect, that 'tis a matter of no small importance, to destroy in your Brothers Heart, the Esteem, Confidence and Respect which he has for his Superiour.

And

† Dile non
detrahet. 2.
Exod. 22. 28.

* Ne qua ra-
dix amaritudi-
nis sursum
germinans
impediat, &
per illam in-
quinentur
multi.
Hebr. 12. 15.

And yet this is the common effect of all murmuring and distraction: So that by consequence there is an obligation of reflecting, not only upon the malice of such Actions whilst they are a doing, but also of the ill effects they may afterwards produce.

CHAP. XV.

That Obedience do's not hinder us from representing our difficulties to the Superiour: And the manner of doing it.

TIS so far from being an Imperfection, to express our difficulties to our Superiour, that on the contrary, we have an obligation of doing it; and he wou'd do amiss, that shou'd fail in this particular; since we have a Rule that commands it in these express terms; as too much solicitude concerning our Body is not commendable, so a moderate care to preserve your Health and Strength in order to do God service, is lawful and just; all Religious being oblig'd thereunto. And therefore if any one finds his Diet, Cloathing, Lodging or Employment, prejudicial to his Health, or judges something else necessary for him, he ought either to inform the Superiour, or some other Person, whom he has empower'd to help him. The Prudence of Saint Ignatius appears very much in this Rule: For tho' it be true, that all the care and concern for our Health and Life, depends chiefly of our Superiour; yet because they are not Angels, nor cannot know our particular wants, nor have always our private necessities before their Eyes, 'tis thought fit we shou'd help 'em in this Point, by representing our necessities to them, in order to have 'em supply'd. But the main business is in representing them; for 'tis much to be fear'd, lest Self-love, by a false Judgement, shou'd creep in. Wherefore Saint Ignatius

3. p. Const. c. 2.
8. l. & reg. 45.
summ.

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gives us a double precaution. The first is, to Pray before we make our address, and if after Prayer we find it necessary, then to make our application, to him that can provide us of what we want. Yet we must not think that he would have us just kneel down to say an *Ave Maria*, and so go to our Superiour with our Petition: But the Prayer he speaks of, is a serious Recollection, and strict examination, whether your proposal be to God's greater Glory, or rather your own private Interest. If after this examination you find that Self-love prompts you to Act, have a care, and desist from your proposal, but if you seriously judge that you have no other motive but God's greater Glory, than you may confidently propose it.

The second precaution which our Holy Founder gives, is, totally to acquiesce in our Superiours determination, after we have represented our case to him, either by word of Mouth or in Writing, for the better help of his Memory; and whether he grants or denys our request, not to make any reply to his orders, or renew our instance either by our selves or another; since we ought to be perswaded, that whatever he ordains, after information given him, shall be most for the service of God, and our Spiritual advancement. And therefore we ought to dispose our selves, both before and after the proposal made, to be equally ready, not only to obey what the Superiour shall ordain, but also receive it with satisfaction; as being the most advantageous for us. This indifferency of Mind towards the thing propos'd, is of very great importance in this matter: Since it makes a denial, as well as a grant, equally welcome to us; and easily shews whether we seek God, or our selves in our request. For if we aim at nothing but God's greater Glory, and the doing his Divine Will, we are sure to meet with content and satisfaction from our Superiours orders; since we can no longer doubt, but that they are a Declaration of God's Will. On the other side, if a refusal troubles us, and we fret and repine at it, 'tis a threw'd sign that we were not indifferent to the thing propos'd, and that our own private Interest not God's, lay at the bottom; since we are so uneasy upon not having obtain'd our desires. The Fruit therefore to be drawn from the Prayer we make, antecedent to our proposal, ought to be to beg this intire indifferency to the Will of our Superiour, concerning the thing propos'd; this being absolutely the best disposition of Mind

in the present circumstances, and makes us as glad of a denial, as of a grant. It wou'd also do very well to consider, after our Superiour has granted our request, whether a refusal of the same, wou'd have been as agreeable to us; and if we find that it wou'd, we may look upon it as a very good sign, and we may hereupon assure our selves, that we shall fulfil God's Will, not our own, in the performance of what we ask'd leave to do.

This presuppos'd, I come now to assert, that to represent our necessities to our Superiour, with the foresaid indifferency and resignation, is so far from being contrary to the Perfection of Obedience, that 'tis the most Perfect and most Mortifi'd way of proceeding. And not to do it in case of necessity, is not only an expresse Disobedience to the Rule above cited, but also a great want of interior Mortification. For Example, every one knows whether or no, such a thing do's him harm or not; or whither this or that particular thing, be necessary for him; and stops here without taking any farther notice of it, fancying that the Superiour may perhaps without his speaking to him, provide him with what he wants, or perhaps not; and may further think; that Mortification and a desire of suffering for God, is a sufficient warrant of this Action. But this is far from the proceeding of an humble patient and mortifi'd Spirit; that 'tis nothing else but Self-love and a fear of suffering, which makes their present condition less painful to them, than the bare representation of their necessities to their Superiour, purely lest he shou'd think 'em too solicitous for themselves, and too active in procuring their private conveniences. This sometimes also proceeds, from want of indifferency to the thing we propose; or because upon the like occasion, we have met with a hearty denial, which has made us resolve never to petition any more, unless absolute necessity shou'd oblige us. But pray whence comes this resolution? Certainly from a want of indifferency towards the thing propos'd, and also from a want of courage to bear a denial; and for these reasons, we had rather keep our difficulties to our selves, and suffer them in private, than represent 'em to our Superiour. Here we may also consider how far the Devil imposes upon us, and how violent our Self-will is, which makes us in Love with our sufferings; because we will suffer, rather than address our selves to the Superiour, purely out of fear of being deny'd. For who-

Soever judges of this matter, by the false lights of Self-love and private Interest, will become blind in his own Cause, and fill his Head with doubts and suspicions. Let us then suppose the worst, which is, that our Superiour shou'd deny us. Pray tell me, wou'd it not be better in this case, rather to suffer by Obedience, and out of a Submission to the Will of God, than by our having too great a tie, to our own proper Sentiments? Besides this, we shou'd have the Merit of having comply'd with that Rule, which bids us represent our wants to our Superiour, which being once propos'd, removes all fear for the future. For whatsoever shou'd happen afterwards, wou'd not be ascrib'd to us, but to our Superiour, and to God himself, who directs us by our Superiour. And therefore Saint *Ignatius* establish'd this Rule, on purpose, to obviate all inconveniences, and remove that repugnance and faulty back-wardness, which we might have in exposing our wants. For why shou'd any one be afraid, or blush to do what this Rule prescribes him? Can the Superiour take it ill to see this Rule kept? Do's not the general custom in our Order, of representing our least difficulties to the Superiour, render this practice easie? Let not then our want of Humility and Mortification make it hard and difficult.

But all the difficulty consists, in making the proposal with indifferency and resignation; and because this point is of the greatest concern in this matter, I'll endeavor to enlarge upon it. When therefore a proposal in this kind is to be made, we must not prepossess our minds with the thought, that the thing to be propos'd is most convenient for us; for supposing we shou'd be refus'd, this wou'd certainly make us uneasie. But rather suspect the worst, and wait our Superiour's resolution, with all equality of Mind; and then happen what will, we are sure to be at ease. When a Scholar that doubts upon a Point of Learning, proposes his difficulty to his Master, he do's it by way of doubt; and with deference to his Masters Opinion upon it; and therefore stands to his decision. In like manner, we ought to propose our difficulties to our Superiour, still doubting of the convenience of the thing demanded, and never determining this or that, till the Superiour has first resolv'd. And this resolution must be admitted, as most advantageous for us, and having once fix'd this in our Judgment, we must recieve the determination with all satisfaction.

Likewise

Likewise in the Prayer we make before the proposal, we are not to Examine whether our design do's conduce most to God's Glory, but only whether it be convenient to acquaint the Superiour with it, and whether we seek God, or our selves in our request. As for the first, whether it be expedient or no, we are to suspend our Judgements till the Superiour has determin'd.

And this you can never be too careful of; for as a due proposal of our wants, so also our receiving the Superiour's Answer with satisfaction and quiet of Mind, intirely depends upon it. And since 'tis so ordinary a thing amongst us, to have recourse to our Superiour upon the least occasion or necessity, it concerns us very much to do it well; and Religious Discipline wou'd hereby extreamly suffer, shou'd we once come to that pass, as to take it ill to be refus'd any thing by our Superiours, be troubl'd at it, think that they have no kindness for us, and proceed to censure them our selves, and perhaps induce others to do the like, for being difficult, severe and uncivil. Here we shou'd do well to consider that our Natural Parents, when we were under their Power, refus'd us several things, and yet that we took it very well from them, and did not hereupon lessen our Love and Respect toward 'em. If so, 'tis much more rational to act in the same manner, towards our Spiritual Parents; especially since we have made Profession of renouncing our own Will's, and of overcoming our selves. Superiours heretofore us'd to train up their Religious to this kind of Mortification, and to make them the better able to support a denial, they wou'd frequently refuse them such things, as they might have granted 'em without the least inconvenience. And in those Days the Religious were so Zealous, for their advancement in Spirit, that they were glad of such occasions of Mortifying their Will's. How comes it then to pass, that we, when deny'd even those things that are really prejudicial to us, shew our selves hereupon uneasie and complain of it? And what if this shou'd be the reason, why Superiours sometimes (tho' much against their Will's) must condescend to what is prejudicial to us, in order to avoid a greater Evil? A true Religious Man, ought to dread and abhor a disorder of this Nature, as we have declar'd in another place.

But to the end this manner of proposing our wants, may be the more Perfect, we ought not only to have this interior

terior resignation and indifferency, we have already spoken of, but also shew it by our Words and Actions, which must agree with our Thoughts, and bear witness of our Interior; which if duly kept in proposing our wants, is very excellent and perfect: But yet 'tis very certain cou'd we improve it so far, as to be able to represent our necessities, without shewing the least of our own inclinations, and leave our Superiour in full liberty, to determine what is most of all expedient, we shou'd herein draw the exactest Model of a perfect representation of our wants. This may be made more clear, by a Rule that relates to Provincials, which says, that when the Provincial wou'd Consult the Fathers of his Province upon any matter, he must propose it with that evenness of temper, as not to discover what he is inclin'd to, for fear the least knowledge of his sentiment, shou'd abridge their liberty, and draw them to his opinion. Thus Subjects ought to represent their wants to Superiours, by using plain and simple Language, whereby he cannot at all discern what we wou'd be at; lest he knowing our Frailty, might too much condescend to us; wherefore we must use such words, as may just suffice to declare our case, but leave him in full liberty, to ordain what he shall think most convenient, without having regard to our particular Inclinations.

We have two admirable Examples in Holy Scripture, which teach us, how we ought to behave our selves in what we have spoke of. The first appears in these words of our Blessed Lady, when present with her Son, at the Marriage Feast of Cana, * *They have no Wine.* She do's not say, Lord supply this want; for you can do it, and prevent all Confusion to the new Married couple, but barely represents their want. The Second Example is drawn from that notice, which Mary and Martha gave our Saviour of their Brother Lazarus's being Sick; † *Lord he whom thou Lovest is Sick.* * *Observe,* says Saint Austin, *they do not bid him come; because to one that Loves, a bare declaration is sufficient. They durst not say come and cure him; nay, they durst not even so much as use the Centurion's language, by saying, Lord speak the Word where you are, and the business shall be done here; but only sayd in plain and simple terms, Lord he whom thou Lovest is fallen Sick. For 'tis enough O Lord that thou know'st our wants; since thou never forsakest those who Love thee.* Thus we ought to propose our wants to our Superiour, by plainly and simply representing

Reg. 14. Pro-
scriptio.

* Vinum non
habent.
Joan. 2. 3.

† Domine, ecce quem amas, infirmatur.
Joan. 11. 3.
* Non dixerunt, Veni, amanti enim tantummodò nunciandum fuit. Non ausi sunt dicere, ibi jube, & hic erit, ut Centurio; sed tantum, Domine, ecce quem amas, infirmatur. Sufficient, ut averteris; non enim amas, & deseris.
Aug. hom. 1. sup. Evang. Joan. 11. 3.

presenting them, without manifesting our desires; which if we do, we may be assur'd that we do not seek our selves in the proposal, and that the measures our Superiour shall take, will not be squar'd, after too mild a condescendence to us.

Saint *Ignatius*, speaking in his Constitutions of those, who find the Air of the Country they live in, not to agree with 'em, takes express notice of this way of proposing it to the Superiour, in these words; he that finds himself in this condition, must not ask to change Air, nor signifie any desire of it, but must barely represent his indisposition, with the impossibility he is in, of complying with the duties of Religion, and then leave all the rest to the Superiour's care. This done, it belongs to the Superiour to judge, whether it be more fitting for him to change Air, in order to recover his health, and thereby to become more capable of doing service to his Order; or whether it be better for this Person in particular, in regard of his improvement in Spirit, and God's greater Glory, to let him remain where he is, notwithstanding the small service he do's: Nay, tho' he be altogether unserviceable and useless. If this be Saint *Ignatius's* opinion, in so considerable a business as that of our Health, what wou'd he say concerning a great many things of less moment? But because we cannot always conceal our inclinations in the proposal we make: There be some (and 'tis a very laudable custom) who having represented their case very modestly and handsomly, earnestly desire the Superiour, not to regard their particular Inclination; and that he wou'd set nothing before his Eyes, but God's greater Honor and Glory. These Persons use all possible means to make him sensible, that by this unbiass'd way of acting, he wou'd shew the greater Charity towards 'em; and confer this comfortable blessing upon them, of being sure to do intirely the Will of God. Whereas shou'd he out of too much compliance condescend to them, they wou'd be extremely afflicted at it, and look upon themselves not to do the Will of God and their Superiours, but rather their own.

2. p. Const. 2.
lib. G.

C H A P. XVI.

Of too much solicitude for those things which relate to the Body, and how far 'tis necessary to avoid all singularity in this point.

8. p. Const. c. 2.
6. l. Reg. 46.
summ.

THE same Rule which recommends a moderate and reasonable care of our Health, condemns, our too much solicitude for it: Which latter shall be the Subject of the following Discourse, having sufficiently treated the other in the last Chapter. 'Tis very hard to maintain in all occurrences an equal temper, but most of all, in what concerns our Body, since Self-love (the Bodies Procurator general) immediately turns Physician upon the least symptom of a Distemper, and tells us this is bad for the Breast, that for the Stomack, this offends the Head, that is naught for the Eyes; and thus under pretence of Necessity, Sensuality and Niceness creeps in upon us.

Saint Bernard inveigh's much against those who are too solicitous for their Health, and under the colour of preserving it, observe very nice distinctions in their Diet. These says he, are Hippocrate's and Galen's Scholars, not the Disciples of JESUS CHRIST; for they do not find those different proprieties in Holy Scripture, which they attribute to this and that Dish; but in Books of Physick. For Example, they say, * *All sorts of Pulse are Windy, Cheese lyes heavy upon the Stomack, Milk d's the Head harm, Water alone is very hurtful to the Breast, Coleworts breed Melancholy Humors, Leeks Choler, and Fish taken out of a standing or muddy Water agree not with my Constitution. What a strange thing is this! Saint Bernard go's on, that our Rivers, Plantations, Gardens and Cellars, can scarce provide you a Dinner that you can Eat? Consider that you are a Religious*

* Legumina
ventrosa sunt:
exceus stom-
achum gravat:
læc capiti no-
cet: potum a-
quæ non sus-
tinet pectus:
caules nutri-
unt melancho-
liam: coleram
rospi accen-
dunt: pisces
de stagno, aut
de lutosa aqua
meæ penitus
complexioni
non congru-
unt. Quale
est hoc, ut in-
totis fluviis,
agris, hortis,
cellarive re-
periri vix pos-

Religious Man not a Physician; and that your Profession not your Constitution is to be look'd after. After this he lays down four Reasons, which are very proper, to persuade us to live up to the Rules of the Community, and avoid all Particularities. † *First, have pity upon your self,* says the Saint, *and consult your own quiet.* For these Particularities bring uneasiness along with them, and expose you to difficulties every moment. It will happen that you do not know whether or no they will give you what you wou'd have, nay perhaps you may meet with a harsh denial. Sometimes your Patience will be tir'd by staying too long, and perhaps for one time you have it, you may twenty times want it. Lastly, no body knows all the inconveniences which flow from hence, but only those who have unfortunately experienc'd 'em; whereas 'tis a great ease to a Man, to be able to live like the rest of the Religious.

fit quid comedas? Puta, quæso, te monachum esse, non medicum, nec de complexione judicandum, sed de professione. † Parce, obsecro, primum quidem quieti tuæ:

* Parce deinde labori ministrantium:

† Parce gravamini domus:

* Parce conscientia; conscientia dico non tua, sed alterius. Bern. serm. 30. sup. Cant.

† Noli adhuc aquam bibere, sed modico vino utere, propter stomachum tuum, & frequentes tuas infirmitates. 1^a Tim. 5. 23.

* *Secondly, do not give those that serve you so much trouble;* and reflect that you make the Refectorian, Cook and Server at Table, take a great deal of pains; who seem to have scarce any other employment but to pay their attendance to your self. † *Thirdly, take care of increasing the expences of the House,* which are not small upon account of your Particularities. Consider, that 'tis no small matter to provide necessaries for the whole Community, and besides daily to comply with your particular and unnecessary fancies, which must needs be very troublesome and inconvenient. * *Infine, be tender* (I do not say) *of your own only, but also of your Brother's Conscience.* He sits by you, Eats what is given him, whilst you scandalize him with your niceness and delicacy, which will not feed upon that, with which he is contented. But suppose he shou'd really believe that you do this out of necessity, you still give him occasion of murmuring, either upon the account that sufficient care is not taken of you, or because Superiours fail in providing for you as they ought to do.

But perhaps some may relye upon these words of Saint Paul to Timothy and urge them in their own defence; † *Drink no more Water, but use a little Wine; by reason of the Weakness of your Stomack, and other frequent Infirmities.* To this, says Saint Bernard, I answer, first, that Saint Paul did not follow this Rule himself, but gave advice to Timothy in a matter, not of his own proposal, for he had not spoken of it before to Saint Paul, who now charitably appoints him to do it. But your case is not the same;

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you have petition'd to be treated above the ordinary; and therefore I have reason to fear, that under the colour of a reasonable care of your Health, the prudence of the Flesh has seduc'd you, and that Sensuality has a great share in what you think pure necessity. I take notice, adds the same Father, that Saint Paul gives this Counsel nor to a Poor simple Religious Man, but to a Holy Bishop, upon whose Health the good of that Infant Church of CHRIST, in a great part depended. * *However give me one like Timothy, and let him be treated with Pearls and liquid Gold. But if you still insist upon this authority of the Apostles, and will have it prevail, pray do not forget that Saint Paul when he advis'd Timothy the use of Wine, prescrib'd it in very small quantity.*

Abstinence from Wine, was what Saint Hierom first of all advis'd *Eustachium* to practise, in order to preserve herself Chast. † *A Sponse of Jesus CHRIST, says, he, ought to look upon Wine as Poyson, and observe how well these words agree with Saint Pauls, * In which there is Luxury. † These are the first Weapons, the Devil uses against our Toughful Tears. The disquiet of Avarice, the swelling of Pride, and the charms of Ambition are not so dangerous. Wine and Touth doubly inflame our Sensual Appetite; why therefore do we cast Oyl upon this Flame? What need of more Fire to a Body that already burns? But to return to our present Subject, I do not pretend to recommend any thing to Religious Persons which Saint Basil, Bernard, Bonaventure and several other Holy Men, have not already earnestly recommended, which is no more than to endeavour to live like the rest of the Community in every thing, and to avoid all Particularities, as much as we are able. Now to ingage us in this practice, one wou'd think it were sufficient to consider, how by this means we free not only our selves from several vexations and uneasinesses, but also several others, as has been before declar'd. Therefore if we look upon nothing else but our own private Interest and Satisfaction, we shou'd do well to conform to the Rules of the Community, tho' some little inconvenience might arise from it; because the advantage we draw from these petty singularities, is never so considerable as is our quiet of Mind. But that which ought chiefly to determine us in this matter, is to reflect, that we shall Edifie our Brethren, content our Superiours, and be the more pleasing*

to

* Damini al-
terum Timotheum, & ego
illum, si vis,
etiam auro,
potabili &
margaritis
enutriam.
Id te saltem
monitum vo-
lo, ut si tibi
ista autoritas
Apostoli pla-
ceat de bibendo

vino, modico,
quod ille ad-
iunxit, non
pretermittas.
† Sponsa
Christi vinum
fugiat pro ve-
neno.

Hierom. Ep. ad
Fulv. de cust.
tod. virg.

* In quo est
luxuria.

Ephes. 5. 18.

† Hæc adver-
sus adolescenti-
am prima ac-
ma sunt de-
moniorum.

Non sic avari-
tia quatit, in-
flat superbia,
delectat ambir-
tio. Vinum &
adolescentia
duplex incen-
dium volup-
tatis est. Quid
oleum flammæ
adjicimus?

quid ardenti
corpuseulo fo-
menta ignium
ministramus?
Basil. serm. de
renut. saculi
vitiis & Spir.
prof. Bern. ubi
sup. & in form.
bonæ vit.
bon. de inform.
nov. c. 9.

to God. And this we ought to take particular notice of, for the Doctrine is admirable, and the Practice very holy; for the making it our business to live up to the rigor and severity of your Rule, to be contented with the Common, to seek no Dispensation, to pretend to no Privilege or Distinction in any thing; is one of the greatest Sacrifices, we can make to God in Religion; and one of the best Mortifications we can undergo, to please him, to oblige your selves, and to Edify our Brethren: We have bound our selves by our Profession to a state of Penance, and the Practice of Mortification; let therefore, our exact Conformity to all the usual and ordinary duties of Religion, be the subject to Exercise our Penance and Mortification upon: For whatever we shall be able to do besides, the Saints and Spiritual Directors, would have us regulate it after such a manner, that we may never thereby so impair our forces, but that we may still be able to comply with the principal Duties and Mortifications of Religion; which chiefly consist, in a general Conformity to the rest of the Community, without any exception. You'll perhaps esteem it a great matter to wear a Hair-cloth; and to afflict your Body with long Disciplines; but your Superiours will make little or no account of either, so long as you are not content with what satisfies the Community; or so long as you seek after Distinction or Delicacy in your Lodging, Cloaths or Diet: Stick fast therefore to those means and helps to Penance, which your Profession furnishes you withal; for you may be assur'd that they are permitted you, that there is nothing more agreeable in the sight of God, and that your Superiours will rejoice at your Practice of 'em. Besides you need not be afraid of Vain-glory in this Point; for thus you'll do Penance without being taken notice of by the rest. This is the way to lead a Life, common to others in the outward appearance; but such a one, as is very particular and very pleasing to God; it leading to a most solid Piety, and to very great Perfection without the least danger.

On the contrary, exemptions, and particular privileges, tho' upon the most specious pretences, do the greatest prejudice imaginable to Religious Communities. And the truth of this is so clear, that Saint Bonaventure thinks 'em, one of the chief causes of Luxury in Religious Discipline. Tho' you have liv'd long in Religion, says he, and done very great service in it, yet you may do it harm for all this, if

Bonav. ubi
supra.

Bona. in quest.
circa. re.
sol. quest. 10.
& de informat.
nervi. c. 9.

those who enter'd after you, do not see your Interior; nor consider how much you labour'd before their Admission, since all they take notice of, is the present Example you give 'em in observing your Rules; and therefore they are always desirous that the Seniors shou'd lead the way, who being first in Religion, shou'd likewise be first, in the exact observance of it's Rules; thereby to serve as Guides, to those, whom the same Zeal has engag'd after the self same manner; and when the contrary happens, they are either scandaliz'd at the bad Example of the Ancient, or what is worse follow their Steps, and turn Libertines like them. Saint Ignatius wisely foreseeing the ill consequence of these kind of Particularities, and willing to prevent such inconveniences, ordain'd that every one, before his Admission into the SOCIETY, shou'd be ask'd, * *If he cou'd be content to live like the rest of his Brethren, without pretending the least Exemption or Privilege in any thing whatsoever, but give himself totally up to the care and conduct of his Superiours.* Particularly, he wou'd have this Question put to such as are Scholars, and may one Day bear the greatest Offices, and be the chiefest Men in the SOCIETY; for such Persons seem'd to him to be the most ready to pretend Exemptions and Privileges. Who notwithstanding are not aware, that the least Privilege they can pretend to, do's a great deal of harm to Religion; for another that thinks he has done as much as they, and stands in as great need of the like consideration, will desire to be treated after the same manner. And perhaps another also who tho' he has not done altogether so much as the former, may pretend the same; and after him a third and fourth, may claim the same Privilege; and by this means Religious Discipline will soon decay, and be quite lost. Saint Bernard call's such Men Enemies to Peace and Union; and without doubt it wou'd have been better, if, for Example, they had neither Preach'd, Writ Books, nor done any thing extraordinary; than to have distinguish'd themselves from others by such Privileges as these; for the harm they do this way, is more than the good they did the other.

For this reason our Holy Founder forbids all such Exemptions and Particularities amongst us, nor will he have one that has been a Preacher, taught Divinity, or been Superiour, pretend any Privilege; but on the contrary, desires that every one shou'd perswade himself that he can-

not

* An. contentus futurus sit eodem modo atque alij in collegio agere, nullique privilegiis, aut prærogativis minimum omnium, qui in eo fuerint, antea: omnem sui curam superiori re-linquendo. Cap. 7. Ex.

not prejudice the SOCIETY more, than by giving occasion for any one to think, that he may have some reason for the like pretences, or by desiring to be otherwise treated than the rest of his Brethren. It belongs properly to the Ancient and more Learn'd, to Edifice and Instruct others; 'tis their duty to maintain and strengthen Religious Discipline, by their Example; and as the Apostle says, † *In conforming themselves to those in the most humble and lowest Employments;*—for Seniority and Learning in Religion, ought to be chiefly subservient to this end.

† Humilibus
conscientias.
Ad Rom. 12.
16.

C H A P. XVII.

Wherein an Objection is Answer'd, to what has been sayd in the foregoing Chapters.

THE care we think we are oblig'd to take of our Health, as 'tis the most ordinary, so 'tis the most plausible pretence, for our being freed from common Duties; and consequently 'tis the strongest Argument that can be made, against what we have already sayd; therefore in order to Answer it, in the first place I'll give you the Opinion of Divines concerning this matter. No body questions, but that for a Man to 'kill himself, or deliberately to Drink Poison to procure his Death, (this being a great Sin) is a quite different thing, from not taking pains, or not using a great deal of industry, to preserve our Health, and prolong our Life; for we may lawfully omit this latter. A Man has no more obligation to use the most nourishing Food, and that which agrees best with his Constitution; tho' he be sure to maintain his Health the better by it, and live the longer for it; than he has to live in the best Air; with an equal assurance of better Health and longer Life. The contrary Opinion also condemns Holy Fasts, Abstinence, and all other Austerities practis'd in the Church: Moreover Holy and Learn'd Men, justly blame and disapprove in most Persons, and particularly in Religious, too great

great a solicitude for their Health. Nor is any one oblig'd even in time of Sicknes; to have recourse to the most able Physicians; or to be at the expence of procuring extraordinary remedies to preserve Life; and shou'd a Religious Man do it, he ought to be condemn'd for it, as not suiting with his Profession of Poverty and Humility. Common and easie remedies, may very well suffice in case they be proper, nor do's God exact more of you, since Life and Health are only temporal and perishable blessings, and scarce deserve to be taken notice of, when compar'd with the Life and Welfare of the Soul. Nor is it only lawful to abtain from extraordinary and costly Remedies, but also to retrench something from the common practice. Hence it is that the Servants of God frequently make this retrenchment in Eating, Drinking, Sleeping, and other necessities of the Body, tho' they are not ignorant at the same time it may prejudice their Health, and help to shorten their Days. And we are so far from blaming this their practice as unlawful, that we look upon it as a great Perfection, and an effect of Sanctity in them. Again as 'tis lawful to expose our own Life to save our Neighbours, or procure his Salvation, as those really do who serve in time of the Plague; so is it equally lawful, to endanger our Life and Health by Mortification, in order to work our own Salvation. Now if for a more convenient, or more honorable livelihood, 'tis permitted to cross the Seas, and by long journeys into foreign Countries, to prejudice our Health, and even risque our Lives; how much more ought we to think it, not only lawful, but good and holy, to neglect our Health, and hazard our Life, in order to secure our Salvation; by keeping our Flesh low and obedient to the Spirit, by preventing it's Rebellion, and not suffering it to destroy the Soul? This is what we call a Penitential Life; and if this practice be once left off, we may bid adieu to most of the Penances now in use in the Holy Church. Divines put the Question, whether a Servant of God that has a great pain for Example, in his Liver or Stomack, or any other painful disease, can in Conscience so long as there is no danger of Death, forbear the use of all remedies, in order to suffer his pains for the Love of CHRIST? And they Answer, that without doubt he may, being warranted by the Authority and Example of Saint *Agatha*. This Holy Virgin and Martyr, after her Breasts were cut off

off by the command of the Tyrant, Saint *Peter* appear'd to her in the Prison, under the shape of a Venerable Old Man, and wou'd have cur'd her Wounds, which she refus'd, saying, * *That she had never made use of any Corporal Remedies in all her Life.* They alledge also that several other great Servants of God, who to Mortifie their Flesh, subject it intirely to the Spirit, and in some sort to suffer with CHRIST, and share in his dolours, have endur'd long and painful Sicknes, without applying any remedy; and hereby made great progress in Vertue. Divines, for a farther proof, say that we are not to set so high a value upon our Health or Life, and that we are not oblig'd to so much care of both as some imagine. Put the following case, of a Man that will certainly Dye, unless one of his Legs or Arms be cut off. Here Divines inquire, whether this Person be oblig'd to suffer this painful Operation? And they answer in the negative; citing the answer of *Marius*, who having suffer'd several Incisions, commanded the Surgeons to give over; † *For he wou'd not buy his Cure at so dear a rate.* They hold likewise, that we have no obligation to make use of remedies to prolong our Life, tho' we know our Days will be shorten'd by not using 'em. For instance thou'd the Physicians advise you to Purge once a Month, or prescribe you some other troublesome remedy, or unpleasant Portion; you might safely forbear the complying with this advice, tho' you were assur'd that by it you wou'd hasten your Death ten Years. They further add, that if a Man were certain to shorten his Days by Drinking Wine in Ice, yet he wou'd not be oblig'd under Mortal Sin to abstain from it. Now let us make the application of what has been sayd, and come closer to our Subject. If Men, barely to gratifie their Senses by Drinking cool Wines, or to please their Palates with the richest Dishes of Meat, neglect their Health, and prefer these delights before the Preservation of Life, without being condemn'd for it; shall a Religious Man, upon fancying this sort of Viuals do's him harm, or that the other is better for him, prefer the care of his Health, before the observance of his Rule? But admit that 'tis not only a fancy of his, but a real truth; let us duly weigh the necessity he has, of taking this care of his Health, and the advantage he can hope from it, which frequently is very uncertain, besides the trouble, uneasiness and difficulty it will bring, both upon himself and others:

* Quia medicinam carnalem corpori meo nunquam exhibui.
In Offic. S. Augustinae, 5. Febr.

Cajetan. 3. 2. q. 37. art. 1. Navar. in summ. c. 11. num. 41.

Non est tantum
to dolore digna
salus.
*Plutar. in Mar-
tio sect. prima.*

others: Let us also put into the same Scale, all the ill effects these Particularities cause, and we shall easily see, that the latter much outweigh the former; and draw down the Scale. If worldly Men, to satisfy their Sensuality, do thus every Day, and perhaps you your self heretofore have done the like upon the same principle, is it not just you shou'd do it now in Religion, thereby to keep your Rule, conform to the Community, and avoid giving scandal to your Brethren, by your being singular and delicate?

Hence it undeniably follows, that at least the consideration of our Health, do's not oblige us to seek after particular conveniences or extraordinary remedies. So that when the very manner of treating you either in Sicknels or Health, shall become more troublesom, and even prejudice your Health, you may be assur'd without a Scruple, that you will do much better, to suffer something to relistie your Love of God, and expiate your Sins, than to seek your ease and convenience, or complain that they do not take care of you, nor consider your condition. God Almighty wou'd not have us thus solicitous for our Health, when he says, * *He that will save his Soul shall lose it, and he that shall lose it for my sake, shall find it.* This gave occasion to this excellent saying of Saint Bernard; Hippocrates teaches us how to preserve Life; Epicurus how to spend it in pleasure and delight; and JESUS CHRIST how to lose it, to fly sensual delights, and to account every thing in this World, as nothing, in comparison of our Salvation. Choose now, says Saint Bernard, which of these three you will have for your Master, and become his Disciple. To this we may add, what we see by daily experience, that those delicate and critical observers of their Health, are commonly Infirm, and often ruin their Health by those very means they use to preserve it: Whereas those who trust in God, commit themselves to the protection of Obedience, and endeavour to live like the rest of the House, are ordinarily fit for any thing, and enjoy a perfect Health.

Cassian has a very good remark upon this Subject, and says, that there are some Religious, who seek after Exemptions and Privileges, not because they stand in need of 'em, upon the account of their Health; but because they have a mind to satisfy their Pride and Vanity; or sometimes because they wou'd be look'd upon more than others; or lastly; because they pretend this distinction as due to their Seniority;

† Qui enim voluerit animam suam salvam facere, perdet eam: qui autem perdidit animam suam propter me, inveniet eam. *Matth. 16. 25.*

Bern. serm. 30. sup. Cant.

Cassian lib. 5. de Instit. re. muns. cap. 25.

Seniority and Merit. Such Religious, says the same Author, never prove either great Spiritualists, or Proficients in Vertue: For we see, that those Ancient Fathers, who excell'd in the observance of regular Discipline, and whom we ought to imitate, have always made it their chief care, to live up to the practice of their holy Rule, and been Enemies to all Singularity, and Distinction of Persons.

However we do not pretend by this to hinder any one from representing his necessities; for 'tis certain, that all have not Health and Strength alike; and therefore in any considerable number, there is still one or other, that requires some particular assistance. Nor ought any Body to make ill use of what has been sayd, or thence take occasion to censure his Brother; but on the contrary, he ought when he sees any one not comply with the Rule, like the rest of the Community; immediately to suppose, that necessity obliges him to it; and thereupon charitably compassionate his Infirmary. It happens now and then, as Saint Bernard observes; * *That we are envious instead of being Compassionate, to Persons thus exempted; and within our selves, to think that a Happiness, which they esteem a Misery, looking upon themselves as subject, to so troublesome a necessity.* For as no body envies a Man, when forc'd by a severe Sickness, to have recourse to extraordinary Remedies, but on the contrary, they rather pity him: So perhaps if you did but know the painful Distemper, which hinders your Brother, from complying with all the ordinary practices of his Rule, you wou'd instead of repining at him, pity his condition: And think your self oblig'd to return Almighty God thanks, for your being able to live up to your Institute, and for not having the necessity of being indulg'd and exempted, in order to Sleep, Dyer, or any other Particularities. Therefore, says the same Saint, whosoever gives himself to a censorious observation, of those little Privileges some are forc'd to make use of, shews very clearly, that his thoughts are not of Heaven, but rather taken up with Softness and Sensuality.

Saint Bernard adds these following lines, and by the Mercy of God I can justly say the same, and so end this discourse. I do not Dear Brethren, says he, speak this by way of complaint, of any one here present, but I thought it necessary to put yee in mind of these things; because several of yee are of a tender and delicate Complexion.

Tom. III.

U u

Notwithstanding

* Videt hoc alterquispiam, & fortassis incipit invidere, cui condolere debuerat. Hinc accidit, ut sæpe beatificetur in corde suo, eæ, unde miserum se ille reputat, molestè ferens necessitatem suam. Bern. serm. 1 de alitis. & bassi. cord.

Norwithstanding this, I thank God that many of yee are above these mean Sentiments, and make your own Spiritual Advancement your chiefest care, without taking notice, how your Sick and Infirm Brethren are treated, and that yee attend only to your selves, continually complaining, as if hitherto yee had done nothing, and according to Saint Pauls Command, * *Esteeming every body your Superiour.*

* Superiores
sibi invicem
arbitrantes.
Phil. 2. 3.

However I must needs set down the excellent advice, which Saint Bernard subjoyns in these words; do not take notice of those who stand in need of Dispensations, but have your Eyes always upon such, who are the most Zealous and Exact observers of Religious Discipline, and strive to imitate them. And he relates a passage which is very pat to this subject, and was much to his satisfaction; concerning one of his own Religious, who came one Morning very early to him, and prostrating at his Feet, sayd, O Father I am altogether unworthy and very unfortunate; last Night in time of Matines, I made a reflection upon the Holiness of one of my Brethren, and I find that he is Master of at least thirty Vertues, to which I am a Stranger. Such a reflexion as this, is very profitable, and I desire, says the Saint, that it may be the Fruit yee reap from my Sermon, to observe always what is good and excellent in others, and not their defects; but in our selves, let us always find some matter of humiliation and vileness, not of pride and vanity. For what signifies it to you, that you can take more pains, and suffer more rigid Fasts than your Brother, if he at the same time be more Patient, Pious, Humble and more Charitable than you are?

† De cætero
ea magis at-
tende quæ a-
lius habet, &
tu non habes.
Non quod tu
habet & ille
indiget.
Sed esto ma-
gis sollicitus,
ut scias quid
desit tibi.
Bern. ubi. sup.
Isai. 56. 6.

† *Observe rather what he has, and what you want, than what you have and what he wants: Or to express it better, Make it your chief study to know what is wanting to your self, in order to arrive to Perfection:* For by this means you'll maintain Humility and Charity in your own Soul, and make great progress in the duties of Religion.

C H A P. XVIII.

*The Confirmation of what has been sayd by
several Examples.*

RABAUDUS, a Prince in France, was call'd Hier. Plat. l. 3.
de bono statu
Relig. c. 16. Miraculously to Religion, but this new way of living, seem'd at the first so difficult and painful to him, by reason of his former Life, that his Abbot *Porcarinus* was oblig'd to order something particular for him every Meal, that was better than what the rest of the Community had; yet for all this, his tenderness and Infirmary grew upon him. One Day when he Eat in the Refectory with the rest, who had Bread and Beans for Dinner, he saw two Venerable Old Men (the one of 'em was high foreheaded with two Keys about his Neck; the other in the Habit of a Monk, with a Christal Glas in his Hand) walk round the Refectory, and make an addition to every Monks Portion, out of the said Christal; but coming to him they frown'd upon him, and gave him nothing. However he ventur'd to tast of his Neighbours Portion, to see what had been given him; which relish'd far beyond any thing, he had ever Eaten in his whole Life. The same Vision happening thrice, he acquainted his Abbot with it, and begg'd to know who these two Old Men were. The Abbot presently perceiving the matter, told him, that one of them was Saint *Peter*, Patron of their Church, and the other Saint *Honorius*, Founder of their Monastery; and having given his Judgement upon the matter, added, that his not living up to the Rule like the rest, was the reason why they deny'd him, what they gave the other Monks. Upon this *Rabaudus* resolv'd to Live up to the exactness of his Rule in every point, and he found it far easier, than he thought it had been. Not long after, he saw the two same Saints making their round, from

U u 2

whose

whose Hands, he now shar'd equally with the rest: Which was an extraordinary Comfort to him, and gave him new Courage and Resolution, to undergo for the future, all the Austerities of his Order.

*Caesar. lib. 3.
Dial. 5. c. 48.*

Caesarinus has an Example, very like this, of a *Cister-tian* Monk, who had indeed the Name of a Religious Man, but nothing else. This Person, under pretence of having been a Physician, was almost continually abroad, and appear'd in the Monastery only upon Festival Days. When he was once at Matins with the rest, upon one of the Feasts of our Blessed Lady, he saw her enter the Quire, all Bright and Shining, and perceiv'd She pour'd a Divine sort of Liquor, into every Monks Mouth; which gave them new Force and Vigour, to Sing the Praises of God; but, when it came to his turn to receive the same, She pass'd by, without giving him any; telling him, that the Regalo's of Heaven, were not made for him, who thought of nothing but Earthly Pleasures. This Reproach so sensibly afflicted him, that entering into himself; he chang'd his Life upon the sudden, and began a State of Mortification; never afterwards going out a door's, without leave from his Superiour. The next Feast of our Blessed Lady, he had the comfort, to see her once again enter the Quire as before, who spoke to him thus; since you have mended your Life, and prefer'd the Sweets of Heaven before those of the Earth, I'll Regale you as I do the rest of your Brethren; who had no sooner tasted of the Liquor, but he found himself confirm'd in the Love of Mortification, and no less fix'd in a Contempt of the Vanities of this World; this Liquor being nothing else but the unction of Devotion, which makes all things Sweet and Easie.

*Caesar. lib. 4.
Dial. 5. c. 80.*

The same *Caesarinus* tells us of a Clergy-man, who had liv'd in great Delicacy, yet made himself Religious in the Monastery of *Clareval*, where finding nothing but very poor brown Bread, he had scarce courage to look upon it, and his Stomack turn'd at the very thoughts of Eating it. Our Blessed Saviour appear'd one Night to him, and presented him a piece of the same Bread, but he replying that it was impossible for him to Eat it, our Saviour Dipp'd it, in the Wound of his Sacred Side, and then Commanded him to Taste it. The Religious Obey'd

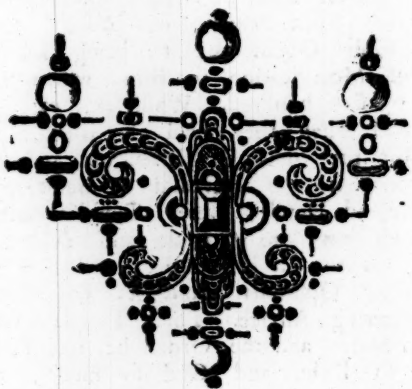
Obe'y'd, and found such an admirable Taſt in the Bread, that from thence forward, he found thoſe very things; which he cou'd not even touch before, always reſiſhing the ſame Taſt, and extreamly Pleaſant.

The Chronicles of the Order of Saint *Francis*, ſpeaking of that Famous Aſſembly they held in the open Field, (which they call the *Bulruſh* Chapter, by reaſon they made Cells of Ruſhes, for more than five thouſand Perſons) obſerve, that the Spirit of Fervor and Penance, reign'd then ſo much in that Order, that it was neceſſary to curb and reſtrain it. Many of them wore Iron Girdles and pointed Coats of Mail next their Skin, and from hence contracted ſuch Diſeaſes, that thereby they were quite diſabl'd, and cou'd not either attend to their Prayers, or do their Order any Service; and ſeveral of them Dyed: So that Saint *Francis* was oblig'd to Command them under Holy Obedience, to bring all thoſe Pious Inſtruments of Mortification to him, which amounted to the number of five hundred. Whiſt this extraordinary Fervor laſted, and when they held this their General Chapter, purely for the Spiritual Perfection and Advancement of their Order; it was Reveal'd to Saint *Francis*, that eighteen thouſand Devils, were aſſembl'd betwixt *Portiuncula* and *Aſſiſium*, to Conſult and deliberate how to oppoſe the Growth of his Order, and that after ſeveral had given their Opinions about it, one ſtood up, and gave the following Advice. Theſe People, ſays he, meaning Saint *Francis* and the Order he had Founded, Love this World ſo little, and God ſo much, and are ſo much addickt to Penance and Prayer, that 'tis very difficult for us, or rather impoſſible at preſent, to prevail againſt them. Therefore without giving our ſelves any further trouble at this time, I adviſe yee, to have Patience till their Founder be Dead, and their number increas'd. Then we will introduce young Men amongſt 'em, who ſhall have none of this Zeal for Perfection; and old ones too, who ſhall require Reſpect; as alſo People of Quality, who have been tenderly and nicely brought up; and laſtly, Learn'd Men, whoſe Pride ſhall be great, but their Piety little: Nor will they fail to receive theſe kind of Perſons, as well to maintain the Credit of their Order, as to augment their number.

Thus

P. I. l. i. c. 55.

Thus we shall be able to take our advantage, by Tempting some, with the Love of the World, others with the Vanity of great Knowledge, and puff up others with the hope of Dignities and Human Praises. And when once they are thus Corrupted, we may freely take our Revenge upon them. The whole Assembly of Devils, approv'd of this Advice, and so departed hugging themselves, and being glad of the promis'd success.



THE

THE SIXTH TREATISE OF

The Observation of Rules.

C H A P. I.

*Of the Favor God has done Religious,
by guarding and fortifying them
with Rules.*



ONE of the greatest Favors that God has done to Religious, is the having fortifi'd them with many Rules and Counsels; to the end that they might be in greater security, against the Enemies of their Salvation. The Saints also compare very well the Angelical Counsels, to the Out-works or Fortifications of a City. For as a City in a better State of Defence, when 'tis incamp'd with out-works, and exterior Fortifications; because shou'd the Enemy become Masters of these, they are still stop'd by the works contain'd within the body of the place: So those who are fortifi'd with Evangelical Counsels, are in a far better condition to resist the attacks

† Urbs fortitudinis nostræ Sion Saluator, ponetur in ea murus, & antemurale. *Isai.* 26. 1.

racks of the Devil, than those of the World are. But this is the advantage, which all Religious enjoy in general, and which we also, by the Mercy of God, enjoy in so particular a manner, that we may very justly apply to our selves the words of *Isay*. † *The City of Sion is our Fortress: The Lord has compass'd it with a Wall, and with a Bulwork to defend it.* He has first of all compass'd us with a Rampire of his Law and Commandments, he has added also to this Rampire, the out-works of our Rules and Constitutions, that all the endeavours of our Enemies, with whom we are always at War, may be able only to make some Breach in this first Fortification; whereby, the Law of God remaining always intire, we may be secure from all their insults: 'Tis a great Favor that God had bestow'd upon us, to have put us in such a State, that the Devil is scarce able to hope, even by his most violent attack's, to prevail any farther, than to make us fail in our Rules. The Transgression of which, amounts not to a Venial Sin; and that at present we have a greater Scruple to break any one of these Rules. than perhaps, had we remain'd in the World, we shou'd have had to commit great Sins.

This let's us easily see, the Error of some Weak Religious, who as soon as they happen to commit some faults against their Rules, and fall into some Imperfections, imagine that it had been better for 'em, to have remain'd in the World, than to live after such a manner in Religion. This is one of the most dangerous Temptations, that the Devil can make use of against us; because it regards what is of so great Importance, and so Essential to our Vocation: For he desires nothing more, than to keep us in the open and wide World, without the Precincts of our Rules, and Angelical Counsels; because then he wou'd freely make his Machins play, against the Rampire of the Law of God, and perhaps make us fall thereby, into some Mortal Sin. But here, 'tis not so easie for him to compass what he aims at; because the first Rampire securely defends us, against which he employs all his force, without being able notwithstanding to put us in danger, of receiving any Mortal Wound in our Soul; whatsoever disgusts he may give us in the Practice of our Rules, and what Imperfections soever he may cause us to fall into. One Sin alone that you shou'd have committed in the World, wou'd have

Part. 3. Of the Observation of Rules. 345

have been far greater, than all the Faults you fall into in Religion; and therefore how dissatisf'd soever you may be, with the little progress you may seem to make in Virtue, yet assure your self that you are in a better State in order to your Salvation; than you would have been, in the World. This advantage is without doubt one of those that ought to make us have a greater esteem of a Religious Life; and this alone is so great a one, that if we should find no other but this, it would deserve a very great esteem, and we should always have an Infinity of thanks to render to God, for having call'd us to it. Do you think that 'tis a small matter, that whilst others are in the Lists, expos'd to a thousand dangers, that you are in a place of Security, only looking on; that whilst they are in the midst of the Sea, weather-beaten by Winds and Tempests, you are at repose in the Haven; and that whilst they are toss'd, and turmoiling themselves in the midst of the Waves of *Babylon*: The Torrent of which carries 'em away; that you repose in Peace and Tranquility upon the Bank.

The Rules of a Religious Life and the Evangelical Counsels, have also this advantage, that they help us to observe the Commandments; because the keeping of 'em, becomes very easie to him that tends to the Perfection of Evangelical Counsels; whereas on the contrary, he who has no mind to follow the Perfection of the Counsels, is very little or not at all Faithful, in the observing of the Commandments: This is the sense which Saint *Thomas* gives to these words of our Saviour in the Gospel,

* *Verily I say unto yee, that a Rich Man will very hardly enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.* Do you know why 'tis so hard, says the Holy Doctor, 'tis because it is so hard to observe the Precepts that lead to this Kingdom, unless we follow the Counsels, and make a renunciation to Riches. The observance of the Counsels, on the other side, renders the observance of the Commandments far more easie; because 'tis certain, that to renounce, for example, all the Goods of the Earth, and thereby, being capable of poss'ing nothing as our own, hinders us very much from desiring to have the Goods of our Neighbour; causes us to Pray to God for those that are Persecuted; to do Good even to those from whom we have receiv'd Evil; to be very far from hating our Enemies; prevents our swearing even when we affirm what is true; and hinders us from making any

Tom. III.

X x

false

* Amen dico vobis, quia dives difficile intrabit in regnum calorum. *Matth. 19. 23.*

† Quia difficile est quod homo præcepta servet quibus intratur in regnum, nisi sequens consilium, divitias relinquat. *S. Th. quodlib. 4. art. 23.*

false Oaths. Wherefore the Saints take notice, that the Evangelical Counsels, and the Rules of a Religious Life, are so far from being a heavy burthen, that they are even a help, and an admirable support, to assist us to bear more easily, the Yoke of God's Commandments.

Aug. serm. 11.
de verb. Apost.
Idem. serm. 87.
341.

Saint *Austin* speaking of the easiness of the Law of Grace, explicates it by two excellent comparisons, he compares it to the Wings of a Bird, and to the Wheels of a Chariot. The Wings says he, are no burthen or hindrance at all to Birds, they on the contrary help to render 'em less heavy, and even to make them fly; the Wheels of a Chariot add's no heaviness at all to the weight, or any incommodity to the Chariot; but on the contrary, they afford great ease and help, to the Beasts that draw it; and without 'em, they would not be able to draw half the weight they do: We may say the very same of Evangelical Counsels, out of which our Rules are taken and fram'd, they are so far from being a burthen or hindrance to us, that they are Wings that make us fly towards Heaven; they are Wheels that help us, to bear more easily, the Yoke of the Law of God; whilst People in the World, who have not the same advantages, bear it with a great deal of Pain, groaning under the Burthen, and oftentimes even falling under it. All this ought to inspire great sentiments of gratitude towards God, for having given us a great esteem of our Rules, and having rendered us very fervent in the observance of 'em.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

That our Perfection consists in the Observance of our Rules.

† **O**BSERVE my Law and my Counsel; and this shall be the Salvation of thy Soul, and the Sweetness of thy Life. This is an Exhortation the Holy Ghost gives, by the Mouth of the Wise Man; to an exact observance of God's Law and Counsels; and these words are very conformable, to these other of the Royal Prophet, * *How pleasing O Lord are thy Words? They are sweeter to my Mouth than Honey or the Honey Comb.* Saint Hierom writing to Helvidius in Answer to twelve Questions he had propos'd to him, of which the first was, what he ought to do to attain to Perfection? Made the same Answer that JESUS CHRIST did, to the Man in the Gospel, who cast himself at his Feet, and ask'd him what he shou'd do to gain Eternal Life. Our Saviour Answer'd him; † *If thou wou'dst enter into Life Everlasting, observe the Commandments;* and this Man answering that he had observ'd 'em from his Youth, * *JESUS look'd upon him, says the Evangelist, and took a particular Affection to him.* Whereupon, we may by the way take notice, what the Merit is of Vertue and Goodness; because it draws the Eyes of the Son of God upon us, and gains his very Heart. But to come to our Subject. † *There's one thing you still want,* says our Saviour, *go sell all that which thou hast and give it to the Poor, and thou shalt have a Treasure in Heaven; and then come and follow me.* Behold here, says Saint Hierom, in what Perfection precisely do's consist; it consists in adding the Evangelical Counsels, to the Commandments.

Venerable Bede says, * *That this second Crown of Gold which God Commanded Moyses to put upon the first, signifies*

X x 2

the

† Custodi legem atque consilium, & erit vita animæ tuæ, & gratia faucibus tuis.
Prov. 3. 21.
Eccl. 22.

* Quam dulcia faucibus meis eloquia tua, super mel ori meo!
Psalm. 118. 103.

† Si vis ad vitam ingredi, serva mandata.
Matth. 19. 17.

* JESUS autem incutit eum, dilexit eum.
Marc. 10. 21.

† Unum tibi deest: vade, quæcumque habes vende, & da pauperibus, & habebis thesaurum in cælo: & veni sequere me.
Matth. 10. 21.

* Et super illam, alteram coronam aureolam.
Exod. 25. 25.

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† Et habebis
thesaurum in
caelo.
Matth. 19. 21.

* De tenebris
vos vocavit in
admirabile lu-
men suum.
1 Petr. 2. 9.
† Et tranſiit
in regnum hij
dilectionis
sue.
Col. 1. 13.

6. p. conf. c. 1.
§. 1.

Concil. Trid.
ſeſſ. 25. c. 16.

ſies the Recompence of thoſe, who not contenting them-
ſelves only to keep the Commandments of God, praſiſe
alſo the Evangelical Counſels; and 'tis for this reaſon that
JESUS CHRIST add's, † *And thou ſhalt have a Tre-
ſure in Heaven*; as if he wou'd have ſayd, thou ſhalt not
only obtain Eveilaſting Life; if thou putteſt in praſiſe thoſe
Counſels I give thee, but thy Recompence in Heaven,
ſhall thereby alſo become greater, and more glorious. After
this manner * *God has, not only, call'd us out of Darkneſs,
to the admirable Light of his Glory*, as he has call'd
all Chriſtians, † *And will, not only, tranſfer us to the King-
dom of his Beloved Son*, but he deſires to give us the
ſeſt places therein: And 'tis upon this account, that he
call's us to keep his Evangelical Counſels, in which con-
ſiſts the State of Perfection, which all Religious have im-
brac'd. 'Tis therefore very Juſt to endeavor on our ſide,
to correſpond to ſo great a Benefit; and we ſhall inſal-
libly correſpond to it, if we take care to praſiſe, what
our Founder has Commanded us, when he ſays, Let all
thoſe who enter into the SOCIETY, propoſe to them-
ſelves intirely to obſerve all the Conſtitutions, all the
Rules, and all the Practices that are therein obſerv'd;
and by the Mercy of God, let them apply themſelves
with all their Heart, and with all their Strength per-
fectly to obſerve 'em. Behold here in, what our Spiritual
Advancement and Perfection do's conſiſt: For we ſhall be-
come Perfect Religious Men, if we obſerve theſe, with all
the Perfection that is Requir'd of us: Nay even the Name
of Religious, ſeems to ſignifie this Obligation; becauſe it
ſignifies a Man who is bound again; becauſe in effect,
Religious Perſons are not only bound by Gods Command-
ments, as all other Chriſtians are, but alſo by the Evan-
gelical Counſels, which are contain'd in each Order. The
Obligation alſo which they have to obſerve their Rules,
is mark'd or ſignifi'd by the Name of Regulars, which
the Church gives 'em; which is a very honorable Name,
that is given 'em alſo by the Canon Law; and we our
ſelves are call'd Regular Clericks, by the Counſel of Trent,
and by the Bulls of ſeveral Popes: Wherefore let us en-
deavor worthily to correſpond to our Name; by rendring
our Lives conformable to it, and by becoming Regular
obſervers of our Rules. Saint Bernard writing to ſome Re-
ligious, to exhort 'em to Perſever in their Fervor;

* I

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* I beseech yee Brethren, says he to them, and earnestly conjure yee, to Live after such a manner in our Lord, that yee may be always careful to keep the Rules of your Order, that they may keep and guard you also. Wherefore hereby we perceive if we take care to keep our Rules, they will also keep us, and maintain us in the Perfection of our State.

* Rogo vos, fratres, & multum obsecro, sic agite, & sic stite in Domino, dilectissimi, solliciti semper circa custodiam ordinis, ut ordo custodiat vos. Bern. epist. 321. ad frat. S. Anna.

Judicium 16. 19.

The Holy Scripture takes notice, that the Strength of *Sampson* consisted in his Hair, and that as soon as 'twas cut off, he lost all his Strength and was easily overcome, and bound by the *Philistians*. Behold an admirable Figure of the State of a Religious Life, for as all the Force of *Sampson* consisted in his Hair, which he kept without cutting, being of the Sect of the *Nazareans*, that is of such as had Consecrated themselves to God, making Profession to keep their Hair without ever permitting it to be cut: So all our Perfection and all our Virtue consists in keeping our Rules, for tho' they appear to us, to be of as light and small consequence, as Hair is. Yet notwithstanding they are of great importance; by reason of the Vow, which we have made to God to observe them. Moreover as from the very moment that *Sampson* had his Hair cut, by the Treachery of *Dalila*, to whom he had confided his secret, he lost with his Hair all his Strength which God had been pleas'd to joyn to it; so as soon also as we shall fail to keep exactly our Rules, we shall easily be overcome and bound by the *Philistians*, as *Sampson* was; that is to say we shall easily fall into the Snares, and come under the Power of the Devils our Enemies.

C H A P.

C H A P. III.

That tho' our Rules do not oblige under the penalty of Sin, yet nevertheless we ought exactly to observe them.

OUR Rules and Constitutions, do not oblige us under pain of Mortal Sin, nor even of Venial, no more than the Commands of our Superiours, unless it be, as our Constitutions declare, when they command on God's Part, or by Vertue of Holy Obedience. Yet we ought to take heed, lest for this reason we come to neglect 'em, which is a kind of Temptation, the Devil ordinarily makes use of, to make us have little concern in breaking 'em; and for this reason we ought not the less exactly to observe them. Our Holy Founder, wou'd, not on the one side, bind us so fast, as might give us an occasion of Sin, and on the other being desirous to move us to an exact Observance of 'em, with all possible Perfection, he gives us this wholesom advice. † *Let the Love of God, says he, succeed in place of the Fear of Offending him; and let it be the desire of your greater Perfection, and the greater Glory of God, that moves us to perform your Duty herein.* He says also in the begining of our Rules and Constitutions, that the Interior Law of Charity, which the Holy Ghost has writ in our Hearts, ought to move us, to an exact observance of 'em; which is the same thing, as the Son of God tells us in Saint John, * *If yee Love me keep my Commandments.* 'Tis sufficient for any one who Loves, to know the Will of the Person he Loves. 'Tis sufficient for a Child of Noble Birth to know the Will of his Father, he needs not the Motive of Fear to make him Obedient; and he who contemn's the Rules and breaks 'em, because they oblige not under the Penalty of Sin and Damnation, shews himself neither a Child Nobly Born, nor even a good Servant. For the

Proof

† Et loco timoris offensæ succedat amor, & desiderium omnis perfectionis, & ut major gloria, & laus Christi creatoris ac Domini nostri consequatur.
c. p. Constit. cap. 5.

* Si diligitis me, mandata mea servate.
Joan. 14. 15.

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Proof of this, I ask you, what Judgement you wou'd make of a Servant, who wou'd never do any thing his Master commanded him, unless he commanded it with the Sword in his Hand, and under pain of Death? What opinion wou'd you have of a Woman, that shou'd tell her Husband, I will be an honest Woman, if you be not unfaithful to me; but if you be, I am resolv'd to do whatsoever I have a mind to, how angry soever you may be with me for it? Behold here the very same thing that those do, who break their Rules; because they oblige not under the Penalty of Sin and Damnation; which in effect is properly to imitate Slaves, who do nothing but out of Fear and Apprehension of being Punish'd. * *The Wicked, as an Ancient Poet says very well, abstain from Sin, for Fear of being Punish'd. But the Good abstain from it, for the Love of Vertue.*

* Oderunt peccare mali formidine pœnæ : Oderunt peccare boni virtutis amore.

Saint Gregory Reports that a Holy Religious Man, call'd *Marinus*, being retir'd in Solitude to Mount *Marsique*, put a Chain upon one of his Feet, which he fasten'd to the Rock, to the end that he might go no farther than the length of his Chain. Saint *Bennet* understanding this, sent one of his Religious to him, to tell him, † *If you be the Servant of God, let not the Iron Chain, but the Chain of Jesus CHRIST hold you.* And the Holy Man presently took off the Chain from his Foot, in Obedience to what was commanded him, continuing notwithstanding to go no farther, than when he was Chain'd. Our Holy Founder wou'd also tye us to our Rules, not with Chains of Iron, that is to say, with fear of Sin and Damnation, but with the Chain of the Love of JESUS CHRIST, and 'tis this which ought to oblige us still to be more faithful to our duty, and to remain in greater recollection.

† Si servus Dei es, non teneat te catena ferrea, sed catena Christi. Greg. Dial. l. 5. c. 16.

We must moreover take notice here of two things. The first is, that when any of our Rules and Constitutions contains any thing which either regards the Vow's we have made, or that is forbidden by the Law of God, then we are oblig'd to the observance of this Rule, under pain of Mortal Sin. not by Vertue of the Rule, but by Vertue of the Vow we have made, or of the Law that God has establish'd. The Second thing we ought to take notice of, is, that tho' our Rule do's not oblige of it self under pain of Sin, yet there may be a Sin in breaking it, when we do it out of Negligence, Laziness,

Laziness, Contempt of the Rule, or out of some other Motive of the same Nature: And this is that, which Saint Thomas has very well taken notice of, speaking of the Rules of the Order of Saint Dominick; who of themselves oblige no more, either under pain of Mortal or Venial Sin, than ours do.

C H A P. IV.

That how small soever a thing may be, that is commanded us by our Rules, we are not for this reason, the more excusable in neglecting it; but on the contrary, are more inexcusable, that we have not perform'd it.

THE Devil makes use also of another Stratagem, to make us neglect the observance of certain Rules; which is, by giving us to understand, that they are of no great importance; and that our Perfection consists not in their observance: So that being on the other side, seconded by our Tepidity and Negligence, he easily moves us to a Transgression of 'em: Wherefore 'tis necessary to arm our selves against this Temptation; whereupon I say, that the excuse of any things being of little importance, do's not render the Fault more excusable, but do's in some manner even aggravate it. This is the Doctrine of Saint *Austin*, who speaking of the the Disobedience of our first Father, says, that as the Obedience of *Abraham* was so much the greater, by how much harder the thing was that was commanded, * *So the Disobedience of Adam was so much the more Criminal, because there was no difficulty, in what was requir'd of him.* For what excuse could be made, for refusing to Obey so easie a command, as not to Eat of the Fruit of one single Tree; since there were

Aug. l. 14. de Civ. Dei. c. 15.

* Ita & in Paradiso tanto major inobedientia fuit, quanto id quod præceptum est nullius difficultatis fuit.

Aug. l. 14. de Civ. Dei. c. 15.

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were so many other Trees, of which he might freely Eat, and which probably were much better? What would he have done if God had commanded him something, that had been very hard; if for Example, he had commanded him to Sacrifice his Wife, as he commanded Abraham to Sacrifice his Son? And how would he have been able to have resolv'd to Sacrifice her out of Obedience, who chose rather to disobey and displease God in eating the forbidden Fruit, than to displease her? We may say in like manner, that the facility in observing our Rules, renders the breaking of 'em more criminal and less excusable: And Saint Bonaventure is altogether of the same Opinion, when he says, ** Our Reputation is so much the more stain'd by our failing in little things, by how much the more easily we might have avoided what we knew to be so.* We might perhaps have some excuse, were we to obey a very hard command but what excuse can we have, when the thing requir'd of us is so easie, and without the least difficulty? Moreover how can I believe that you would obey in harder things, when you disobey in those that are most easie? 'Tis to be believ'd, that he that performs not lesser things, will never perform greater: And he, says Saint Bernard, that cannot command his Tongue nor his Appetite, cannot be a good Religious Man. This Maxim was one of the chief, amongst the Ancient Fathers; and 'tis for this reason, that they always began their Exercises with Abstinence. For he, say they, who cannot overcome himself in certain exterior things, where the Victory is more easie, how can he be able to overcome himself interiorly, where the difficulty is far greater? How can he be able to defend himself against the malice of his Invisible Enemies, if he cannot even resist those he perceives? This may help us to discern the truth or falshood of those desires, we may sometimes have, of doing great things for the Love of God; as to endure all sorts of Pains and Mortifications, and even to go and suffer Martyrdom amongst Infidels; for if amongst our Brethren, we are not able to bear a light Mortification; if we break sometimes one Rule sometimes another, only to avoid the asking leave of our Superiour; what can be expected from us in harder matters? ** Many, says Saint Bonaventure, would Dye with JESUS CHRIST, that would not endure a hard word for JESUS CHRIST. But he who trembles at the noise of a Leaf shaken by the Wind, how will he have Courage, to expect*

Tom. III.

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** Minima neglecta eo turpius maculam moribus ingerunt, quod vitari facilius cognita poterunt.*
Bonar. in disc. spiritali ad novit. in prolog.

+ Qui linguam suam & ventrem custodire non potest, Monachus non est.
Bern. de intro. domo c. 56.

** Multi pro Christo optant mori, qui pro Christo non luctantur levia verba pati. Sed quem terret*

sonitus folij
volantis, quo-
modo sustine-
ret ictum gla-
dij vibrantis;
Bon. ubi supra.

* Minima eti-
am adversa to-
lerare patien-
ter assuec-
imus: Quia
majora non
superat, qui
minora tolera-
re non discit.
Idem ibid.

Dionys. Cartus.
in scala Reliq.
art. 16.

the blow of a Sword, ready to light upon him. If a light word sayd to us, is able to trouble us, and make us lose our repose, what will happen, when Persecutions shall be rais'd against us, when they will bring false Witnesses to accuse us of things of very great moment; and when we shall perceive, that all the World believes 'em? * Wherefore, the same Saint exhorts us, to accustom our selves to suffer Patiently even the least things, for he will never be able to overcome great ones, who has not learnt to overcome small difficulties.

Denis the Carthusian, reports of a Novice, who had great Fervor in the beginning, but afterwards, as it often happens, came to fall into great negligence and tepidity. All things at first seem'd easie to him, but a little while after; all the Exercises of Mortification and Humility became very heavy and uneasie; and amongst other things, he cou'd not suffer the outward course Habit, which the Novices wore during their Novitship. One Day, as he slept, he saw in his Dream JESUS CHRIST loaden with a very heavy Cross, who striving to get up a Ladder which was very streight, exceedingly increas'd his pain and difficulty. The Novice touch'd with Compassion, presently offer'd himself to our Saviour, to help him to carry his Cross; but our Saviour looking upon him with Indignation, sayd to him. How dare you pretend to carry my Cross which is so heavy, since you have a difficulty for Love of me to carry your Habit, which weighs so little in comparison of my Cross? At the same instant the Vision disappear'd, and the Novice awak'd very much Confounded at this Reproach, and at the same time fully resolv'd, to suffer all things for JESUS CHRIST, so that for the future, this course and contemptible Habit which he had difficulty to carry, became a Subject of Joy and Contentment to him.

C H A P.

CHAP. V.

How dangerous a thing it is, to contemn our Rules, tho' but in small things.

† **H**E who is Faithful in little things, shall be also Faithful in great ones, and he who Offends in small things, Offends also in great ones. It being the ordinary Practice of the Devil, to endeavour to carry us to a neglect of the Observance of our Rules, under pretence, that the things they ordain, are of small importance, and that our Spiritual Advancement, do's not at all depend upon them; I shall therefore speak here of two remedies against this Temptation. The first, is the consideration of the danger there is in the neglect of small things. The second, is the consideration of the advantage there is, in a careful performance of them: Since our Saviour takes notice of the one and the other; in the words I have just now cited. Wherein he says concerning the first, that *He who is Faithful in little things, will be faithful also in greater.* The Holy Ghost also had sayd of them, the same thing before, letting us understand, that * *He that Contemn's small things will by little and little come to fail.* We cannot doubt but that these sentences come from God; and therefore they ought to suffice to render us extremely careful, in the Observance of our Rules, and hinder us from breaking them, under pretence of the small importance of those things they prescribe. The Prophet Jeremy assures us, that 'twas from small beginnings, that God came to Destroy Jerusalem. † Our Lord, says he, *propo'd to cast down the Walls of the Daughter of Sion, he has taken his measures with his Line, and has not ceas'd to endeavour it's Ruin: All it's Out-works are intirely Demolish'd, and it's Wall's in like manner cast down.* Behold here after what manner even the strongest places are taken, and 'tis according to

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this

† Qui fidelis est in minimo, & in majori fidelis erit: Et qui in modico iniquus est, & in majori iniquus est. Luc. 16. 10.

* Qui spernit modica, paulatim decidet. Eccl. 19. 1.

† Cogitavit Dominus dissipare murum murum Filiae Sion: tetendit funiculum suum, & non avertit manum suam a perditione: luxitque antemurale, & murus pariter dissipatus est. Thren. 3. 3.

this method, that the Devils endeavour to make themselves Masters of the Fortrefs of our Soul. The Rules, as I have already sayd, are the Out-works, and serve for a defence to the Law of God, which is it's chief Wall: So that if you look not well to these Out-works and exterior Mortifications, your Invisibile Enemies will afterwards undermine your chief Wall, and hereby become Masters of your Soul.

* Qui dissipat
sepem, mor-
debit eum co-
luber.
Ecclesi. 10. 8.

† Ut quid def-
truxisti mace-
tiam ejus, &
vindemiant
eam omnes,
qui prætergre-
diuntur viam?
Ecclesi. 79. 13.

* Qui spernit
modica, pau-
latim decedit.
Ecclesi. 19. 1.

† Lapides ex-
cavant aquæ;
& alluvione
paulatim terra
consumitur.
Job. 14. 19.

* *He that destroys the Hedge, shall be bitten by the Serpent*, says the Wise Man. If you begin to destroy this Hedge, and this Inclosure of your Rules, if you once come to break it, the Old Serpent which is the Devil, will not fail thereby to enter into your Soul, and to destroy you: † *Why hast thou destroy'd the Dry Wall that encompass'd thy Vineyard*, says the Prophet speaking to God, *and now all Passengers make the Vineyard there*: If you destroy this Wall which encompasses the Vineyard of our Lord, you can never hope to gather any Fruit from it, it will be soon layd wast.

But since this is a matter of great importance, and cannot be render'd too easie to be understood; let us lay aside these Figures and Metaphors, and speak more clearly; wou'd you know how that is to be understood, which the Holy Ghost says to us, that * *He who despises little things, by little and little will come to fall*? We ought to understand these words in the same sense that Saints and Divines do, who say, that Venial Sin is a disposition to Mortal. Venial Sins tho' never so great in number, can never amount to one Mortal Sin, and are not capable of causing Death to a Soul, or of making it lose the Grace of God; but they leave behind 'em in the Soul, a certain disposition to a slackness in Devotion, and a love to ease and softness; which weakens it, and renders it more easie to be overcome upon the first occasion, and to fall into Mortal Sin. 'Tis after this manner, that tho' the first discharge of Canon, shot against a Wall, do's not cast it down, yet it shakes it so, that it disposes it to be easily cast down, by the discharges that shall afterwards be made against it; and moreover, tho' the first drops of Water, which fall upon a Stone, are not able to make any impression upon it; yet they dispose it after such a manner, that those that follow it, actually make holes in it. † *Water makes Stones hollow*, says Job, and *Floods by little and little carry away the Earth*. The effects
of

of Venial Sin are the very same; they insensibly carry us, to lose the fear of Offending God, and to Act by other motives, than by that of his Love; and after this, we are not far from doing, what is directly contrary to it. He who makes no difficulty to tell a Lye, and gives himself the liberty of Swearing without necessity, will soon come to Swear to a Lye, or to what is doubtful; and hereby miserably fall into Mortal Sin. He who makes little or no Scruple to Detract in small things, will soon find occasion to Detract in things of great importance; and will hereby be in danger of losing the Grace of God. He who keeps not a custody over his Eyes, and has not a particular care to reject bad Thoughts, when they come to him, is very near his Fall. An occasion will happen, in which his Heart and Desires will follow his Thoughts and Looks; and behold here again a miserable Fall; 'tis just that, which the Devil pretends by ingaging us to commit Venial Sins, thereby to precipitate us into those, that give Death to the Soul.

The Contempt and Breach of Rules, are the very same; they are the means that the Devil makes use of, to carry us by little and little to worse things, and to make us at last to fall into a Precipice. In the beginning we shall have a very great Scruple to break the least Rule; but afterwards we shall have less, and lastly we shall come freely to break 'em without the least remorse of Conscience. The same thing happens also in regard of Prayer and other Spiritual Exercises, for they carry with 'em no stricter Obligation, than the rest. For when once we neglect to make them, another time we make them by halves, and very negligently, without gathering any Fruit from 'em, and at last we fall into such a remissness, and into so great a negligence of them, that we come quite to lose the gust of Spiritual things: 'Tis from these kinds of beginnings, which seem very inconsiderable, that the Mortal Falls of a religious Man proceed; and Saint *Austin* very well takes notice upon the Subject, of what the Gospel makes Reflection; which was, that *Magdalen* having pour'd out her Ointment of great price, upon the Feet of the Son of God, *Judas* murmur'd at it, saying, * *Why was not this Perfume sold, and the Money given to the Poor?* For the Gospel, says expressly, *That he sayd not this; because he took any care of the Poor; but because he was a Thief, kept the*
Purse

* Quare hoc unguentum non vœniit, & datum est egenis? Dixit autem hoc, non quia de egenis perti-

nebat ad eum,
sed quia fur
erat, & locu-
los habens, &
ea quæ mitte-
bantur porta-
bat.

Joan. 12. 5.
Ch. 6.

Aug. tract. 10.
sup. Joan.

† Faciem e-
jus præcedit
cælitus.
Job. 41. 13.

* Erudire Je-
rusalem, ne
forte recedat
anima mea, &
ne forte po-
nam te deser-
tam, terram
inhabitabilem.
Jerem. 6. 3.

Purse and had the Dispensation of all that which was given, he was displeas'd, that *Magdalen* hereby took from him, the occasion of Robbing, or taking away some of that Mony, for which the Perfume might have been sold; and to recompence this loss, the miserable Wretch resolv'd to sell his Master. Whereupon Saint *Austin* says, take notice that it was not in selling our Saviour, that *Judas* began to lose himself: The Evil began long before, he had been a long time a Thief, and his Body only follow'd JESUS CHRIST, whilst his Heart was far distant from him. Wherefore when you perceive that any Religious have grievously fallen, believe not that the Evil began only then, for without doubt, it had been a long while, that his Mind and Heart were no more in Religion; that he had no care of keeping his Rules; and that he neither made Prayer, nor Examin, nor any other Exercise of Piety. Consider into what a Precipice *Judas* is fallen, for want of repressing the motions he had of Covetousness of Mony; and let us learn never to relent even in the least things, for fear from weak and small beginnings, they cast us into terrible consequences. † *Poverty and Want go before his Face*, says the Scripture; and one of the senses which is given to these words, is, that Remissness and Tepidity, are always forerunners of the Devil into a Soul; it falls first into this Spiritual want, which proceeds from a multitude of Venial Sins; and because it has depriv'd it self of those helps, which 'twas wont to draw from Prayer and Spiritual Exercises, it afterwards easily gives way to the attacks of the first great Temptation that comes upon it. Wherefore let us take care of having the least negligence or contempt of our Rules; for fear of giving entrance unto the Devil: For as soon as we make no Scruple of falling into deliberate Imperfections, and of committing Venial Sins, we are not far off from committing Mortal. * *Learn O Jerusalem*, says our Saviour by the Mouth of *Jeremy*, *learn for fear lest my Soul retire from thee, and that I render thee not a Desert and an Inhabitable Land.* Learn O Religious Souls, learn how to conform your selves to the practice of Religious Discipline, and apply your selves to an exact observance of your Rules; for fear that God leaves and abandons yee, and that hereby yee incur some dangerous fall.

C H A P. VI.

Of the great Advantages that are drawn,
from an exact Observance of Rules even
in the least things.

WELL done Good and Faithful Servant;
because thou hast been Faithful in
small things; I will give thee the
Administration of greater; enter into
the Joy of thy Lord. The Son of

God gives us to understand by these words, the Recompence that is annex'd to fidelity in little things; and to make us see more clearly, the greatness of his Recompence, he says not the Joy of the Lord shall enter into us, because our Heart is too streight a Vessel to contain it; but he says that we shall enter into the Joy of the Lord; which marks the excess and abundance of this Joy, and that we shall be altogether plung'd therein. In another place he Promises us, † *That they shall cast into our Breasts good Measure; a Measure fill'd, and heap'd up so high, as it shall even run over.* But let us a little consider, why he Promises so great Recompences to those; who shall be Faithful in small things; 'tis because after the same manner that a Man carries himself in little things, he is observ'd to carry himself also in great ones; according to the words of the Gospel; * *He that is Faithful in lesser, is also Faithful in greater things.* Moreover, take notice that he says not, that he who is Faithful in great things, shall also be so in little ones, but he quite turns the Proposition another way; because in effect, Fidelity makes it self more known in little things, than in great ones. When a Steward makes the Expences in a House, 'tis not in his being found faulty in his accounts a hundred or two hundred Pounds, that his great fidelity appears; but that he is found not to have miscounted a Farthing. A good Servant is not so soon found or known

* Euge, serve bone & fidelis, quia super pauca fuit fidelis, super multate constitutum, intra in gaudium Domini tui. Matth. 25. 21.

† Mensuram bonam, & confertam, & congitatam, & superfluentem dabunt in sinum vestrum. Luc. 6. 38.

* Qui fidelis est in minimo, & in majori fidelis est. Luc. 16. 10.

known in those great things, which purely belong to his duty, as in certain little cares, to which he is not oblig'd; and lastly a Son gives a less mark of his Love and Respect for his Father, by the Obedience he renders him in matters of consequence, than by those he performs which are of less concern; and by his care never to do the least thing, that may displease his Father: 'Tis the same in a good Religious Man: He makes his Vertue appear less, by hindering himself from falling into any Mortal Sin, than by applying himself faithfully to perform those things which his Rules and Obedience prescribe; and 'tis for this reason that God treats those so well, who carry themselves after this manner; and bestows so many Graces upon 'em: He is thus liberal towards 'em; because they are also liberal towards him, which is conformable to the words of Saint James, *† Approach to God and he will approach to you*: And the more they approach to God, and use this liberality towards him, the more he approaches to them, and the greater Graces he heaps upon 'em. He who has a great care to please God, not only in things of his Duty, and of Precept; but also in those which are of Counsel; and not only in the greatest, but even in the least things always diligently applies himself, to do what he believes is most conformable to Gods Will; is truly Liberal towards God; which God Recompences by the like Liberality towards him: They are those that serve God after this manner, whom he makes his Favorites; 'tis upon them, that he showers down his Graces and Blessings in greater abundance, than upon any others; and lastly these are they, who ordinarily distinguish themselves from others, by their Vertue and Perfection. I have known some Religious amongst us, who by this means have become great and admirable Men in Spirituality; And I have heard it sayd of others, who being very much advanc'd in Age, had so much fidelity even to observe the least Rules, that they became an Example to all their Brethren, and at the same time gave them a great Confusion: But 'tis not to be wonder'd at, if such as these be the beloved Favorites of God; we see even in the World, that such Domesticks as apply themselves only in doing whatsoever they think pleasing to their Master, and that apply themselves indifferently to all things for his Service, are those that most of all insinuate themselves into his Favor; and upon whom he bestows

† Appropinquate Deo, & appropinquabit vobis. Jacob, 4, 8.

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bestows greater benefits; 'tis the same in Gods House, they who become little ones, and debase themselves to all things, that take care even of the least things that regard the Glory and Service of God, are those who are God's Favorites; 'tis to them that he lays open the Treasures of his Blessings and Graces, and 'tis of these he properly says, * *Permit little ones to come unto me, and do not hinder them; for the Kingdom of Heaven belongs to such as these are.* On the contrary, those that pretend to be distinguish'd from others; that believe their Antiquity in Religion, gives 'em right to dispence with themselves, in the Observance of the Common Rules; and look upon little things, as imployments fit only for Novices, disdaining to stoop to them, themselves: God Humbles such as these, and rejects 'em, according to the words of David. † *If I thought not Humbly of my self, but proudly Elevated my Mind. Treat me O Lord as a Nurse treats her Infant, when she weans her Child?* She carries him no longer in her Arm's, and not only gives him no longer Suck, but even rub's her Breast with some bitter thing, that he may there find bitterness, where he before was accustom'd to find so much sweetness; behold the Curse which David gave, both to himself, and to all those who wou'd appear great, and are ashamed of being little. He begs that God wou'd reject 'em; that he wou'd deprive them of his Consolations; and that he wou'd change all that Spiritual sweetness, with which he was wont to favor 'em, into bitterness.

Saint *Jerom* who knew perfectly well, what the Sentiments of a true Servant of God ought to be, says. * *That he who is intirely devoted to JESUS CHRIST, has no less attention and exactness in the performance of small things, than in great ones; knowing that he must render an account, even for one unprofitable Word.* He knows that from little defects, we fall by little and little into great ones, and 'tis very certain that he who is Faithful in little things, God will reward him by a great abundance of his favors; and therefore he has a great attention to the performance of small things, and neglects not one of 'em, how little soever it may appear. Saint *Basil* recommends to us the like Practise: † *Take care, says he, that you arrive to the highest pitch of Vertues, even the most elevated, yet notwithstanding neglect not the least, and think no fault little, how small soever it may appear to you, even smaller than a Mite.*

Tom. III.

Z. 2

CHAP.

* Sinite parvulos venire ad me, & nolite eos prohibere; talium est enim regnum celorum.
Matth. 19. 14.

† Si non humiliter sentiebam, sed exaltavi animam meam. Sicut ablactatus est super matrem suam, ita retributio in anima mea.
Psalm. 130. 3.
C. 4.

* Mens Christo dedita, æque & in majoribus, & in minoribus intenta est, sciens etiam pro otioso verbo reddendam efferationem.
Hier. ep. 3. ad Hesiod.

† Studero, ut majorum virtutum compos efficiam, neque minores tamen negligo. Nullum omnino sit errorum quod parvi pendas, quamvis illud tenuissimam vestigia minutus sit.
Basil. in princip. 2. tom. 2. p. 2.

C H A P. VII.

Wherein what has been already sayd, is confirm'd by Examples.

WE Read in the fourth Book of *Kings*, that *Naman* General of the Army of the King of *Syria*, was afflicted with Leprosy, and having heard 'em say, that the Prophet *Eliseus*, who was in *Samaria*, did infallibly Cure it. He went upon this account to the King of *Israël*; with Letters of Recommendation from the King his Master. *Eliseus* knowing the cause of his coming, commanded his Servant to meet him; and *Naman* being come to his Gate with a great Retinue, the Prophet bid him tell him, † *Go and wash your self seven times in the River Jordan, and your Body shall receive perfect Health, and you shall be quite Cur'd.* *Naman* receiv'd the Message with Indignation, and return'd, saying, *I thought he wou'd have come out to meet me, and that standing he wou'd have Invok'd the Name of his God upon me, and that he wou'd have touch'd with his Hand, the place of Leprosy, and wou'd have Cur'd me after this manner. Are not Labana and Pharphar, which pass by Damascus, better Rivers than those of the Land of Israël? Might I not rather have wash'd my self in them, and thereby have been cur'd? How- ever his followers, seeing him return very angry, told him, My Lord, had the Prophet commanded you any thing that had been very hard, without doubt you wou'd, and ought to have done it: With how far greater reason therefore, ought you to Obey him in what he tells you; Wash your self, and you shall be Cur'd.* This reasoning of theirs, made such an Impression upon him, that he went to *Jordan*, wash'd himself there seven times, *And his Flesh*, says the Scripture, *became like the Flesh of a Young Child, and he was intirely Cur'd.* You see that his Cure was annex'd to what appear'd

† Vade, & lava-
re septies in
Jordan, & re-
cipiet sanita-
tem caro tua,
atque munda-
beris.... Puta-
bam quod e-
grederetur ad
me, & stans
invocaret no-
men Domini
Dei sui, & tan-
geret manu
sua locum
lepræ, & cu-
raret me.
Numquid non
meliores sunt
Labana & Phar-
phat, fluvij
Damasci, om-
nibus aquis
Israël, ut laver
in eis, & mun-
der? Pater,
& si rem gran-
dem dixisset
tibi Propheta,
certè facere
debueras:
quandò magis
quia nunc dix-
it tibi: Lava-
re, & munda-
beris. Restitu-
ta est caro e-
jus, sicut caro
pueri parvuli.
* Reg. 5. v. 10.
et seq.

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to him, to be very frivolous, and of little or no importance; the same often happens, in order to the Cure of the Soul, and our making a progress in Vertue. For 'tis just, that our Spiritual Perfection shou'd consist, in those small things which are ordain'd by our Rules; do we not see that the Perfection of an engraven Plate, consists in certain points and strokes which are scarce perceptible? Shou'd you be ordain'd to do something to acquire Spiritual Perfection, after which you ought to aspire, that were very hard, *Without doubt you ought to perform it*: With how far greater reason therefore, ought you to do this, which is ordain'd you for this end; since they are the easiest things in the World, which carry no difficulty at all along with 'em. Wherefore it ought not to be a subject or occasion of remissness to us, to see that what our Rules prescribe, is so inconsiderable, and so easie in it self; but on the contrary, nothing ought more strongly to excite us, to a perfect observance of 'em, than to see that our Perfection is united to such small things, as we can so easily perform.

The History of the more Illustrious Persons of the *Cistercian* Order, takes notice that there was a Rule in that Order, that requir'd that all the Religious at the end of every Meal, shou'd gather together all the Crums of Bread which were before them, and either Eat 'em, or put 'em upon a Plate. One Day a Religious, who was a great observer of the Rules, having gather'd into his Hand all the Crums that were before him, it happen'd that the attention he had to the Reading, so took him up, that whilst he held 'em, the knock was given to rise from Table. Coming again to himself, he found himself in great pain what to do; because he was not any longer permitted to Eat 'em, and that he cou'd not put 'em upon his Plate, which was already taken away. Lastly he imagin'd that he cou'd not better repaire his fault, than by going and declaring it to his Superiour, and by demanding a Penance for it: And in effect he perform'd this, with very great marks of Sorrow and Confusion, as soon as Grace was ended. The Superiour after having reprehended him for his negligence, ask'd him what he had done with the Crums, the Religious answer'd, that he had 'em still in his Hand, and when he open'd it to shew them, he found that instead of Crums, they were become very fine Pearls. The Author takes notice in this place, that God by this Miracle wou'd let us know, how pleasing to him

the fervor of Zealous Religious is, who do not content themselves only, in a careful Observance even of the more important Rules, but apply themselves also, to an exact Observance even of the least. *Syrinus* says, that the self same thing happen'd to Saint *Eude* before he was Abbot, and says, that he out of Humility reports it, as if it had happen'd to another, yet notwithstanding 'twas to himself that God was pleas'd to work this Miracle.

*Cesar. lib. 6.
Dialog. c. 25.*

Casarius reports that in the time of *Fredrick*, the first Emperor of *Germany*, there happen'd to fall an Imperial *Abby*, which the Emperors were accusom'd to dispose of, the Religious having propos'd two of their own, that the Emperor might choose which of 'em he pleas'd, one of the two offer'd great sums of Mony, to have the Preference, which the Emperor took, and promis'd to choose him. Notwithstanding being afterwards inform'd, that the other Religious was a very Holy Man, and a great Observer of Religious Discipline, he chang'd his Resolution; and as he sought for some expedient, to free himself from the engagement he had made, that thereby he might elect the most Worthy; one of his followers told him, Sir I have heard that these Religious have a Rule, that ordains that every one shou'd carry a sowing Needle about him; when therefore you shall be present at their Chapter, take a pretence to ask him, whom you have a mind to exclude, that he wou'd lend you his Needle; who being no strict Observer of his Rules, 'tis very probable he will have none, and then this will be a sufficient reason to exclude him, having taken him in such a fault. This Counsel was follow'd; and 'twas found that this Religious had no Needle about him, so that the Emperor applying himself to the other, ask'd him for his: The Holy Man presently presenting it to him, you are a good Religious Man, says the Emperor, and deserve to be Abbot; I had resolv'd to prefer your Competitor before you, but he has shewn himself unworthy of the Dignity, by not Observing his Rule; for 'tis very easie to judge, that he who is negligent in little and easie things, will be also far more in those that are very hard and essential; afterwards he declar'd that he chose the other for Abbot, and so the one was punish'd for his little care in Observing his Rules, and the other was recompenc'd for his Faithful Observance of 'em.

The same *Casarius* reports, that a Woman, of Quality, resolving to become Religious, made a great Feast for all her Relations and Friends, upon the Day she was to enter into Religion; and invited also the Superiour of the Monastery where she was to take the Habit. At which they serv'd in Flesh for the Seculars, but Fish for this Religious, and her Companion; because the Rule and Custom of their Order, permitted 'em not to Eat Flesh. Yet this Religious, Tempted at the sight thereof, and desirous to shew she was not Scrupulous in small matters, took a bit of roast Meat to Eat it: But she had no sooner put it into her Mouth, but it stuck so fast in her Throat, that she cou'd neither swallow it, nor get it up again. Whilst she was in this condition, and her Eyes already began to rowl in her Head; her Companion gave her a blow upon the Back with her Fist, which made her cast up the piece of Meat, which had like to have choak'd her; and the whole Company easily conceiv'd, that the extremity to which they had seen this Religious reduc'd, was a punishment of her Disobedience; and of her neglect of her Rule. We Read also in the History of the Order of Saint *Dominick*, that this Saint being at *Boulogne*, the Devil upon a sudden seiz'd upon a Lay-Brother, and began to torment him after so strange a manner, that the Religious who were gone to rest, wak'd at the noise, and ran to help him. The Saint Commanded 'em, that they shou'd go with him to the Church, whether ten Religious were scarce able to carry him. It happen'd also, that as soon as he was enter'd, with one puff he blew out all the Lamps. So that the Religious not being able to see any thing, they left him there. The Devil began again to torment him a new, and to bruise him with very many blows. Then the Saint Commanded him in the Name of *JESUS CHRIST*, to tell the reason, for which he Possess'd this Brother, and why he so cruelly torment'd him; to whom the Devil answer'd, 'twas because he had drunk over Night, without having ask'd leave, and without having made the Sign of the Cross upon it, according to the Rules and Practice of the Order. But it having begun to Ring to Mattines, I can stay here no longer, says the Devil, for behold the Brothers are Rising to go Sing the Praises of God; and having sayd this, he left the Poor Man so bruise'd and broken in pieces,

*1. p. In the
History of the
Brothers Preach-
ers. l. 1. c. 62.*

Greg. lib. 1.
Dialog. c. 4.

pieces, that twas two Days before he was able in any manner to move himself. Saint Gregory reports almost the same Example of a Religious Woman, who having neglected to make the Sign of the Cross before she Eat a Sallet of Lettice, was presently Possess'd by the Devil.

CHAP. VIII.

Of some other causes, of the Disobservance of Rules, and of the Remedy that may be apply'd thereunto.

TIS sometimes by a kind of fearfulness and reserve, that we fail to observe our Rules; or to say better, 'tis by the Spirit of Im-mortification; and because we have not strength to overcome the repugnance we have to go and ask permission of our Superiour for a small matter; and therefore 'tis very much to the purpose, to be arm'd against this difficulty. Wherefore I do not require of you, that you shou'd abstain from Eating, Drinking or Speaking, nor wou'd I hinder you from receiving what is offer'd you; the only thing that I desire, is that you wou'd do all with leave; for since you may do it with the Blessing of God, and with the good Will of your Superiours, why do you desire to do it otherwise? But you will say, must I every moment then importune my Superiour, for royes and things of no moment? This only serves to hinder him from his business, and to give him trouble. Behold here precisely the abuse I pretend to Correct, and the errour I wou'd disabuse you of: Superiours are so far from being displeas'd, when one goes to ask leave for any thing, that they are very much pleas'd thereat. 'Tis their business to barken to you at all times; and Religion which is a Mother that seeks your advantage, and that knows of how great Merit Obedience is in God's Sight, has so great a desire that you shou'd be very Obedient, and shou'd

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shou'd do nothing without leave; that to facilitate the means thereof, it keeps one or two Superiours in every House, whose Office it is to give you leave, as often as you ask it. Since therefore they know that they are establish'd Superiours for this end, they'll take as much care not to be angry, when you have recourse to them; as a Merchant or Tradesman wou'd, when you come to him for any thing belonging to his Trade, or to buy any Marchandise of him; and if you harbour any other thought than this of your Superiours, 'tis to do them wrong, and to think they do not their Duty.

Moreover, why shou'd a Superiour be troubl'd, that you shou'd ask leave for a thing, which he knows you cannot do without it? Shou'd you go to him, to entertain him with frivolous, Idle and Superfluous Discourse, you might have reason to fear the importuning him, but to go to him, when by your Rules you are oblig'd to do so, 'tis to do him a Pleasure; because he ought to be glad to see those that are under his charge, exactly to observe their Rules, to Obey with Punctuality, and make great account even of the least things: That which troubles and displeases him, is the liberty which some take, in dispensing with the Rules, and in doing things without leave, as if they had no Superiour to go to for it, which is, as if they made no account at all of their Rules, and look'd upon 'em as nothing: Behold here what we ought to take care of, that we may give no trouble to our Superiours,

From hence we may draw this consequence, that in regard of things, in which our Hands are ty'd by the Rules, or for which we want leave: We ought neither to have any difficulty in asking it, nor of freely telling our Brother, who is Instructed as well as our selves in the Rules, that we have no leave to receive it. This Advertisement is of great importance; because a great many, easily permit themselves rather to break their Rules, than to Mortify themselves, by declaring that they have no leave to ask, or to receive what the Brother wou'd give them. They pretend sometimes to excuse themselves by saying, that 'tis because they have no mind to Mortify their Brother, that they neglect a Rule, and that they dare not tell him, that they have no leave for what they desire, and he offers 'em; but this is to have a bad opinion of your

your Brother, and to believe him so little faithful in the Observance of his Rules, as to imagine that you would hereby have Mortified him. Your exactness would rather have Edified him; and that which he did, was perhaps to try you, and to see your fidelity in the Observance of your Rules; you are a Religious Man, and therefore ought to glory in, and not be ashamed of the performance of the duties of your Profession. Wherefore observe punctually your Rules, and your Brethren will be so far from having any thing to say against you, that they'll esteem you the more for it.

Some others, to excuse the liberty they take to break their Rules, say, they do it, not to appear Scrupulous; which is also a very bad excuse; for to be an exact observer of his Rules, is not to appear Scrupulous, it only making a Person to appear truly Religious: What a strange thing then would it be, should this give him any occasion of shame? One of the abuses that is in the World, is, that as soon as a Secular Person gives himself to Piety, that he frequents the Sacraments, that he lives in Retirement, he is presently expos'd to the Scoffs and Raileries of Secular Persons; and from hence it happens, that many dare not make any open Profession of Piety; being like in this, to that Jew, who went to find out our Saviour by Night, not daring to go to him in the Day time. But 'tis not the same in Religion, and God preserve us from such a misfortune as this would be; we have the advantage to live there amongst Persons, that make Profession of Piety, and do all aspire to Perfection; and he who makes greater progress in Vertue, is he who is most of all esteem'd; But notwithstanding if it should happen, that for this reason any one should receive a contradiction from any one of his Brethren yet a Religious Man; who ought to be firm and unshaken in the Love of God, should not upon this account, neglect at any time to aspire to Perfection; or be ashamed to appear the Disciple of JESUS CHRIST. * For he who shall be ashamed of me and my Words, says our Saviour. The Son of Man will be ashamed of him, and disown him, when he shall come in his own Majesty, and in that of his Father, and the Holy Angels. If a Man had taken one of his Servants to follow him, and this Servant out of a foolish Vanity, and that he might not seem to belong to his Master, should affect to keep

Jean, 3. c. 2.

²⁰ Nam qui me erubuerit, & meos sermones, hunc Filius hominis erubescet, cum venerit in maiestate sua, & Patris, & sanctorum Angelorum. Luc. 9. 26.

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keep at a great distance from him, when he went into the City, would not he deserve to be turn'd away? Wherefore a Religious Man who is ashamed to pass for a Servant of JESUS CHRIST, and who for this reason neglects exactly to observe his Rules, ought with justice to apprehend the like treatment. But to the end we may be disabused, and cast off this bad shame, which we may hereupon have: We must fix this truth well in our minds, that when we are careful and punctual in observing our Rules, Seculars themselves are no less edified at us, than our Brethren. If you are, for Example, in Conversation with a Secular Man, and the Bell call's you, you will Edifie him more, by telling him civilly that Obedience call's you away, and that therefore you are oblig'd to quit him, than by all you could have been able to say to him, had you still remain'd with him; and the more Ancient the Person is, that you treat in this manner, or of the greater quality he shall be, the more he will be Edified at it. We ought not therefore to imagine; that the tying our selves to an exact observance of our Rules, or to say, we have not this or that leave, is any offence against Civility, or look'd upon as Scrupulosity; for there is no Religious or Secular Person, that can find any thing blame-worthy herein, but on the contrary, they will hereby be the more Edified. If the thing in question were something extraordinary, or if you were not oblig'd to it by your Rules, you might perhaps have some reason not to do it, for fear of appearing too singular, and to pass for an Hypocrite: But here the question is about our ordinary Duty, and the obligations of your Profession. Moreover if you let your self once go to a neglect of your Rules, 'tis to open a gap to do the like another time, in a matter of greater consequence; and on the other side, if you make it appear that you are ty'd to an exact observance of your Rules, you will thereby remove occasions of breaking 'em afterwards, and put your self into a great deal of quiet and repose. There is still another advantage herein, which is, that besides the good you do to your self, you do also a very great kindness to your Brother; for perhaps he did not think at all of the Rule, and you by your Example make him think of it, which is the best kind of advertisement, that you could be able to give him.

In the History
of the Order of
Hieronymites
chap. 28.

The History of the *Hieronymites* make mention of a certain Religious Man, who was a great observer of Silence, and who had hereby gain'd the esteem and veneration of all the World. A Person of Quality having heard him much spoken of, had a great mind to see him, and to have some Discourse with him; and one Day having met him as he went to his little Garden, he follow'd and call'd after him to oblige him to stay. The Holy Man notwithstanding stay'd not to expect him, nor made him any Answer, till being both of 'em enter'd into his Garden, he cast himself at his Feet, and then putting his Hands before his Face, he spoke thus, to him that follow'd him; perhaps Sir you know not, that I cannot speak without leave of my Superiour, and after these Words he prostrated himself again upon the Earth, and sayd not a word more; so that the Secular, who would not importune him any longer, left him, and as the History remarks, return'd home more Edify'd with the Silence of this Religious Man, than he should have been, had he had never so long a Conversation with him.

Chapter. 21.

The same History speaks of another Holy Religious Man, who kept Silence so exactly, in all the Places where 'twas forbidden to speak, for Example in the Church and Cloister; that in them he never spoke to any one, nor never Answer'd any one that spoke to him. It one Day happen'd, that King *Henry* walking in the Cloister of the Monastery, where this Religious Man liv'd, perceiv'd him pass by, and Loving him very much by reason of his Sanctity, he call'd him to entertain himself with him, but the Servant of God would neither stop nor answer, till he was out of the Cloister, and then the King being also out of the Cloister, ask'd him why he did not sooner answer him. Sir reply'd the Holy Man, 'tis not permitted to any of the Religious to speak in the Cloister; and therefore I did not answer your Majesty, till I was out of it: And the History takes notice, that this Prince was extremely Edify'd at his answer.

C H A P.

CHAPTER IX.

Of some other means, that may contribute to an exact observance of our Rules.

THERE are still other means, that may extremely help to make us careful in the observance of our Rules; the first of which, is the good Example and Edification that we are oblig'd to give, according to the words of the Apostle. * *Let us take care to do well, not only before God, but also before Men;* 'tis not sufficient for you to be good only upon your own account, you ought moreover to apply your self, to Edify the World by your good Example: † *You ought to let your Light so to shine before Men, that they may see your good Works, and Glorify your Father which is in Heaven.* When we see a Tree full of Blossoms, or extremely charg'd with Fruit, we Bless God for it. The same ought to be done for the Fruits of a Holy and Exemplar Life; they ought to move us to Praise God for 'em; we ought to be an Example to all, but above all, to our Brethren with whom we live; and this is an indispensable obligation. For good Example and Edification, do not only consist in our not falling into great faults, but also in carefully avoiding to fall even into the least; and to make appear by our Conduct, that we are extremely ty'd to the least Duties of our Profession; and that we have a very great esteem even of the very least things that regard us. He who distinguishes himself most in this, is he who most of all Edifies others; and the more considerable one is in Religion, either for Antiquity or Learning, the more he ought to attend to the least things, that may be of Edification to his Brethren. * *Let him who is greatest amongst you, says the Son of God, become as the least; and he who presides as he who serves;* 'tis after this manner that the most Ancient in Religion ought to make themselves

* Providentes boni, non tantum coram Deo, sed etiam coram omnibus hominibus.

Rom. 12. 17. & 2 Cor. 8. 21.

† Sic luceat lux vestra coram hominibus, ut videant opera vestra bona, & glorificent Patrem vestrum, qui in cælis est.

Matth. 5. 16.

* Qui major est in vobis, fiat sicut minor: & qui præcedit est, sicut ministrator. Luc. 22. 26.

† Faciam illum colum-
nam in tem-
plo Dei mei.
Apo. 3. 12.
* Et ego dedi
te hodie in co-
lumnā ferre-
am, & in mu-
rum æneum.
Jerem. 1. 18.

known to be so; by being more Humble and more Mor-
tify'd than others; and by an exact Observance of their
Rules; and those who do this, are truly the props of
Religion: They are those that make Piety and Religious
Discipline flourish therein, and the words of the *Apocalypse*
may with justice be apply'd to them; † *I will make him*
a Pillar in the Temple of my God. And these others also
of *Jeremy*, * *I have to Day establish'd thee to be as a*
Pillar of Iron, and as a Wall of Brass. On the contrary
there cannot be a greater prejudice done to a Religious
Community, than to give ill Example in it, and the more
remarkable he is that giv's it, either for his Antiquity, Lear-
ning or any other quality; the greater will be the
prejudice; because Example, which has a great power over
Men in all things as experience teaches us, has still great-
er to carry us to what is Evil: For if your Brother sees
that you observe not the Rules, and that you neglect little
things, you especially who are Ancient, and who ought to
give Example to others, what will he do, considering the
great Inclination which Nature gives him to Liberty, and
the Repugnance and Aversion which all the World has, to
any thing that causes Subjection, or brings Constraint along with
it? When he sees such a Path beaten, and such a Gate
as this open'd by you, can he forbear from following you?
'Twas perhaps that which he expected, and that he desir'd
only, that any one would lead the way, and take away that
shame he had left in him. Your carriage do's this and destroy's
him, it brings in the neglect of Religious Discipline, and there-
fore you will have a great account to render to God, not
only for your own faults, but also for the faults of others;
because you are the cause of 'em by your bad Example.
This consideration ought to be sufficient to move you to
an exact observance of your Rules, and to hinder you from
ever doing any thing, that may be of disedification to
your Brethren.

The Second means, to make the Observation of Rules,
to remain always in Vigour, is very familiar, and very easie
amongst us; and Saint *Ignatius* teaches it in the same Rules.
Let every one, says he, from time to time beg of the Su-
perieur; to give him some Penance for the neglect of
Observance of Rules, and by this let him make appear the
care he has of advancing in God's Service. We ought
to have so great an esteem of our Rules, that when we
happen

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happen to break any one, it shou'd not be sufficient only to have an interior regret thereof, but we ought also to testify an exterior sorrow by some Penance; and 'tis only after this manner, that we may intirely repair the breach of our Rules, and maintain them in such Force and Vigour, as if they had never been broken. *The Law*, as Divines and Lawyers say, *is then in as great Force and Vigorous Observance, as if it had but newly been made, when care is taken to punish him, that breaks it.* Now to make it appear as if it were in it's first Vigour; 'tis not requir'd that no-body shou'd break it, but 'tis sufficient that he who breaks it, shou'd be punish'd; but when one freely breaks the Law without Punishment, and without the Magistrates being at all concern'd for it: 'Tis a sign, say they, that 'tis not then in it's Vigour; and that the Law has no longer any Force, and that the contrary Practice, *Or the want of use thereof has abrogated it.* The same thing may be say'd of Rules, when in any Religious Order no fault is committed against the Rules, which is not presently follow'd with a Penance; for we may then say, that Observance of Rules, is in it's Vigour. But on the other side, when frequent breaches are committed, and the Authors of 'em not punish'd, 'tis true to say, that the Rules are no longer observ'd, and a little while after, they'll hereupon pretend that the Rules have no longer any Force, but that the contrary Practice has abolish'd 'em; because they have been condemn'd, even in the sight, and with the knowledge of Superiours, without their doing their Duty, to put a stop hereunto; or without their having impos'd any Penance upon the Offenders.

In viridi observantia.

Per non usum.

Since then 'tis the Superiours Duty to take care that the Rules be observ'd, and that they have the obligation upon 'em, to see they be maintain'd in their Vigour, they are also oblig'd to impose a Penance, when any one fails to observe them; so that when a Superiour gives you a Penance upon this account, or reprehends you for it, 'tis not that he is angry with you, nor that he esteems you the less; for he knows we are all of us Men, and 'tis not strange that we shou'd fail in the Observance of one or two Rules; but 'tis because he has a mind to do his Duty, which obliges him to take care, that the Rules be observ'd. But if when any of 'em are broken, he shou'd dissemble it, without being at all in pain, and without imposing any Penance for it; this wou'd shew that he had but

but little esteem of 'em, and hereby he would render himself guilty of a great Fault, and give his assistance towards the abolishing of the Rules, and to a great remissness in Religious Discipline. 'Tis in this different conduct, that Saint *Bonaventure* makes the difference between Religious Orders, which are in the first Fervor of their Institution; and those that are relax'd, do's consist. Because this difference do's not proceed from this, that they committed a Sin in the one, and that they Sinn'd not in the other; for that would be impossible; * *For all of us Offend in many things*, as Saint *James* the Apostle says. But it proceeds from this, that in the one they punish'd those that broke the Rules, and in the other they did not punish 'em at all.

* In multis
offendimus
omnes.
Jacob. 3. 2.

Wherefore that which our Superiours are oblig'd to do herein, according to the duty of their Office, in the opinion of Saint *Ignatius*, is to help towards their performance; and 'tis for this reason says he, why each one from time to time, shoud beg of the Superiour to give him some Penance, for having faild in the Observance of the Rules; because it would be a great trouble to the Superiour, should he be oblig'd continually to perform the Office of a Sergeant or Spy, to punish or regard those that break the Rules; and should he every time impose a Penance upon 'em, this would be a thing impossible, and tho' he could do it, yet it would be far from that Spirit of sweetness, with which the SOCIETY is govern'd. 'Tis your duty therefore to take care to discover your faults to your Superiour, and to go to him to ask a Penance for 'em; and you never ought to permit, that he should sooner be inform'd of 'em by another, than by your self; because 'tis your business, 'tis more your Interest than any on's else to do it, and all the advantage comes to your self. Take notice moreover, that the reason why Saint *Ignatius* would have us act after this manner, is to the end, says he, that they make appear what care they have to advance in God's Service. Wherefore when we fail against the Rules, and take care to go to ask for a Penance, we shew also, that we take care of our Spiritual advancement; as on the contrary, when we break 'em, without being in pain to ask a Penance for it, we make appear that we extremely neglect 'em. We perceive also that when we oblige our selves exactly to practise this, and that the Penances and Mortifications upon this account become frequent, the Spirit of Fervor and Zeal, then flourishes far more amongst all the Religious, and their Edification hereby becomes greater.

'Tis

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'Tis in this practise, that the second means we have propos'd, to make the observation of Rules to be always maintain'd in Vigour amongst us, do's consist. I do not say, that we can be able absolutely to hinder, that the Rule should never be broken; for we ought upon this account to be Angels and not Men; since we shall very often without doubt break 'em, and who is he, let him be never so Just, who happens not to commit some Venial Sins? * For there is no Man who do's not Sin. But what I ask of you is only this, that when you have broken your Rules you shew some regret for having done so, and manifest thereby, that you are truly Religious, that you esteem 'em, and that you have a great desire to observe them; or at least go presently to acknowledge your fault; for by a small Penance you quite repair it; and you will not only repair it, but you will thereby, gain more than you have lost. And the Devil hereby instead of rejoicing, for having made you commit it, will have a great deal of Confusion and Dispair, to perceive that you know how to gain by your Losses. 'Twas a truth, which he himself was constrain'd one Day to Confess to Saint *Dominick*, when this Saint forc'd him to follow him into all the different places of his Monastery, to know of him the different Temptations he made use of in each place against his Religious: For coming to the Chapter-house, which is the place in which they were wont to declare their faults, and to receive Reprehensions and Penances for 'em; 'tis here, says the Devil, that I lose all that I have gain'd, either in the Dormitory or Refectory, and in all other places. This kind of reparation is moreover very full and intire; because by this means the fault committed against the Rules, is no less wholly repair'd in the sight of Men, than it is in the sight of God. You fail for Example to ring the Bell precisely at the hour, or to be punctually present at any hour, with the rest of the Community. These are publick faults, which are perceiv'd by all the World, and will also be repair'd before 'em all, at the sight of the publick Penance you do for them. But if after having seen the fault, they had not seen the Penance, they would have had reason to have sayd, that the House was come to such a pass, that they made no account of exact Observance, and that all things were perform'd in it, with more or less Imperfection, and without any care to perform 'em well.

Moreover tho' we must here take notice, that in the SOCIETY. Penances are more ordinarily ask'd than given, and tho' this Practice is very reasonable; yet care must be taken, that the custom of giving Penances be not quite abolish'd, according
to

* Non est enim homo qui non peccet.
3. Reg. 8. 46.

Reg. 4. sum.

Reg. 17. sum.

* Quæ enim
est gloria, si
peccantes, &
colaphizati
suffertis? Sed
si benefacien-
tes, patienter
suffinetis; hæc
est gratia a-
pud Deum.
1 Pet. 2, 20.

to that Rule which says, That the Superiour ought to impose some Penance for the greater Spiritual Advancement of every one. For if it shou'd happen that Penances shou'd no more be given than are ask'd, it wou'd follow that all which the Superiour shou'd otherwise give, wou'd become more heavy and troublesom, and those upon whom they were impos'd, wou'd receive 'em with too much trouble and disquiet; which wou'd be of great prejudice to Religious Discipline, and of very bad Edification. Wherefore care ought to be taken, that this custom shou'd be kept, and generally practis'd towards all Persons; because there will always be subject enough for it, and if there shou'd be none, yet do's not our Holy Founder say, that we ought to be dispos'd, to receive and fulfil very willingly, all those Penances which shall be impos'd, even when there shou'd be no fault committed, for which they were given? 'Tis truly in this, that true Vertue and the Spirit of Humility do's most of all appear, and which makes appear the desire we have to advance in Perfection. * *For what glory is it, says Saint Peter, if when you have Sinn'd you suffer your self to be ill treated? But if when you have done well, you suffer with Patience, you will gain great Merit before God.*

It will be also a great help towards the exact Observance of our Rules, to Practice what is ordain'd in the last Rule of the Summary, and in the last of the Common Rules, which is to take care to imprint 'em well in our Minds, and to Read 'em for this end, or to get 'em Read to us once a Month. Many are not contented only with hearing of 'em Read in the Refectory, but add every Day to their Spiritual Reading, three or four Rules; so that every Month, they Read 'em over at their leisure: And this without doubt is an excellent Custom, and a very good Spiritual Lecture. 'Tis also an excellent means, for the same end, to make our particular Examin upon the Observance of our Rules; not of all of 'em in general, but of those in particular, which we find our selves most subject to fail in, Examining them one after another, and also Examining our selves, upon all those that regard our particular imployment; and this kind of Examin, cannot but be very advantageous and profitable.

THE SEVENTH TREATISE

OF

That fidelity which all ought to
have, in laying open the bot-
tom of their Heart and Con-
science, to their Superiours
and Ghostly Fathers.

CHAP. I.

*How necessary it is, to make our selves known
to Superiours, to be such as we are indeed.*



ASSIAN says, that the first thing the
Ancient Fathers propos'd, to those who be-
gan to serve God, was that they shou'd
take great care, presently to discover to
their Superiours, whatsoever Temptations
or bad Thoughts they had; or infine
whatsoever pass'd within themselves: And
'twas this, says he, that these Men of
God look'd upon, as a kind of first Principle amongst 'em,
and as the Base and Foundation of the whole Spiritual
Building.

Tom. III.

B b b

*Cass. l. 4. in.
Inst. c. 9. c.
Collat. 2. Ab.
bas. Moys.
cap. 10.*

* Si potest fieri, quot passus ambulat Monachus, vel quot calices aquae bibit in cella sua, debet declarare senioribus, ut non devietur in ipsi.

Ant. in vitis Patrum. pars. 2. §. 104.

Clim. grad. 4. art. 39.

Basil in cons.

mon. Hier. in reg.

mon. c. 34.

Ambros. l. 3

Offic. c. 16.

Bern. de ord.

vit. & mor.

inst. c. 4.

† Re in Domino considerat, visum est nobis in divina maiestatis conspectu minus in modum conferre, ut superioribus subditi omnino perspecti sint.

Exam. §. 34.

* Qui abscondit scelera sua non dirigitur.

Prov. 28. 13.

* Quod ignorat medicus non sanat.

Hier. sup. illud:

Si mordeat

serpens in

silentio.

Eccl. 10. 11.

Building. * A Religious Man, sayd the great Saint Antony, ought not, as much as is possible, to make one step, or to drink one drop of Water in his Cell, which he do's not presently declare to his Superiour, that he may not harbour the least Irregularity, even in his least Actions; but that all things may be rectify'd by the Spirit of Obedience. Saint John Climacus says, that he found in a very Regular and Holy Monastery, several Religious who carried a little Book at their Girdle, in which they Daily writ all their Thoughts, to give an account of 'em to their Superiour, who had oblig'd 'em thereunto. Saint Basil, Saint Hierom, Saint Ambrose and Saint Bernard, expressly ordain'd the self same thing; and 'tis this which Saint Ignatius, founding himself upon their Authority, and the Example of the Ancient Fathers, do's in like manner recommend unto us, even in the gravest terms, that we can find in his whole Constitutions. † After, says he, having well examin'd this thing before God, it seem'd to me in the Presence of his Divine Majesty, that it was very much to the purpose, that all Religious should make themselves perfectly known to their Superiours. He was not wont to speak after this manner in other matters how important soever; and yet he do's not content himself with this, but go's still farther; proving by solid reasons, the great advantage and necessity of this Practice.

The first reason he gives, is that by this means, 'twill be more easie for Superiours to direct those that are under their charge; and in effect, it belongs to the Superiour to take care of 'em; his Office obliges him to it, 'tis for this reason that he was made Superiour; but how shall he be able to do this, if he do's not know you, nor you discover not your self unto him? * He that hides his Crimes, says the Wise Man, can never be well Directed, a Sick Man can never be cur'd, if he discovers not his Disease to the Physician. † For the Physician, as says Saint Hierom, cures not that, which he do's not know. You must therefore intirely discover your Sickness to the Physician; and if you have many Diseases, you must discover 'em all; for if you hide one of 'em, the Physician may perhaps give you such a Remedy, as will make that Disease which you conceal'd worse, and which perhaps will not help that which you discover'd. We know that which is good for the Liver, is not good for the Spleen; wherefore all is to be told, that the Remedies may be so prepar'd, that what helps you on one side,

side, may not hurt you on the other. The same reason ought to oblige us, to discover after the same manner, all the Infirmities of our Soul, unto our Superiour who is our Spiritual Physician. 'Tis a great help to the cure of a Disease, to know perfectly well the Complexion, and the Indisposition to the bottom; for then 'tis easie to find the true cause of the Disease, and to apply convenient Remedies thereunto. For this reason, Princes have always their Physician that accompanies 'em; for 'tis not, that they shou'd every moment put 'em in mind, either not to Eat of such a kind of Meat, or to Drink more or less, or to abstain sometimes from one thing, sometimes from another; for by this Importunity, they wou'd render themselves very uneasie. But 'tis, that being present whilst they Eat, and at the greatest part of their Exercises, and hereby seeing what do's 'em hurt or good, they may be able to know their Complexion, and upon this knowledge, to regulate the quality of those Remedies, that shall be necessary to give 'em, when they shall fall Sick. Our Holy Founder therefore, wou'd have us enjoy the same advantage. He wou'd have us always to have our Spiritual Physicians with us, to the end that they may know the Interior Disposition of our Souls, and also our strength and weakness, and hereby be the better able to conduct us. The Government establish'd in the SOCIETY, intirely regards Spirit, and the Interior; 'tis not a Government, where fear or punishment is made use of; and therefore Superiours are seldom wont to proceed by the way of Juridical informations or accusations therein; they only look upon the Salvation and Advancement of your Souls, they wou'd only cure all your Infirmities, but you must your self assist 'em to make this cure, by discovering all things to your Superiour, who is your Spiritual Physician, and holds God's place; which if you do not do, you'll remain expos'd to very great dangers, and will tempt God; who desires to conduct you by putting a Man in his own place, and consequently wou'd have you discover your Interior to this Man. And since 'tis impossible, morally speaking, that this Man shou'd lead and conduct you well, if he do's not know you, nor can he, but by your self; wherefore 'tis certain that you tempt God, as often as you will not submit to this Practice.

The second reason that mov'd Saint *Ignatius*, which is only an extension of the first, is, that the more Perfect

B b b 2

knowledge

Knowledge Superiours shall have, of the Interior of their Subjects, the more they will be able to preserve 'em, from such inconveniencies, as may cause 'em to fall; and lest for want of knowing their Temptations, their Inclinations, the strength, and weakness of each one, they shou'd come to place 'em in certain Employments, and engage 'em in certain occasions prejudicial to them. Above all, says he, since according to our Institution, we ought always to be ready to go into any part of the World, whether it shall please the Pope or our Superiours to send us, *It do's not only import much, but even very much.* To succeed well, in the choice they ought to make of these kinds of Missions, that Superiours shou'd have an intire knowledge of the Inclinations and Temptations, of all those that are under their Charge and Conduct; and that they shou'd know to what Faults, or to what Sins they are most of all subject; that by this means, they may conduct each Religious Person that way, that shall be most convenient for him; and that they do not command any thing that shall be above his forces, nor lay any Burden so heavy upon any Person, that he shall not reasonably be able to support. One of the things that contributes to render the Interior Government of the SOCIETY sweet, easie and comfortable, is the knowledge that it has, of all the Subjects that compose it, of their different Talents, of their good and bad Qualities, of the things they are fit, or not fit for; for by this means, they know what is to be done to each Person in particular, and how he ought to be employ'd: And will not Command any thing beyond his Power to perform, nor expose him to the danger of falling under too heavy a Burden, but conformable to the words of the Gospel, they will distribute Employments and Labours, *† According to each one's forces.*

The third reason why it extreemly imports, that Superiours shou'd know their Religious to the bottom; is, says Saint Ignatius, that by this means they may provide, for what is most convenient to the whole SOCIETY; to the good and honor of which, they are no less oblig'd to have an Eye, than upon yours. For when you discover to them, and let 'em see the bottom of your Soul, then they can without exposing your honor, or putting you into any danger or hazard, take care of the general good of the whole SOCIETY; but if you shou'd not do this, it may per-
chance

* Non solum
refert valde,
sed summo-
pete.

† Unicuique
secundum pro-
priam virtu-
tem.
Matth. 25. 15.

chance happen, that they might put you into an Employment, where you wou'd run the risque of loosing your self, and your honor both together, with that of the whole SOCIETY also, which depends upon yours, and wou'd be expos'd to very great danger.

'Tis good here to mark by the way, how conformable those means are to the end of it's Institution, which the SOCIETY makes use of, to procure the Advancement of each Religious. Were it according to our Institute to live shut up in our Cells, and not to go out of 'em, but to the Quire or Refectory, 'twou'd not be so necessary, that our Superiours shou'd have so intire a knowledge of our Consciences. But since amongst us, Subjects are put into so many different Employments; that often care is given 'em of several things of Importance; and that they are sent to all parts of the World, amongst Infidels, and Hetericks; and sometimes alone, and for a very long time together; 'tis therefore necessary that Superiours shou'd know all of 'em perfectly well, that they may not dispose of 'em amiss in dangerous occasions, nor expose the honor of the SOCIETY with 'em. It also very much imports all Religious, for the discharge and security of their own Consciences, to let the Superiour see the bottom of their Souls: Otherwise they will render themselves accountable, for all the misfortunes that may happen to them; since 'tis certain, that had they made known their weakness, as they ought to have done, and their want of those Spiritual forces requir'd, Superiours wou'd have taken care not to have engag'd 'em in occasions so full of danger. Those that are Poor, says *Plutarch*, yet notwithstanding wou'd appear Rich, soon render themselves more Poor than they were, and in a small time effect their own ruin; for because they wou'd imitate Rich Persons, they make greater Expences than their Estate can bear. We may say the same thing, of those that are Poor in Vertue, and have not a great stock of Humility. If a Religious Person, who is in this condition, shou'd hide his Poverty, and pass for being Rich, in Spiritual goods, he will still become more Poor, and perhaps will quite loose himself; because they'll treat him as a Man fill'd with the Treasures of Grace, and upon this account expose him to dangerous occasions, for which he will not have a sufficient stock of Vertue. And 'twas because he wou'd not intirely discover himself to his Superiour, that he has brought all

Plutar. in moral. 9. 12.

all these Miseries upon himself. So that if we look only upon our own security, and the discharge of our own Conscience, and that we may have nothing to reproach our selves withal, we must be glad to discover our selves to our Superiours, to be such as in reality we are, whereby we shall ayoid those inconveniencies I just now spoke of; and shall by this means draw upon our selves the Blessing and help of God in all those occasions, in which it shall please Obedience to engage us.

A Religious Man, who has thus discover'd all his Imperfections and Infirmities to his Superiour, and is afterwards sent into some Mission, or put into some Employment, ought to be in great quiet and repose of Mind, and to have a great confidence, that God will happily draw him out of all those dangers, he may meet withal therein. 'Tis not I O Lord, may he say, who put my self into this Office, or into that Employment; I represented my own Incapacity, and the few Spiritual forces I had, to acquire my self herein as I ought; 'twas you your self would have me in it, and 'tis you who are to supply what is wanting to me to succeed therein. With what a plenitude of Confidence, may not he also say these words of of Saint Austin; † Give me O Lord means to perform what thou Commandest, and Command me what thou wilt. It justly seems to him, that God in these circumstances, is oblig'd to grant him all the Graces he shall stand in need of, in the Employment in which he has engag'd him: But he that will not make himself known, and who neglects to discover his Temptations and Weaknesses, for fear he shou'd not be put into such an Employment as he desires, or shou'd be taken out of that which pleases him, what comfort can he have? Since 'tis not God that has call'd him to this Function, and 'tis no longer Obedience that engages him therein; for tho' his Superiour has plac'd him there; yet 'twas out of Ignorance; and Ignorance, as Philosophers say, renders our Actions Involuntary, and consequently, 'twas not the Will of his Superiour, but 'his own that establish'd him therein. 'Tis he that install'd himself, and introduc'd himself into this Employment of his own accord; he was neither call'd nor sent to it, but enter'd into it by surprise; and therefore that may justly be apply'd to him, that our Lord says by the Mouth of the Prophet Jeremy. * I did not send 'em to play the Prophets, they went of their own accord, as if they

† Domine, da
quod jubes, &
jube quod vis.
Aug. lib. 10.
Conf. c. 29.

* Non mitte-
bam Prophe-
tas, & ipsi cur-
rebant: Non

they had been sent. I sayd nothing to them, and yet they Prophesied. Can we after this be astonish'd, if such Persons as these do not succeed? For tho' in some measure they shou'd do so, yet they have great reason to live in fear; and moreover they cannot think, that they have satisfi'd their Conscience, or their Duty, by begging of their Superiour, not to engage 'em in such or such an Employment; they only representing to him after a general manner, that they find not sufficient Vertue and Capacity, to acquit themselves well of it. For this is not sufficient, since they ought, as I shall shew hereafter, to have more particularly explicated themselves: For the Superiour attributes these general expressions to their Humility, and even the greatest Saints are wont to excuse themselves after this manner.

All the considerations I have here set down, mov'd Saint Ignatius so powerfully, and caus'd him to think this Practice, of so great importance, for the general good of the whole Society, that in his Constitutions he frequently recommends the same: The thought of which even ran so much in his Mind, that in one place, after he had sayd that a Religious Man, ought not to keep his Dore, nor his Coffer or any thing else lock'd, he added, *No, not even his own Conscience.* Tho' he thought that was not a place to speak of it. The same Spirit caus'd him to say in another place, that Religious ought to have nothing hid from their Superiours, neither without nor within: And lastly 'tis a thing he esteems so necessary, that he insists upon it both *Opportunely and Importunely*, as Saint Paul sayd, and frequently endeavour'd to renew in us the memory thereof upon all occasions.

In the fifth General Congregation when they came to Examin what were the most essential things of our Constitutions; it was sayd that they were those that were contain'd in the form of our Institute, which was presented to Julius III; and were Approv'd and Confirm'd by him and his Successours. 'Twas moreover sayd, that they added to this number all those things, without which, either the first were not able to subsist, or cou'd not do so, without very great difficulty; and they plac'd in the rank of these last, the Obligation of rendring an account of Conscience to Superiours: Wherefore hereby they judg'd, that it was an essential Rule, without which the Society cou'd not be conserv'd. And having sayd this, nothing cou'd be sayd more in it's favor. Some Historians have taken notice, in regard of certain Religious Orders, that

loquebar ad
eos, & ipsi
prophetabant.
Jerem. 23. 21.

4 p. const. c. 10.
§. 5.

Nihil ex
ternis vel in-
ternis eos co-
lent.
6 p. Const. c. 1.
§. 2.
Opportunè,
importunè.
2 Tim. 4. 2.

In Congreg. 5.
Gener. cau. 17.

Bernard. Rossig-
net. l. 1. de dis-
Christian. per-
fect. c. 1.

so far as this Holy Practice is observ'd therein, the Purity of Religious Discipline is there also maintain'd; and experience moreover teaches us, that the neglect of the Observance of this Rule, is ordinarily the Gate throu' which Religious Persons enter into the high way of Perdition; they begin by little and little to relent, and grow less Fervorous in Religious Discipline; they neglect to resist some bad Inclinations; they either leave of, or perform very ill, their Spiritual Exercises; and from one fault they fall into another, and so into a third. Notwithstanding, instead of discovering these Wounds, they endeavour to hide 'em; whereby they augment and corrupt; and a Disease, that wou'd have been easily cur'd in the beginning, afterwards becomes incurable. Lastly the Spiritual Edifice falls to the Ground; because it had not been a long time repair'd; and they permitted it, to run to ruin of it self. Saint *Dorotheus* knew very well the cause of this Evil: Some, says he, are wont to say, that such a thing is the cause of the fall of this Religious; the other is gone out for this reason; 'tis his indisposition that caus'd him to quit the Monastery; they were his Parents that intric'd him out; and I Answer, 'twas nothing of this that they alledge, but 'twas, because he conceal'd from his Spiritual Father, the beginnings of his Temptations, and that he wou'd not discover to him the bottom of his Heart.

*Dorot. serm.
des. doct. 5.
tom. 3. colum.
na 185.*

C H A P.

C H A P. II.

That nothing causes greater Comfort and Repose of Mind, than the keeping nothing hid from our Superiour, or Ghostly Father: And of several other advantages in the Practice of Manifestation of Conscience.

S AINT Ambrose, Saint Austin, and Saint Bernard say, that one of the greatest Comforts a Man can have in this Life, is to have a Faithful Friend, in whose Bosom he can with security depose, whatsoever gives him any trouble; and in general even all the Secrets of his Heart: * *A Faithful Friend*, says the Wise Man, *is a Remedy against all the Evils of this Life*: And Saint Austin says, there's nothing equal to a Friend, who is able to Comfort us in our Afflictions; to give us Counsel in our Doubts; to Rejoyce with us in our Prosperity; and to Succour us in our Necessities. † *Who-soever has found such a one*, says the Wise Man, *has found a Treasure*. But shall I only call it a Treasure? * *There's nothing*, add's he, *that is comparable to a Faithful Friend, the excellency of who's Fidelity, out-weighs all the Gold and Silver in the World*. But this advantage, which is above all the Riches of the Earth, God has bestow'd upon the SOCIETY; by giving each of us a Friend of this Nature, in the Person of our Superiour; who is at the same time our Spiritual Father, our Master, our Physician, our Brother and our Mother; and who has even a greater tenderness for us, than a Mother can have for a Child; for our Superiour makes our business his own: Endeavour therefore to esteem such a Friend, and gain all the profit by him that you are able, by faithfully laying open your Heart unto him, according to the Counsel of the Wise Man; † *If thou see'st a Prudent Man, have Recourse to him, and let thy Feet wear out the Steps*

Tom. III.

C c c

of

Ambros. l. 1.
Offic. c. 6.
Aug. l. unico de
amicis. cap. 1.
Hieron. in reg.
monach. cap. 14.
Bern. de ord. vit.
& mor. instit.

* Amicus fidelis
medicamentum vitæ.
Eccl. 6. 16.

† Qui autem
invenit illum,
invenit the-
saurum.

Ibid. v. 14.
* Amico fideli
nulla est com-
paratio; non
est digna pon-
deratio auri &
argenti con-
tra bonitatem
fidei illius.
Ibid. 7. 15.

† Si videris
sensatum, evi-
gilas ad eum,
& gradus osti-
orum illius ex-
terat pes tuus.
Eccl. 6. 16.

of his Gates: Communicate to him all your Affairs, and all your Thoughts, and you will find in him, all the Comfort, all the Counsel, and all the helps that you stand in need of. As 'tis a very great ease to the Minds of all Persons, to have given a good account of their Disease to the Physician, who undertakes to take care of 'em; so 'tis a great satisfaction to the Afflicted, to be able freely to discover their pains to him, from whom they may expect Comfort and Assistance.

S. Thom. 1. 2.
q. 38. art. 2.

One of the means which Moral Philosophy gives, to find some ease in Affliction, is to discover our pains to some Person or other. This Saint *Thomas* proposes, speaking of sadness, and the Reason he gives for it is, that when we would keep all our grief within our selves, it draws our attention more violently unto it; and thereby the sense of our grief becomes more lively: Whereas when we discover it, it becomes less; because then our attention is divided, and our Heart is eas'd by opening and dilating it self. Experience daily teaches us this truth; and do we not daily meet with People who tell us, they find ease by recounting their Afflictions? The holy Abbot *Nilus*, Disciple of Saint *Chrysostom* says, that this remedy was very much in use amongst the Ancient Fathers, who made use of this following Comparison, the better to Authorise it's practice: Have you not taken notice, say they, that when the Clouds are full of Water, they are black and obscure, and as the more Water falls from 'em, and the more they discharge themselves, the clearer also they become? The same also happens in these disquiets of Mind and Temptations that a Religious Man suffers. The more he keeps 'em to himself, the more pensive, troubl'd, and melancholy he is. But when he frees himself from 'em by discovering 'em to his Superiour, he feels according to the measure that he discovers 'em, the black Vapors of sadness and disquiet to be dissipated; and infine, he do's thereby discharge himself from that, which put him into so melancholy a humor, and return's again to his former Joy and Tranquility.

Nil. Abb. de
inter. SS. Pa-
trum qui erant
in Syria, tom 3.
Biblot.

Serm 5. tom. 5.

Saint *Dorotheus* reports of himself, that when he had given an account of the state of his Soul to his Ghostly Father, he found himself in such a quiet and peace of Mind, that sometimes he was afraid, that 'twas an ill sign; † *Because*, as the Scripture says, *we must enter into the Kingdom of Heaven by many Tribulations*. And finding nothing but Joy and Sweetness, he fear'd that he had reason to doubt

† Quoniam
per multas tri-
bulationes o-
portet nos in-
trare in reg-
num Dei.
Mat. 14. 21.

doubt, whether he were in the right way to Heaven. But he was put out of pain by the Abbot *John*, whom he consulted in this affair, who told him that the Peace and Interior satisfaction he enjoy'd, was promis'd to those that hide nothing from their Ghostly Father.

This Point is of so great importance, that Saint *Ignatius* did not content himself only to recommend it to us, as I have already sayd, but he wou'd moreover have Superiours, accustom themselves to speak often to their Religious; because besides many other good effects that it produces, 'twill give their Subjects confidence, more freely to address themselves, and open their Hearts unto them: Moreover for the greater satisfaction of all his Religious, he order'd that in every Colledge of the SOCIETY, there shou'd be a Prefect of Spiritual things, to whom each one for his Comfort and Direction of Conscience, might address himself in his necessities.

Regul. 25. R. 3.

We see, says *Cassian*, that Human Sciences, that propose to themselves no other end, than only Temporal advantages, and in which nothing but sensible and palpable things are treated, can notwithstanding be never well understood; if we put not our selves under some Master to learn 'em. How then can any one imagine, that there is no necessity of a Master in the Science of Salvation, and Spiritual Advancement? Since 'tis so hidden and Spiritual a Science, that the means of obtaining it, are not expos'd to our Corporal Eyes, but that even those of our Soul cannot discover 'em, without very great purity of Heart. In other Sciences we run the risque only of some Temporal advantage; if we succeed not therein; and 'tis a thing that otherwise may easily be repair'd; but here Salvation or Damnation depends upon the good success; here we are not to fight against Visible, but Invisible Enemies; nor against one or two, but against Legions of Devils; who cease neither Day nor Night to make War upon us: Wherefore, continues *Cassian*, we cannot do better, than to have recourse to our Ghostly Fathers, by discovering to them whatsoever passes in our Souls; to the end that they may assist and conduct us by their Counsels.

*3. p. c. 1. 5. 12.
8. 4 p. c. 10.
5. 7.*

*Cassian coller.
2. 2. 1. 12.
Moy. 2. 12.*

But setting all this aside the very Subjects, for which ordinarily we address our selves to the Prefect of Spiritual things, do moreover signifie of how great profit it is, that in each House there shou'd be one, to whom we may have recourse: For when we address our selves to him, 'tis to give him an account, for Example, after what manner we

make our Prayer; of the method we keep in it; of the Fruit we gather from it; and of the care we have of the Additions and other Rules prescrib'd about Prayer. 'Tis to treat with him what Subject we shou'd choose for our Particular Examining; and about the number of faults we have set down therein; of the difference we find between the number we have mark'd in the Morning, and of that in the Afternoon; 'tis to inform him of our Spiritual Reading, and of the profit we make thereby; and lastly 'tis to discover to him those Temptations we have, and how we carry our selves therein; our Penances, our publick or private Mortifications that we Practice; and how we carry our selves in order to Obedience, Resignation, Humility, Observance of Rules, and all other things of the like Nature. And the knowing that we must give this account, is a means without doubt to help us, to keep our selves in a better disposition to give a good one. 'Tis certain also, that the esteem which we perceive is had of any thing, ordinarily moves us to make a greater account of it; and consequently when I perceive that I must be ask'd and examin'd of these kind of matters, they become more considerable to me; which is the reason that if I have once committed a fault herein, I take care not to commit the like for the future: Moreover, according to the opinion of Saints and Divines, as Confession is a great Bridle to hinder Men from falling into Sin; so 'tis a great Bridle to a Religious Person to hinder him from falling into many faults and imperfections, to reflect upon the obligation of his giving an account of 'em to his Ghostly Father. This advantage of Confession, has been more-over so apparent even to Hereticks themselves, that perceiving that in those places in *Germany* which had left it off, they were all fill'd with disorder; and that no body was in security; they beg'd of *Charles* the Fifth, that he wou'd set forth an Ediþ, to oblige all to go to Confession; the Emperour cou'd not but Smile at this Petition, yet took notice at the same time, of the necessity People had of Confession, and of the Ignorance of those, that had recourse to him upon this subject, as if it had been in his power to make a Law about this matter.

But to continue the Comparison I have before mention'd, 'tis certain that frequent Confession, is the best means we can give a Christian, in order to his Salvation: For besides the Grace which is annex'd to this Sacrament, and the Remission

Domin. Sotro.
9. 1. in 4. sent.
dist. 13. q. 1.
c. 1.

of

of Sins obtain'd thereby. 'Tis certain that it comprehends all the Remedies, and all the Counsels of a Christian Life; wherefore when we wou'd move a Worldly Person to take care of his Spiritual Advancement, we Counsel him to say his Beads often; to hear Mass every Day; to hear the Word of God; to Examine his Conscience; to practice Penance; and to let no Day pass, without doing some one or other of these things. But in the last place to compleat all, we propose to him to go often to Confession, and to an able Confessour, and we believe, that hereby we have given him all Spiritual Remedies together; and that we have sayd all that can be sayd, and all that is necessary for him to be told. For if he do's what we have Counsell'd him, his Confessours will not fail, every eighth or fifteenth Day, or at least every Month, to furnish him with several Spiritual Remedies, which we shall not be able either to give him; or at least not be able to perswade him to Practise on a sudden; and he will also take care to exact an account, of the use he makes of his Counsels; 'tis this that, good Confessours ought to perform; they ought always to take care that their Penitents continually increase in Vertue; And 'tis for this reason that Masters of Spirit, give Counsel, to have always one constant and stable Confessour; because to Confess this Day to one, and to morrow to another, is not the way to make great progress in Perfection; for as all the Remedies of a Christian Life, are compris'd in Confession; so all the means that can be given to a Religious Person, for his Spiritual Advancement, are compris'd in the Obligation of rendring an account of his Conscience; because the Superiour or the Prefect of Spirit, who is appointed to hear you, sees thereby the profit you make in Prayer, Examinings, and Spiritual Reading. He sees how you resist Temptations, and how you overcome your Passions and bad Habits. He sees how you are dispos'd to the observing of Silence, Humility and Resignation; and whether you go forward or backward in Vertue; and regulates his Remedies and Instructions, according to the necessity you are in, and to the disposition, of your Soul; reprehending you for your defects in your Duties, and encouraging you in the performance of 'em. When all this is done with the Spirit of Sweetness and Charity as it ought to be, and as 'tis effectually practis'd amongst us, and when you perceive that they seek nothing herein, but your good and Spiritual Advancement, 'tis impossible but this means shou'd be of wonderful profit and advantage.

C H A P. III.

*That the discovering our selves to our Superior
or Ghostly Father, is a most excellent Re-
medy against Temptations.*

I Have already sayd, that 'twas the general opinion of all the Saints, and as a kind of first Principle amongst the Ancient Fathers, that all Temptations ought to be discover'd to Superiours: And Saint *Ignatius* do's not only recommend the same thing to us in his Constitutions; but that this Truth may be more deeply imprinted in our Heart, Let us see a little, what may be the cause that all have so strongly insisted upon this Point: The reasons thereof, says *Cassian*, is that the Devil cannot deceive you, by his Craft, as an Ignorant Man without Experience, if you know how to have recourse to the Experience and Wisdom of your Spiritual Father, and if you guide your self by his Lights and Knowledge; because hereby he will not have to do with a new and unexperienc'd, but with an old Souldier, who has been brought up all his Life in this Spiritual Militia; because that what your Confessour or Spiritual Father has gain'd either by Experience or Abilities, are communicated to you as soon as you intirely discover your self unto them, and and leave your self intirely to their Conduct; and 'tis after this manner, says he, that we gain the true Spirit of Discretion and Prudence, of which Saint *Antony* made so great an account: For one Day says *Cassian*, when this great Saint was in Conference with other Holy Fathers of the Desert, they there-disputed which was the Vertue, that most of all contributed to the gaining Perfection. The one sayd 'twas Chastity, because it kept Sensuality subject to Reason; another, sayd it was Justice; and lastly, every one gave his opinion of what he thought best. When Saint *Antony* had heard 'em all, he decided the Question, telling 'em that the most necessary Vertu to acquire Perfection, and which contributed most

3. p. Conf. c. 1.
5. 12. reg. 4.
summ.

*Cassian. lib. 4.
de Instit. re-
munt. c. 9. &
Collat. 2. Ab-
batis Moyse
c. 2. & 10.*

Ibid. cap. 4.

most of all to it; was Discretion and Prudence; because if these two do not regulate all the Actions of Vertue we perform, they are not properly Acts of Vertue, nor cannot be pleasing to God: But would you know; add's *Cassian*, a short and easie means to acquire this Vertue; communicate all your Thoughts to your Superiour, and guide your self in all things by his Advice; and by this means all the Prudence of your Superiour, will pass into your self. Saint *Bernard* affirms this in expresse words. * *Because the Spirit of Discretion, says he, is a thing rarely found in the World, therefore make Obedience supply the Defect of this Vertue in you; so that you do nothing either small or great, but what is Commanded you; nor after any other manner, than you are Commanded to perform it, and you will supply the Defect of Experience, you stand so much in need of.*

'Tis upon this account that the Saints earnestly recommend unto us, presently to discover our Temptations; and 'tis for the same reason that the Devil, who desires nothing more than to destroy us, hinders us as much as he can, from declaring 'em. Saint *Dorotheus* says, that nothing pleases the Devil more, than to meet with one that will not discover his Temptations; for then, since he fights with him Hand to Hand, he assures himself of the Victory, according to the words of Scripture. † *Wo to him who is alone; because if he comes to fall, there's no body to help him up.* On the contrary, add's the Saint, there is nothing the Devil fears so much, and that gives him so much pain, as to see himself discover'd. For then he looses all courage and hopes of gaining the Victory; and therefore betakes him self to Flight. Saint *Ignatius*, the better to clear this matter, makes use of a Comparison, very proper for our Instruction, he says, that when the Devil tempts us, he deals with us as a Man who solicites a Young Woman to what is Evil, who has a Father or Mother who are very Prudent: Or a Married Woman, that has an Honest Man to her Husband. The first thing that this Man do's is to hinder the Young Woman from saying any thing to her Father or Mother; or the Wife to her Husband; and fears nothing more than to be discover'd; because then all hopes of effecting his wicked pretensions are lost; whereas so long as they keep it secret, he thinks he has still ground to hope: 'Tis after this manner continues our Holy Founder, that when the Devil would deceive any one, the first thing he do's is to hinder him from

† At vero quis omnino rara ista avis est in terris, hujus discretionis locum in vobis suppleat virtus obedientie, ut nihil plus, nihil minus nihil aliud quam imperatum sit, faciat.
Bern. serm. 3. de Circumcis.

Dorothe. serm. 5. Idem. Abb. Poem. in vobis Pat. p. 2. §. 147.

† Vx soli, quia cum ceciderit, non habet subleuantem.
Eccles. 4. 10.

S. Ignat. lib. Exercit. spirit. in reg. ad mortis anim. disce. Reg. 13.

from discovering his Temptations to any body, because as long as they conceal 'em, he is as it were assur'd to overcome, and to obtain what he desires. But on the contrary, that which he apprehends most from those he Tempts, is that they shou'd go presently and discover his Temptations to their Superiour, or Confessour: For since 'tis rather by craft than force, that he get's the better of us, he looks upon himself as overcome, as soon as he sees his craft discover'd. † *Whoever do's Ill*, says the Evangelist, *hates the Light*. And moreover 'tis proper to those who make it their business to deceive others, to be affraid thereof, more than of any thing else, and to avoid it as much as they are able.

Omnis enim
qui male agit,
odit lucem.
Joan. 3. 20.

Saint *Dorotheus* recounts what happen'd to Saint *Macarius*, that helps much to our purpose. He says that this Saint, who had been a Disciple of the great Saint *Antony*, and to whom God had given a great power over the Spirits of Darkness, ask'd a Devil one day, what success he had with the Hermits. The Devil answer'd a very bad one; because he cou'd suggest nothing to them, but they presently discover'd it to their Superiour. * *But there is notwithstanding one of your Brethren*, add's he, *who is very much my Friend, whom like a Top I turn which way I please*; and being hereupon constrain'd to it by the Power of God, he declar'd the Hermits Name. Saint *Macarius* went presently to find him out, and understanding by the Conference he had with him, that he discover'd not his Temptations to his Ghostly Father, and that he conducted himself only by his own Lights, he Exhorted him, to do so no more for the future, nor to confide hereafter in his own Judgment. The Hermit receiv'd this Advice with very great submission, and profited so well by it, that a little while after, the Saint asking the Devil how it went with his Friend the Hermit; he is no more my Friend, says he in a rage and despair, he is become my Mortal Enemy. Wherefore here 'tis to be taken notice of, says Saint *Dorotheus*, that all the Hermits who liv'd under Saint *Macarius* were Tempted; but because they took care to give an account of all their Temptations to their Spiritual Father, and govern'd themselves by his advice; the Devil Tempted 'em in vain, for he cou'd effect nothing against any of 'em, but only against him, who relying upon his own Judgment and Conduct, wou'd not discover his Interior to his Ghostly Father, and

† Habeo unum
de fratribus
tuis, quem uti
turbinem cum
volo, verso.
Dorat. ubi sup.
de S. Mach. 28.

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and yet as soon as he did so; The Devil had no longer any power or force against him, *Cassian* says, that he who has no reserve to his Ghostly Father, is intirely secure from all the snares and surprises of the Devil, and he applies to this subject, these words of the Wise Man; * *If thou discoverest his Secrets, thou wilt no longer follow him*; and these others also, † *If the Serpent bites thee without noise*. God preserve you, says he, from being bitten by a silent Serpent; for whilst he whistles and makes a noise, so that the enchanter can hear him, there is some remedy to be hop'd for; wherefore God grant the Old Serpent the Devil, do's not silently bite you; for so long as your Ghostly Father hears him, he will be able to enchant him with the words of the Holy Scripture, and thereby preserve you from all kinds of danger.

But there is still another advantage, which is, that the recourse to our Ghostly Father in time of Temptations, is so pleasing to God, that oftentimes, only by this Submission, and by this only sign of Humility, without ever receiving any Counsel or Answer, from him to whom we address our selves, we shall free our selves from the Temptations that molests us. This is the opinion of *Cassian*, who says, † *The suggestions of the Devil are no longer hurtful to us, than whilst we hide them*; for as soon as we come to discover 'em, they lose all their force; and before the Prudence of our Superiour has decided any thing, the Infernal Serpent is constrain'd, by Vertue of this Humility and Sincerity, to quit the obscurity in which he had hid himself; and to retire with shame: Like as when there is a Serpent or Adder under a Stone; it presently flies, as soon as you lift the Stone up; so the Devil, who is the Father of Darknes, and cannot indure Light, flies away, as soon as you expose him to the sight of others. Add to this, that as he is the Father of Pride, he cannot with Patience suffer to have his Weakness and want of Power known, and therefore as soon as he is discover'd he shamefully flies away.

Moreover, we may here make a reflection, that is very proper to our subject. If the Diseases of the Body could be cur'd, barely by the discovering 'em to the Physician, what care shou'd we not take to give him an account, even of the least Infirmary we suffer? But this which cannot happen in Corporal Diseases, happens and is daily experienc'd in those of the Soul; because that, as I have already sayd,

Tom. II.

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*Cassian. Collat.
2. Abbas
Moyse. c. 11.*

* Si denudaveris abscon-
ditus, non per-
sequeris post
eum.
Ecclef. 27. 19.
† Si mordet
serpens in si-
lentio.
Ecclef. 10. 11.

† Tādū enī
suggestiones
eius dominan-
tur in vobis,
quādū celan-
tur in corde:
illīc enim, ut
patefacta fue-
rit cogitatio
maligna, mar-
cessit, & ante-
quam discre-
tionis judic-
ium profectur,
serpens teter-
rimus, velut &
tenebrosus ac
subterraneus
speci, virtute
confessionis
protractus ad
lucem, & tra-
ductus quo-
dammodo, ac
demonstratus
abscedit.
*Cass. collat. 2.
Abbas Moyse
cap. 10.*

as soon as we discover 'em to our Superiour, and even before he has sayd any thing about what we propose to him, we are deliver'd from the Temptation; nay give me leave to say yet more, we often find this effect, even by the resolution, only, of discovering it to our Ghostly Father: For going to give him an account of it, even before you can get to his Chamber-door, you'll find that God has dispers'd the Cloud, deliver'd you from the Temptation; and render'd Peace and Tranquility to your Soul.

We have an Example of this, in the Lives of the Fathers of the Desert; an Hermit had Fasted above a Year together, to obtain light and direction from God, about a doubt he had; and offer'd continually his Prayers to God for this end: But at last perceiving that he receiv'd no light at all herein, he resolv'd to go and consult another Hermit, that remain'd in the same Desert. He was scarce gone out of his Cell to execute his design, but an Angel appear'd to him and clearly solv'd his difficulty; and added, that he had Merited this Grace, rather by his Humility and Submission, than by his Fasts and Prayers. The Gospel furnishes us also with an Example of the same Nature, in the Person of the ten Lepers who came to JESUS CHRIST, crying out,

* *Master have Mercy upon us: Go, says our Saviour, and shew your selves to the Priest, and it happen'd, says the Evangelist, that whilst they were upon their way, they were all Cur'd.* God is so satisfi'd with our Submission, to those who hold his place, that he even declares it by Miracles. It may also very well happen, that even by threatning the Devil, that you will discover those Temptations he torments you withal, you may make him affraid, and oblige him to let you be at quiet; so that 'tis always very good, in these sorts of occasions, to carry our selves like little Children, who when you do them any hurt, threaten to tell their Father.

«Jesu preceptor, miserere nostri. Ite, & ostendite vos Sacerdotibus. Et factum est dum irent, mundati sunt.
Luc. 17. 13.
or 14.

C H A P. IV.

*That we ought not to neglect to discover our
Temptations to our Ghostly Father, under
pretence, that we already know those
Remedies, that he will Counsel us
to make use of.*

BUT some may say, I have so often heard 'em speak of Remedies against Temptations, and I have read so many Spiritual Books that treat thereof, that I already know all, that the Superiour or Ghostly Father will be able to Answer me; what need therefore have I to address my self to him? Let us take care not to be carried away with this Temptation, and let us so much the more defend our selves from it, the greater our ability and knowledge is, or that we may at least think we have. Saint *Dorotheus* was very much tormented with this kind of Temptation, but he knew how to deliver himself from it, he says, that when he went to discover his Temptation to his Superiour, this Thought presently came to his Mind, why shou'd you loose so much time to no purpose? You may be assur'd he'll give you such and such an answer, and tell you nothing but what you know already; to what end therefore shou'd you go to importune him? Then I was mov'd to anger against the Temptations, continues he, and also against my self, and sayd. † *Wo be to thee Satan: Wo be to thy Wit and Judgment: Wo be to thy Prudence and Knowledge?* And without hearkning any longer to the Temptation, I went presently to give an account to my Superiour, of all that pass'd within me. When I came to him; he answer'd the very same things that I before thought of, and I felt something within me which sayd to me with some disquiet and trouble; Aye, did not I tell you what answer he wou'd give you, and that 'twas not at all necessary to go to him? But I presently answer'd.

D d d 2

No

† Anathema
tibi & iudicio
tuo, & intelli-
gentiæ ag. pru-
dentiz tuæ,
cogitationi &
scientiæ tuæ. 4
Dorothe. form. 5.

No such matter; for now I am assur'd, that what I before thought of was good, and that it came from God, which I had reason to doubt of when I was alone, and when it came only from my self. 'Twas after this manner that he free'd himself from this Temptation, never failing to address himself to his Superiour; and we ought to do the very same, without trusting to our own Judgment; because 'tis certain nobody is a good Judge in his own cause. But if this be true, when we are not set upon by any Temptation, what will it be, when Temptation hinders us from making a right Judgment of things, and even shut's our Eyes, according to the words of the Prophet; † *My Iniquities have seiz'd upon me, and I am able to see nothing.* One knows not then what is most convenient for him, or if he knows, he is got in a condition to profit thereby, and to put it in practice; because the Temptation disquiets and even blinds him: Whereas one word that the Superiour shall say to him, will be able to work a greater effect upon him, than all he can say to himself.

† Comprehendunt me iniquitates meae, & non potui aut viderem. *Psal.* 39. 13.

Aug. serm. 3. de verb. Apost. cap. 7.

Saint *Austin* recounts a passage very particular, and no less pleasant, to our purpose, he says, that a certain Man finding himself seiz'd upon by a Distemper, call'd for a Physician, who gave him a Remedy that presently Cur'd him, the same Distemper seising upon him some few Days after, he wou'd needs use the same Remedy, which had done him so much good before, and having very well remembred it's Composition, he did not call for the Doctor; the Remedy notwithstanding gave him no ease, whereat he being very much surpriz'd, he call'd for the Physician, and recounted to him what had happen'd, asking him the Reason why the Remedy which he gave him, did him so much good the first time, and the second time, did him none at all? 'Twas, answer'd the Physician smiling, because I did not give it you my self. Now let us apply this to our Subject, the Spiritual Remedy that you have heard of, and that you know very well, will do you no good, because 'tis not your Spiritual Physician that gives it you; the Remedy given by the Hand of the same Physician, who observes Times and Circumstances, has a better effect, than when 'tis taken after another manner; or by on's own prescription. 'Tis the same with the Remedies relating to the Soul: The Waters of the River *Damas* was very good, and perhaps better than that of *Jordan*; yet 'twas not the Water of *Damas*, but that of

of Jourdan that Cur'd Naman of his Leprosie; when *Ehseu* Commanded him to wash himself therein. The concurrence of God, joyn'd with what your Superiour Directs, and with the Remedies he gives, are very efficacious; because the Superiour, holds the Place of God, and a simple and easie remedy which the Superiour shall give, will do you more good, than all others that you can imagine, or shall make use of.

CHAP. V.

That we must never permit our selves to be hinder'd, from discovering any thing to our Ghostly Father, upon pretence that 'tis small and inconsiderable.

THE Devil also make use of another means, to hinder us from having recourse to our Superiour or Confessour; which is to represent unto us, that the thing in question, is of no moment at all; that 'tis not at all necessary to go to him about trifles; and that one ought to be asham'd to importune him to no purpose, for things of no moment at all. To this I answer, first, that he who aspires to Perfection, ought not to expect till the things he performs be of some importance or necessary; but ought always to propose to himself, that which is better and more perfect; and therefore how light soever the thing may seem to be, 'tis always good not to neglect it, but to give an account of it to his Superiour; because 'tis properly herein, that he makes it appear, that he aspires to Perfection: In effect one thing which Edifies extreamly, is to have recourse to our Superiour for small matters, and the more one has so, the more knowing they are, and the more they will Edifie their Brethren by this submission, because this is to make our selves become little, and to become Children again for the Love of JESUS CHRIST.

I answer in the second place, that those things also are not always inconsiderable, that appear so to you, but 'tis the shame and repugnance you have to speak of 'em, that furnishes you with reasons to make you believe 'em such; and to perswade you, that 'tis to no purpose to speak of 'em. 'Tis just so when we are asham'd to Confess any thing, The Devil presently makes use of this bad bashfulness, to perswade us, that what we are asham'd to speak of, is not in reality a Mortal Sin; and therefore we are not oblig'd to accuse our selves of it. How many are there, that he has abus'd after this manner, by hindring them from Confessing those things they were oblig'd to Confess, and hereby caus'd 'em to make Sacrilegious Confessions and Communions? The very repugnance we feel, to discover any thing to our Superiour, ought to be sufficient to make us suspect the reasons, that we believe we have not to discover it, and ought fully to convince us that we ought to speak of it. *Cassian* says,

** That there needs no other reason to let us see, that a thing is bad in it self, than the desire we have not to speak of it, which is a pure Temptation of the Devil.* And he add's that this was the opinion of the Ancient Fathers, who held it for an infallible mark, that the Thought came from the Devil, when one had a shame to discover it unto his Superiour; † *All Iniquity*, says the Prophet, *stops it's Mouth*, and * *Whoever do's ill*, says our Saviour, *hates the Light*; wherefore as often as we seek to hide any thing from the knowledge of our Superiour, there is reason to suspect that 'tis not good.

In the third place, how light or small soever the thing may be, yet it becomes considerable as soon as we hide it, wherefore 'tis good to declare it in the beginning, that we may soon apply a remedy thereunto, for 'tis then easier to do so, than 'twill be afterwards. Saint *John Climacus* says, that as the Egg's that are set upon by the Hen, or that are hid under the Dung-hill, by little and little come to have Life, and afterwards are hatch'd; so the bad Thoughts that we hide in our Heart, without being willing to discover 'em, to him who may hinder their progress, ordinarily happen to produce very bad effects.

Another means which the Devil makes use of, in regard of some Persons, to hinder 'em from addressing themselves to their Superiour, is to make 'em believe that they will become importune to him, and give him hereby trouble; but 'tis
a great

* Generale namque, & evidens iudicium diabolicæ cogitationis esse pronuntiant, si eam seniori confundamur aperire. *Cass. de Instit. renunt. l. 4.*

† Omnis iniquitas opilabit os suum. *Psal. 106. 41.*

* Omnis qui male agit, odit lucem. *Joan. 3. 20.*

a great error to have this thought; for 'tis the Duty of your Superiour to hearken to you at all times, and 'tis in this, that the principal care of his charge consists; wherefore you do him wrong, to think he imagin's himself importun'd, by that which is one of his chief Obligations. On the contrary he is very well pleas'd to be employ'd in so essential a thing, upon which, as I have already sayd, depends the Spiritual Advancement of all Religious.

Cassian reports a thing to our purpose, that happen'd to *Scrapien* the Abbot, in his Youth; and which he was wont to recount to his Religious, to excite 'em to give an account of all things to their Superiour. When I was yet only a Novice, says the Abbot, I was Tempted with Gluttony, so that I thought I cou'd never be able to satisfie my self, in so much, that every Day after I had din'd with the Abbot *Theonas* my Superiour; I secretly took a Loaf as I rise from table, and I eat it at Night without his knowledge; notwithstanding, tho' Gluttony still importun'd me after the same manner, and tho' I had no sooner made an end of my Loaf, but remorse of Conscience seiz'd upon me, and the grief I then felt for my Fault, surpass'd very much the pleasure that I had in satisfying my Appetite: Yet the Temptation had so much got the upper-hand over me, that the next day I return'd to steal another Loaf, and did Eat it as before in private, without daring to discover my Temptation to my Superiour; till at length it pleas'd God to deliver me from it, after the manner that I shall now tell you: Some Hermits came to see the Abbot *Theonas*, and entertaining themselves, as they were wont to do after Dinner, in Pious and Spiritual Discourses of God, it happen'd, that this Holy Old Man in answering their Questions, spoke of Gluttony, and also of the Power that Temptations get over us, when they are kept secret; my Conscience in the mean time gave me a thousand reproaches, and I thought that all he sayd was address'd to my self, and imagin'd that without doubt God had Reveal'd my Temptation and my Fault unto him: So that at the same time being both touch'd; and astonish'd at his words, I began bitterly to lament within my self, afterwards the sorrow and displeasure for my Fault, increasing in my Heart, I was able to hold no longer, but giving way to Tears and Lamentations, I cast my self at the Holy Abbots Feet, and shewing him the Loaf that I had stolen that very day, I publickly declar'd to him the

*Cassian. coll. 2.
Abbas Moys
cap. 11.*

the Fault I daily fell into, begging his Pardon, and that he wou'd impose some Penance upon me for it. The holy Old Man began then to comfort me, and sayd to me, Child take courage, this heroick Action that you have now perform'd, by publickly declaring your Fault before the whole World, has for ever deliver'd you from this troublesome Temptation. And you have to day gain'd a greater Victory over the Devil, than that he had before gain'd over you, nor do I doubt but that God permitted, that this Temptation shou'd have so much power over you, because you kept it secret; be therefore assur'd, that since you have declar'd it, the Infernal Serpent will not for the future be able to do you any hurt, but will fly far from you; because he cannot indure the Light. The holy Old Man had scarce ended his words, but on a sudden a kind of an inflam'd Vapour came out of my Breast, which fill'd the Cell with an insupportable stench; and then the holy Man turning towards me. You see dear Child, says he, how God wou'd by effects confirm my words; because he has let you see the Merit you have got, by discovering your Fault, which has cast out the Devil, who cannot suffer himself to be expos'd to the Light, or that his Craft shou'd be discover'd; wherefore fear not that he will ever come back to torment you for the future, what this holy Old Man foretold me, I found true; for I was never after disquieted with this Temptation, nor ever any thing like it, enter'd any more into my Thoughts.

CHAP.

C H A P. VI.

*In which several difficulties are solv'd, that may
binder us from giving an exact account of our
Interior.*

I Have already sayd, of how great importance and necessity it is, to keep nothing hid from our Superiour; but the Corruption of our own Nature, and the Malice of the Devil are so great, that those things that are most necessary for our Spiritual advancement, are ordinarily those, to which we have greatest repugnance; or in which, he endeavours to cause us to meet with the greatest obstacles: Wherefore 'tis very fit, to endeavour to apply a Remedy to this inconveniency: And 'tis no small task that I shall perform, in a matter of so great importance, if I find out a means to remove all difficulties, and so make the way very plain and easie. Moreover, tho' this is address'd particularly to Religious, yet every one may make an application thereof to himself; because 'tis a Doctrine that generally regard's the whole World: And *Gerson*, as we shall afterwards see, speaking of Confession, treats of Manifestation of Conscience in general, for all sorts of Persons.

We are naturally Enemies of Labour and Pain, and because the Subject we treat of, ordinarily appears to us very painful and troublesom, I will begin to make it appear, that without comparison, there is a far greater pain in keeping a reserve towards our Superiour, than in keeping nothing hid from him. Wherefore here take notice of this; for 'tis one of the best reasons to object to those, who Love themselves so well, that they dare not imbrace Vertue and Perfection; because of the difficulties that are met withal therein. I grant there is some Pain and some Mortification, to declare all our Temptations, Inclinations and Defects to our Superiour; but at the same time I also affirm, and maintain, that the hiding 'em, is a far greater pain than their disclosure.

covery: The experience we daily find in our selves, as well as the examples of others, let us see this; and all those who ever had a mind to hide any thing from the knowledge of their Superiour, are able to give a good testimony hereof. What troubles, what remorses, what disquiets do we not feel, when we wou'd not have our interior known? * *The Iniquity of Ephraim is as it were ty'd up in a Sack; his Sin is hid, the pains of Child-birth will cease upon him.* In the doubt and uncertainty we are in, whether or no we shou'd discover our selves, we are always as it were in the pains of Child-birth: Now we have a mind to say all, now we repent to have had a mind to do so; afterwards we go to our Superiour's Doer, to lay open our Hearts unto him; then on a sudden we return again, without daring to do it. † *The Children are Just ready to be born, but their Mothers have not strength to bear 'em.* We were upon the point of discovering and bringing to light our Thoughts and Temptation, which is the Fruit and Child of the Father of Darkness, and we had not force to be deliver'd of it; and after this manner we remain always in the pains of Child-birth. Nay even these pains augment, the longer we defer, to discover our hidden imperfections; for the more we hide 'em, the greater will be our pain and shame afterwards to declare 'em. We are then angry with our selves we have not done it sooner, and that which then gives us the greatest pain, is thus to think with our selves: How is it possible to go now to my Superiour, after I have let so long a time pass? Were it a thing to begin again. I wou'd not fail to give him an account thereof, but with what Face can I now appear before him? What will he say to me for having conceal'd my self for so long a time from him? He will say that I have no Confidence in him; because I did not presently manifest my self to him. To conclude, for so long a time as we shall defer laying open our Hearts to our Ghostly Father, we shall never find any quiet of Mind, but shall always be expos'd, to the reproaches and remorses of Conscience, that we have fail'd in a thing of so great importance. Whereas from the moment we had discover'd 'em, we shou'd have had none of all these disquiets, but the trouble and interior agitation wou'd have presently ceas'd, and we shou'd have enjoy'd a perfect Peace and Tranquility.

'Tis the self same thing in order to this, that 'tis in order to Confession; for then, when out of shame we dare not

* Colligata est iniquitas Ephraim, absconditum peccatum ejus, dolores parturientis venient ei. *Osae. 13. 12.* *Ps. 13.*

† Venerunt filij usque ad partum, & virtus non est patiendi. *Isa. 37. 3.*

not accuse our selves of some Sin, we find no peace at all within our selves, but are in continual disquiet and anguish of Heart. But as soon as we have Confest our Sin; we presently find our selves content and at ease, we seem as if we had cast of a heavy burden, under which we were ready to fall. † *The Wounds which are not open, says Saint Gregory, cause greater pain than others, by reason of the Inflammation caus'd by the Matter that is within; but as soon as they are open'd, the Matter and Corruption go's one, and the Pain diminishes.* 'Tis almost the self same thing, when we come from accusing our selves of our Sins, or from declaring our Temptations and Weakness. For as the Saints add's, * *Confession of Sins, what is it else, but the opening of a Wound or Impostume?* We may also compare this state, to a Man whose Stomack is overcharg'd with Meats and bad Humors, and who has a continual provocation to Vomit; he suffers cruelly, till he casts up whar he had in his Stomack; but as soon as he has done so, he suffers no more, but finds himself intirely at ease. What I have sayd, clearly lets us see, that to hide whar passes within us, is a far greater pain, than we can have in declaring it; for one is presently free'd from it, by a little Shame and Mortification that passes in a moment, and afterward we remain in a profound Peace and Tranquility. Wherefore we may very well say, to those who hide their interior from their Spiritual Father, to spare themselves a little pain and trouble, that 'tis for this reason they ought not to do so, for so long as they shall persist in hiding it, they will be consum'd with irksomeness, and be even eaten up with disquiet; according to the words of the Royal Prophet, † *Rottenness has even pierc'd to the Marrow of my Bones; because I held my Peace,* but as soon as they have laid open their Heart, they'll feel themselves at ease and find themselves comforted.

† *Vulnera clausa plus cruciant; propter dinem putred quæ intrinsecus fervet, sed aperiendo, ad salutem dolor minuitur.*
Gregor. lib. 7. Moral. c. 11. & lib. 3. pastor. adm. 15.

* *Quid est peccatorum confessio, nisi quædam vulnerum ruptio?*
Idem. ibid.

† *Quoniam tacui, inveteraverunt ossa mea.*
Psal. 31. 3.

C H A P. VII.

*In which the chief Difficulty is Answer'd,
that ordinarily binders us, from freely disco-
vering our selves to our Superiour.*

ONE of the chief difficulties, that hinders Religious Persons from discovering themselves to their Superiour, if I may not say better the greatest of all, is, that they imagine they shall be dishonour'd by it, and loose the good repute and esteem they had before gain'd; for after that, the Superiour will always have his Eye upon 'em, trust 'em no more, and have no further kindness for 'em. Behold here the pretext the Devil makes use of to abuse them; and to hinder them from discovering their interior, or at least from making a full discovery thereof. But if I can make the contrary clearly appear, and evidently prove, that 'tis a false imagination; and that his esteem and amity for 'em, will rather be augmented, when they intirely lay open their Hearts; than lost, when they do the contrary; I hope the obstacle will be quite remov'd, and the difficulty intirely taken away. 'Tis this therefore which I, by the assistance of God's Grace, undertake at present to prove, and shall make it appear, that things are not so as the Devil represents 'em, purposely to seduce us; and in this he do's but the same thing, which he do's in all other Temptations, and what we must expect from the Father of Lies. I say then, that there is nothing that do's so much discredit a Religious Man with his Superiour, as his taking care to hide himself from him; that this is the means to make on's self be look'd upon as a dissembler; and that they cannot find out any other Fault, that may do them more prejudice than this, in their Superiours esteem. For after all, one Fault is at least but one Fault; but they easily suspect him guilty of many; whom they think a dissembler and unsincere. He is a dark Man, say they; and how do

do I know, since he has not discover'd to me such a thing that I have found out, whether he has not still other things which he do's not discover to me? This thing alone, more lessens his Reputation with his Superiour, than any other Fault he can be guilty of. On the contrary, when we have no reserve to our Superiour, and we discover to him all our Temptations, Inclinations and Defects. 'Tis so far from lessening our selves with him, that hereby we gain a greater esteem from him. Because that we pass, for Humble, Mortifi'd and Sincere Persons; and such as are truly in the interior, what outwardly we appear to be.

But let us go a little farther, and ascend even to the Fountains head; since we treat here of a most essential and important Point. First of all I say, that a Religious Man cannot make use of a better means, to cause himself to be below'd by his Superiour, than intirely to lay open his Heart unto him, without ever having any thing hid from him.

And the reason of this is, that nothing moves more to Love than to be below'd. From hence it comes, that Saint John, to excite us to Love God, represents to us, * *That God Lov'd us first*. But one of the things in which a Religious Man, can most of all shew his Love to his Superiour, is by laying open to him the bottom of his Heart; and having no reserve at all to him: For his friendship is very great, who keeps nothing secret or hid from his friend; wherefore our Saviour explicating to his Disciples the Parable of the Seed, † *To yee*, says he, *is given a special Priviledge throughly to know the Mysteries of the Kingdom of God, but to others, they are hid under Parables*. And in the Sermon of the last Supper; * *As for yee*, says he to his Apostles, *I have call'd yee my Friends; because I have discover'd to yee all that I Learn'd from my Father*. When therefore the Superiour perceives, that a Religious intirely opens his Heart unto him; he knows hereby that the Religious Loves him in effect, and looks upon him as his Father, and as one who is in the place of God; because he confides all things to him, and wholly gives himself up into his Hands, and this obliges him to Love him so much the more, and to take greater care of him. But if on the contrary, he perceiv's that you are reserv'd to him, and instead of openly declaring all things to him, you speak to him after a close and hidden manner, so that hearing you he may not understand you, this is to give him a bad impression

* Quoniam ipse prior dilexit nos.
1 Joan. 4. 19.

† Vobis datum est nosse mysterium regni Dei, ceteris autem in parabolis.
Luc. 8. 10.
* Vos autem dixi amicos; quia omnia quaecumque audivi a Patre meo, nota feci vobis.
Joan. 15. 15.

of

of you, and to oblige him to Love you so much the less; because your diffidence and reservedness, are sufficient marks that you have not those sentiments of esteem and affection, that you ought to have for your Father; and that you do not treat him as such; which is apt to give him less kindness at least, if not an aversion for you: For how wou'd you have him Love you as his Son, if you do not Love him as your Father? Love him therefore as you ought to Love a Father, by confiding in him, and intirely opening your Heart unto him, and he will Love you also as a Son ought to be Lov'd:

Treatise 3. c. 1.

I shall also make appear in the following Treatise, that Superiours also ought to carry themselves towards their Inferiours after the like manner; for when a Superiour speaks to any one of his Religious, with a free and open Heart; and tells him, take care of your self, you have such and such a fault, such a Complaint is made of you, you neglect such a Duty, endeavour to correct your self; the Religious Loves him then so much the more; because he perceives that this proceeds, from the true Affection he has for him. But when the Superiour treats him after another manner, and instead of speaking to him with Charity and Confidence, about what he ought to correct in himself; when he affects to go about the Buis, and to say one thing, whilst he thinks another, this is not a cordial way of proceeding, but a conduct full of dissimulation: When therefore there shall be a great sincerity and openness of Heart on both sides, then there will be a true friendship between Superiours and Subjects, and a true Union of Hearts, and all things will go well; but when there shall be no more this openness of Heart, by freely discovering our selves to our Superiour, there will be no more true friendship, but only such exterior expressions thereof as civility requires.

From hence it also follows, that there is no reason at all to fear, the loss of the esteem of our Superiour, which ordinarily gives us the greatest pain herein; since friendship is always accompanied with esteem: For the Will does not move us to Love, till the Understanding proposes, how much the Object deserves to be belov'd. But besides this Reason in general, let us descend to particulars; 'tis very certain, that how great soever the Temptations of a Religious Person are, his Superiour for this reason cannot have the less esteem of him; because those that serve God and give themselves intirely to Spiritual things, are those who are most of all subject to Temptations. Others very often, even know

not

not what it is to be Tempted, or do not perceive it when they are so, and of themselves they are but too much carried to Sin; so that the Devil has no need to take the pains to Tempt 'em; wherefore 'tis chiefly those that apply themselves to God's Service, and aspire to Perfection, against whom he turns his Arms; and this made the Wise Man say, † *My Son applying thy self to the Service of God, prepare thy Soul for Temptation.*

† Illi accedens ad servitutem Dei, prepara animam tuam ad temptationem. Eccl. 3. 1.

Moreover, there are some Persons, who sometimes form such a strange and shameful Idea of their Temptation, that not being able to believe that any one ever had the like, they do not declare it to their Superiour, for fear of astonishing him: And this chiefly happens to Novices or Young Religious, who as yet having very little experience in matter of Temptation, and look upon that which is ordinary and very common, as a thing very strange and new; but assure your self, you cannot say any thing to your Superiour, or to your Confessour, that will seem extraordinary to him; many others besides you have told him the self same thing, and perhaps he himself will have experienc'd the like Temptation. The Wise Man says, * *There is nothing new under Heaven*; Do not believe therefore that 'tis any thing new; because it never happen'd to you before.

* Nihil sub sole novum. Eccl. 1. 10.

Another reason, which ought to hinder us from believing, that by declaring our Faults and Imperfections to our Superiour, we shall be the less esteem'd by him, is this; to reflect that all Men are subject to fail, that we are form'd of the same frail matter, and have been all taken out of the same Mass; and therefore the Superiour, who knows by his own, the frailty of his Subjects, is not easily astonish'd when they discover their Thoughts and Imperfections to him. *Gerson*, desirous to withdraw his Young Religious, from a Fault they often fell into, which was to hide their Faults from their Ghostly Father, mov'd hereunto out of an ill bashfulness; say'd thus to them, do you believe that by knowing your Sins and weaknesses I esteem you the less? No such matter, I even Love you so much the more; because of the Confidence you have plac'd in me, by discovering such things to me, as you wou'd not have done to your own Father. God is my witness add's he, with how much tenderness my Heart is touch'd, when any one discovers to me his weaknesses, and the greater and more shameful I find 'em to be, the greater is the tenderness and compassion that I feel for him.

Gerson de parva illi tradendis ad chr. p. 2.

him. The Humility that a Religious Man testifies when, of himself he freely owns his Fault, and the desire he hereby shew's of the Health of his Soul; and of his Spiritual advancement, touch Superiours after so particular a manner, that they even carry them in their Bowels. When a meer Stranger addresses himself to us, and relates to us his Pains and Afflictions we presently conceive an Affection for him, we find our selves mov'd to assist him, and we endeavour to comfort him, after the best manner we are able. What Sentiments then ought we not to have for the Children of JESUS CHRIST? 'Tis without doubt a thing of very great importance, that all Religious shou'd be throughly perswaded, that by discovering their Faults to their Spiritual Father, they do not in the least cool his Affection for them. But on the contrary they very much increase it. Wherefore when they shall be fully convinc'd of this truth, they will not easily give ear to what the Devil shall suggest to the contrary, thereby to withdraw them from so essential an obligation.

To confirm the more what I have already sayd, we must take notice, that 'tis a great shame before God and Man, to do ill, and to persist therein, with a determinate Will; but to detest it, to repent our selves of it, to have confusion and sorrow for it, and to accuse our selves of our Sins, is what is very pleasing in his sight; and therefore ought to be thought so, by those who are in his place. Divines treat this Question. Whether at the Day of Judgment, the Sins of the Saints and Blessed Souls, shall be made Publick, as well as those of the Damn'd? And they differ in their Opinions therein. But what may be held for certain in this Point, and what makes for our Subject is this, that shou'd it happen that they shou'd be expos'd to the Knowledge of the whole World, it shall not be for the Shame and Confusion of the Saints who have Committed 'em, but for their Honor and Glory; because the Penance they shall have done for 'em, will at the same time also appear before the Eyes of the whole World. 'Tis this, which God at present do's in regard of very many Saints. For when they speak in the Pulpit of the irregular Life of Saint *Mary Magdalen*, and when even upon her Feast Day, the Gospel is Read in the Church, in which she is call'd a Sinner; and when mention is made of the Adultery of *David*, of the Infidelity of Saint *Peter*, and of the Persecution of Saint *Paul*, against the Church of God: All that

is sayd of the Sins of these great Saints, turn's to their praise; because the rigorous Penances they did for 'em, has increas'd the Glory of our Lord, † *Who draws Honey out of a Rock and Oyl out of the hardest Stone.* Masters of Spirit do ordinarily clear this Point, by a very just comparison. A Man, say they, caus'd a very fine Suit of Cloaths to be made, which was very fit for him; it happen'd that by chance a great hole is torn in 'em; behold his Cloaths seem to be spoil'd, yet he causes the hole to be drawn up and covers it with Gold Lace, or very fine Imbroidery: And by this means, his Suit becomes far more Rich and Magnificent, than it was at first; wherefore if the Sins of the Blessed, shou'd appear at the Day of Judgment 'twill be after this manner; they will be seen so well expiated, that they will rather be to them a Subject of Glory, than Confusion; this rent that their Sins had made in the Robe of the Lamb, shall be well drawn up, and so Richly cover'd over, that it will serve for a greater Ornament unto them. The same thing may be sayd of a Religious Person; who with a great deal of Ingenuity, discovers his Wounds to his Superiour, to be heal'd by him; and expresse a true sorrow for his Faults. The knowledge he gives of his Infirmities and Weaknesses, do's not at all diminish the esteem and affection, which the Superiour had before for him; but on the contrary encreases it: * *For there is a Confusion, says the Wise Man, that carries Sin along with it, and there's a Confusion which causes Glory and esteem.* The Confusion and Shame, which is the occasion we dare not discover our Faults, cast us into Sin and Disorder; but the Confusion which we have for our Faults, when we declare 'em, draws the Esteem of Men, and Blessing of God upon us.

'Tis reported in the Life of Saint Ignatius, that having to no purpose try'd all ways imaginable, to gain a Religious Man, of a very irregular Life, unto God, he at last went and made his Confession to him. After he had Confess'd the Faults he had committed since his last Confession, he told him that with his leave he had a great mind to Confess the chief Sins of his Life past; and then he began to Confess, and to accuse himself of the Weaknesses and Irregularities of his Youth, with so great a Sorrow, and such an abundance of Tears, that on a sudden, the Heart of his Confessour was touch'd, and quite and clean chang'd. For hereupon he found so great a horror for his past disorders,

Tom. III.

F f f

and

† Qui sugit
mel de petra,
oleumque de
fazo durissi-
mo.
Deuter. 32. 13.

* Est enim
confusio addu-
cens pecca-
tum, & est
confusio addu-
cens gloriam,
& gratiam,
Eccl. 4. 25.

and such sentiments of Love and Respect for Saint Ignatius, whom he before hated, that he chose him for his Director, made the Spiritual Exercise under him, and by an intire change of his Life, Edifi'd all those that had before known him. This lets us clearly see, how much they are deceiv'd, who are afraid to discredit themselves with their Superiour, by an humble Confession of their Faults; for that which renders us more pleasing and considerable in God's sight, cannot do us any prejudice with those, who are his Ministers, and regulate themselves by his Example.

From whence I may draw the following consequence, which deserves to be taken notice of, and which is but too true, and 'tis this; when we keep our selves strange and reserv'd, and give not any account of Conscience to our Superiour, 'tis a sign we have no mind to correct our selves, nor to cast off our bad habits. For do you not perceive very well, that if you had a sincere sorrow for your Faults, and had made a firm Resolution to be more faithful to your Duties hereafter, you wou'd do your self no prejudice in the opinion of your Superiour, by opening your self unto him? Because the Declaration you shall make of your Faults, will be accompanied with such a true Repentance, as will give him a very good opinion of you: 'Tis not therefore the not rendring an account of Conscience to our Superiours, but rather the robbing 'em of that knowledge they wou'd thereby have had of us, that lessens us in their esteem; because by the last, they perceive that we think not at all of correcting or amending our Faults.

CHAPTER VIII.

Of another way of Answering the foresaid Difficulty.

THERE is still another manner of answering the difficulty, of the fear we may have of losing the esteem of our Superiour; which is, that if we have truly the Spirit of Humility, we ought to be glad to be known, to be as weak as we are; and therefore there ought to be no other reason than this, to move us to declare our defects, and bad Inclinations to our Superiour; for true Humility not only makes us know and despise our selves, but it makes us also to be glad to be known and despis'd by others. 'Tis true that the obligation of giving an account of Conscience, was establish'd amongst us for other ends; but tho' there shoud be no other advantage to be drawn from it, than that of exercising our selves in the practice of Humility, this alone ought to be sufficient to ingage us, punctually to satisfy this obligation. But if we have not those sentiments of Humility which we ought to have, but on the contrary desire to be esteem'd, and to be promoted to the most considerable employments; I do not at all wonder that upon this account we let our selves be seduc'd by those vain frights, which pride and ambition are wont to suggest; and that we think within our selves, if my defects come to be known to my Superiours, they'll have no more consideration for me, and will never advance me to any extraordinary employments, but I shall always remain in Contempt and Oblivion. Many great Servants of God have often attributed to themselves, not only defects, but even considerable Sins, for fear that any one shoud cast their Eyes upon em, to raise em to any great dignities in the Church; but he who on the contrary endeavours to hide his true Faults, that they may have a better opinion of him than he deserves; and consequently advance

advance him to great employments, is far from resembling these others I spoke of, and clearly manifests, that he has in his Heart no feeling at all of Humility.

We ought moreover to take notice here, of what is very essential; and what I have already touch'd upon elsewhere, which is, that the practice of Humility and Mortification, or of any other vertue whatsoever, to which a Religious Person ought most of all to apply himself, are those in which he cannot fail, without neglecting his Rules at the self same time; because 'tis in the exact observation of our Rules that our Spiritual-Advancement and Perfection do's consist; but if there be not sufficient Humility to perform the Exercises thereof, nor that Mortification also, to which they oblige us; we may be confident, that we have not Humility; for to what end do Humility and Mortification serve, if one to spare himself a little shame, and not to expose himself to have a little less esteem, treads under foot so essential a Rule as that is, which obliges us to discover, the very bottom of our Hearts to our Superiour? We ought, on the contrary, if we had a true Humility, and a true Sorrow for our Defects, willingly to submit our selves to this shame, in satisfaction for them; and they wou'd be so far from hindring us to lay open our Consciences to our Superiour, that they wou'd even move us thereunto. The Example of the Great *Theodosius*, deserves in this to be imitated by all the World: *Rufinus* endeavoring to dissuade him from going to the Church; because Saint *Ambrose* expected him there, with a resolution to hinder him from entering into it. He answer'd, with an Humility worthy a true Christian; for this very reason I will go thither, that the Holy-Bishop may reproach me after such a manner as I deserve. When the Devil wou'd hinder you from addressing your self to your Superiour or Confessor, you must do thus: You must Answer him with Resolution and Courage, I'll go to him, that he may reproach me as I deserve; I'll go to him, that I may have the confusion to be known to be such a one as I am; and that this confusion may help me in some measure to expiate my Sins. Behold here with what Spirit of Humility we ought to declare our defects; behold here an excellent mark, that we are truly sorry for having committed 'em: But when we are more sensible of the shame to discover 'em to a Man, than of the sorrow for having Offended God by them, we are far from those sentiments

of

of Humility, which we ought to have; and if one of our Rules, says, that we ought continually to desire to see our selves charg'd with Injuries, Affronts, false Accusations and all other sorts of Ignominies, without giving any occasion for 'em, in case God shou'd not thereby be Offended: With how far greater reason ought we to desire to be contemn'd, not only when we have given no occasion; and when the thing in question, is to perform an Act of Religion, and to pay an Act of Obedience to one of the most important Rules that we have?

These considerations which I have now touch'd, ought to be sufficient to perswade us to keep nothing hid from our Superiours: But still to render the thing more sensible and palpable, and that it may not seem that we wou'd establish any thing upon such bare Reasons as are drawn from Speculation, I shall take no other course than I took in the precedent Chapter, where I made it appear, that we not only do our selves no prejudice in the esteem of the Superiour, by discovering our selves to him; but on the contrary we thereby gain his esteem and affection; and that those expose themselves to loose it, who make use of a contrary Method: I shall here also add one thing more, which necessarily follows, from all I have already sayd upon this subject: And 'tis this, that when you render a faithful account of your Interior, the Superiour takes a great Confidence in you, and with a great deal of reason; because he knows you to the bottom, and is assur'd, that as soon as any new thing shall pass within you, you will not fail to adress your self to him. But when you discover your self only by halves, which he may easily find out, he cannot any longer take any confidence in you; because he knows not what you have in the bottom of your Heart; so that he is necessitated always to observe you, and to have his Eyes continually upon you. Moreover, this reason deserves extreamly to be taken notice of; because the contrary proceeding, may give occasion on both sides, of a great deal of disquiet and bitterness; which wou'd not happen, had there been an intire freedom and open heartedness with the Superiour. Experience daily teaches us, that this openness and freedom of Heart, helps extreamly to a Reconciliation of Minds, and do's destroy many Imaginations and Suspitions, which one may have of another; either Superiours of Inferiours, or Inferiours of Superiours. Moreover the same happens here, as it do's in certain Objects,

which

which seem frightful, when they are but half seen either by Night, or a far off; for when you have the courage to approach 'em, you'll find that what appear'd a Fantome, was perhaps only a Branch of a Tree, or some other thing like it. You have certain Imaginations and Diffidences that make you apprehend your Superiour: Go to him, take Courage to inform your self, and to open your Heart to him, and you'll find all your Imaginations and Diffidences very ill grounded. *Seneca* speaking of the Resolution, with which we ought to push our selves forward to great Actions, says very well, That if we had but the Courage to undertake 'em, we shou'd find 'em less difficult, than we, to our selves had figur'd 'em to have been. And lastly add's, * *We want not Courage, because the things are hard; but they are hard, because we want Courage.* Upon this account also, he makes use of the same comparison, that I just now brought; and citing *Virgil*, who call these Fantomes and Night-shades, † *Dreadful Figures to be look'd upon*, takes notice that he do's not call 'em dreadful or terrible in effect, but terrible only in appearance; wherefore to shew that all this appearance has nothing in it self that is, dreadful or terrible, we must only approach it, and thereby we shall be convinc'd that 'tis nothing. 'Tis the same of those suspicions and imaginations I just now spoke of.

* Non quia
Difficilia sunt
non audemus,
sed quia non
audemus diffi-
cilia sunt.
Senec. Epist.
104. de morte.

† Terribiles
visu formæ.
Virg. Æneid.
lib. 6.

C H A P.

CHAP. IX.

That we have a great obligation to God, for having render'd this account of Conscience amongst us so easie, and what is the cause of this facility.

CERTAINLY we have great reason to give thanks to God for this Practice, he has establish'd amongst us, of intirely discovering our Conscience to our Superiour, and for the sweet and easie manner, with which we acquit our selves, of a thing, which in it self is far harder, than all other Penances and Exterior Mortifications whatsoever. We may easily Judge of this difficulty by that which is found in the Sacrament of Penance, which all Christians, generally speaking, find to be of so great a Constraint and Subjection, that 'tis harder than all the rest of their Obligations; so that to render this Constraint more easie and supportable, 'twas necessary to oblige the Confessor by the Divine Law, even under pain of Sacrilege, to keep an inviolable Secrer thereof; yet notwithstanding Confession ceases not to give such a pain, to many People in the World, that rather than to Confess their Sins, they choose to deliver themselves up to all those Remorses of Conscience, and those frights, of what will happen for the future, which are also at present very terrible, and even equal to all that cruelty which the pains themselves of Hell Eternally contain. But that which you do, when you discover the bottom of your Soul to your Superiour, is still something more, than what is practis'd in Confession; because we not only declare to him our Sins, and all that which is matter of Confession, but discover also many other things, and oftentimes such weaknesses, as we have a greater repugnance to make known, or to accuse our selves of, than of our Sins themselves; and what is still more, all this is done out of Confession, wherefore

wherefore that a thing, which is of it self so hard, and at the same time so profitable and useful, shou'd become by the Mercy of God so sweet and easie; is a favor, for which we can never give him sufficient thanks.

But let us see a little, what is the cause, that this Practice is so easie amongst us; the first and chief cause, is the Grace of the Religion, to which we have been call'd; because God as I have already sayd elsewhere, gives to each Religious Order those particular helps, that are necessary for the end for which he has Instituted it; and 'tis this, which I call the Grace of Religion. Since therefore we are oblig'd by our Institute, to be always ready to go to any part of the World, where Obedience shall imploy us for the help of Souls, and to Converse with all sorts of People; that the Superiour may not be deceiv'd, in the choice of those Subjects, he shall make use of for this effect, 'tis necessary that he shou'd have an intire knowledge of us; which he can never have, if we our selves do not intirely discover our selves to him. From hence also it happens, that tho' this Manifestation of Conscience, be a thing very painful of it self, and very troublesome; yet God by a particular help of his Grace, renders it very easie and comfortable.

The second reason of the Sweetness and Facility we find in it, is the manner wherewith Superiours treat those, that address themselves to them for this end; they receive them as their Children, with the tenderness and bounty of a Father; in such a manner as they seem even to apply themselves to nothing else, but to give them Comfort; and without doubt, 'tis of very great importance they shou'd do so, and that Subjects shou'd be intirely perswaded, that as often as they shall have recourse to them, they shall thus be treated with bounty and sweetness; for this being so, they address themselves to them with all kind of Confidence; whereas if they apprehended to meet with harshness and dryness from 'em, this apprehension might hinder 'em from Manifestation; but the assurance which still they ought to promise themselves, that they shall always find all sorts of that good treatment, which Superiours are oblig'd to give them, according to the obligation of their charge; moves 'em to come to them: Which if Superiours do not perform, they neglect one of their chief Obligations.

Saint Bernard upon these words of the Canticles; † *We will rejoyce and exult in thee, remembering thy Breasts, which are more excellent than Wine.* Which contain a very profitable Advertisement to Superiours, touching the Conduct they ought to have toward their Inferiours; * *Let Superiours,* says he, *who always seek to make themselves fear'd by those that are under their Charge, and seldom make themselves pleasing or profitable to them, hearken to this; come hither and learn Instructions, yee that Judge the Earth, learn here that yee ought to become like Mothers, and not Masters to your Inferiours; study therefore to make your selves be below'd, rather than to make your selves fear'd; and if 'tis necessary sometimes to use severity, let it be the severity of a Father, and not of a Tyrant. Shew your selves to be Mothers by your tenderness, and Fathers by your Correction, render your selves affable; lay aside what may appear Austerity, be not forward in Chastising, reach out your helping Hand to those in necessity, be fill'd with the Sentiments and Affection of a Mother, and not puffed up with the tumours and swellings of Pride, and Authority of Commanding.* The same Saint recites upon this Subject, the words of the Apostle. † *My Brethren if any one falls into any Defect, yee that are Spiritual, Reprehend him with the Spirit of Sweetness, each one making reflection upon himself, lest he himself comes also to be Tempted.* And these others also of Ezechiel, * *The Wicked Man shall Dye in his Iniquity: But I will require of thee an account of his Blood.* Wo be to Superiours, add's he, who receive not their Subjects with Sweetness, when they address themselves to them in their Temptations and Weaknesses; Wo be to them who Reject or Check 'em, and shew not the Bowels of a Father towards 'em. For if any one comes to grow worse by your Harshness, as it often happens, and thereby comes to perish, God will require an account of his Soul from you; wherefore tho' the Superiour shou'd have regard only to himself, yet he ought to apply himself to perform his Duty well, that you may do yours in like manner, and that he may not make himself accountable for your Faults.

Thirdly, that which renders this Practice easie amongst us, is the frequent and general use, that is made thereof, so that we may make use herein of a consideration, like to that Saint *Austin* made use of, when the difficulty he fear'd, of being able to keep Chastity, came into his

Tom. III.

G g g

Mind,

† Exultabimus,
& letabimur
in te; memo-
riam uberrimam
super
vinum.

Cant. 1. 3.
* Audiant hoc
Prælati, qui
sibi commissis
semper volunt
esse formidini,
raro utilitati.
Erudimini qui
iudicatis ter-
ram.

Psal. 2. 10.
Fugite subdi-
torum matres
vos esse debe-
re, non domi-
nos. Studete
magis amari
quam metui;
& si interdum
esse formidini
est, paternum
sit, non ty-
rannicum. Ma-
tres fovendo,
patres vos cor-
ripiendo ex-
hibeat. Man-
fescite: po-
nite feritatem,
suspendite ver-
bera, produci-
te ubera; pec-
tora lacte
pinguescant,
non typho
turgant.

Bern. serm. 23.
in Cant.

† Fratres, & si
præoccupatus
fuerit homo
in aliquo de-
licto, vos qui
spirituales
estis, hujus-
modi instruite
in spiritu leni-
tatis; confi-
derans teip-
sum, ne & tu
tenteris.

Gal. 6. 1.
* Ipse impius
in iniquitate
sua morietur,
sanguinem au-
tem eius de
manu tua re-
quiram.
Ezech. 3. 18.

* August. lib. 8.
Confess. c. 12.

Mind, to hinder the design he had to Convert himself to God. He says, that he then represented Contingency to himself, under the Figure of a Venerable Matron, that was surrounded with many Persons, of all sorts of Sects, Age or Quality, that Liv'd after a very Chast manner, who shew'd these to him; mocking of him and saying to him, is it this you are not able to perform, which so many Persons Practice? Or do you believe that what they are able to do, that they do it by their own Strength, and not rather by his, who is All-powerful? And he assures us, that this Consideration help'd extremely to give him Courage. Do the same thing in order to Manifestation of Conscience, which you ought to make to your Superiour; and when the Devil shall represent it to you as hard, say to your self what then, am not I able to do what others perform? Must I dispence with my self in doing what so many other Religious, who are more Ancient, more Knowing, more Prudent and more Enlighten'd than my self, do. Daily Practice? This Consideration will easily take away all Difficulties, which not only hinder us when we have a pain to Practice any thing, but it will make us even to be in pain, when we do not Practice it; because 'twill be a shame and give great disedification, to fail in the performance of that, which all the World Practices, wherefore we ought all of us to endeavour, to maintain in force and vigor, so holy a Practice as this is, that the Example of one, may help to encourage others: But above all, as those that are more Ancient in Religion, and more Advanc'd in Knowledge, are capable of doing much good or hurt by their Discourse or Example, so 'tis chiefly their duty, to endeavour to maintain such sorts of Practices, by these two means; because all take notice of what they say, and what they approve; and ordinarily regulate themselves after their Example. I add moreover to what I have already say'd; that it very much imports each one in particular, to Exercise himself in this Manifestation of Conscience; because hereby the Practice will become easie, whereas if he do's not Exercise himself therein, in a short time he will find it very hard. 'Tis this which happens in regard of other Exercises of Humility and Mortification, and even in regard of Confession, which ordinarily gives a great deal of pain to those, who Confess but once a Year; and on the contrary gives a great deal of Ease and Sweetness to those, that Confess often.

One thing, which also contributes very much to render this Practice Easie, is to know, that by giving an account to our Superiour or Prefect of Spirit of our Consciences, we give it not to a Judge, from whom we may fear to be punish'd; but to a Father, from whom we expect Comfort and Consolation; and in whose good Counsel we hope to find a remedy for our Disease; wherefore by whatsoever we can declare in this manner we run no risque of Punishment, any more, than we do by what we declare in Confession; because these two Tribunals are of the same nature, and what is practis'd in the one, is consequently practis'd in the other.

Cap. 4. Exam.
§. 35.

Lastly, that which extremely facilitates Manifestation of Conscience, and which very much confirms all that I have already sayd, is, that our Superiour is expressly oblig'd by our Constitutions, to keep as an inviolable Secret, whatsoever is sayd to him. Wherefore you may be assur'd, that what you shall say to your Superiour, in giving an account of your Conscience, will only remain in his own Breast, without any one else ever knowing it; and without your ever receiving any prejudice thereby. Moreover tho' they are already oblig'd, under pain of Mortal Sin to guard a Secret of this Nature, yet Father General *Aquaviva* has taken care, by his most Wise and more severe Ordinations, still more to oblige 'em to Secrecie in this Point. For he ordains that a Superiour, that shall Violate this Secret, shall be rigorously Punish'd, and depos'd from his Office, and he would also not only have all the Religious be advertis'd of this Ordination. But would have 'em also know that there is a precise Ordination for the punctual execution of this, against any Person whatsoever. And as to take away the difficulty of People from Confessing themselves, 'twas necessary to oblige all Confessours by all ways imaginable, Religiously to keep the Secret thereof, so that we might have no difficulty to discover our Conscience to our Superiour, Father *Aquaviva* judg'd, that he cou'd not put too many Precautions, to prevent Superiours from Revealing, what was confided to them after this manner. I know not, says he, whether ever any thing can happen, that can be of greater Prejudice to the good of the Society than this, which proposes rather to draw it's Subjects to Perfection, by the Interior way of Spirit, than by that of Publick Penances

Claud. Aquaviva in instruct. de paternae exigenda ratione conscientiae à subditis, & secreti fide servanda.

and Mortifications; and by these his words, 'tis easie for Superiours to judge what prejudice they will do their Order, if ever they permit any thing to esCAPE out of their Mouths, of what has been declar'd to them in Manifestation of Conscience.

C H A P. X.

After what manner we ought to render an account of Conscience.

† Effunde sicut aquam cor tuum ante conspectum Domini.
Tren. 2. 19.

† **P**OUR out your Heart as Water in the Presence of the Lord. Says the Prophet Jeremy, and these words explicate admirable well, after what manner we ought to pour out our Hearts into the bosom of our Superiours. It ought to be, as if we pour'd out a Pitcher of Water: When we pour Oyl out of any Vessel, there always rests something in the bottom; and when 'tis Wine or Vinegar we pour out, the Vessel retains at least the smell thereof, but if we empty a Pitcher of Water, there remains neither smell nor any thing in the bottom; it has no more smell nor tast, than if nothing had been in it. 'tis after this manner, that you must pour out your Heart, in giving an account of your Conscience; you must do it so, as nothing may remain behind, no not the least sent of any thing whatsoever.

Reg. 4. commun.

Since this Point is of very great importance, and one of the chiefest means we have, for the Spiritual Advancement of our Souls; our Holy Founder requires, that besides the accounts of Conscience, that we render all the Year long, we shou'd be particularly oblig'd, to render one every six Months, which shou'd comprise that whole time; and that this shou'd always be done before the Renovation of Vows. And 'tis after this manner, that it has been always Practis'd in the SOCIETY, and from the time of the Fourth General Congregation, there is a Rule made hereof. Which is inserted amongst the Common Rules; which ordains, that as Saint Ignatius requires at the times of Renovation, besides

besides the frequent Confessions that are made before; we should then make a General Confession, from the time of the last Renovation; so he would have us also, besides the Accounts of Conscience, which we render from time to time, give then a general account from the last six foregoing Months; for he thought he cou'd not give a better means than this, for the Renovation, and the Regeneration of the Interior Man. And Father *Aquaviva* mov'd by the same Spirit, earnestly recommends the same means, in his Instruction to Visitors. † If Subjects, says he, give an account of their Conscience as they ought to do, and Superiours on their side receive also as they ought, the account given 'em by their Subjects; this will without doubt be of great efficacy, to renew in us a Spiritual Life, and to contribute to our Spiritual Progress. These words agree admirably well with what Saint Basil says, * That if Subjects have a desire to make any considerable progress in Virtue, and to arrive to Perfection; they ought to keep nothing hid from their Superiours; because by an intire Manifestation of our selves, it will happen that they will confirm us in what is good, and will suggest convenient Remedies for what is bad within us; and so by means of this Reciprocal Communication, we shall by little and little arrive to Perfection. As when Water is very clear, we see the least Gravel or Sand in the bottom; so our Manifestation ought to be so clear, that our Superiour may be able to see even the least Defects and Imperfections, which are in the bottom of our Soul.

Hereupon there is a very good Instruction given us, which will very much help to render things more easie; and I take notice upon this occasion, that of the two chief Parts it contains, the first, which is as a Preface and Introduction, is the most considerable; because it contains in substance, the whole fortieth Rule of the Summary of the Constitutions: In which the obligation of rendering an account of Conscience, and the manner of doing it, are fully set down; first each Religious is exhorted in this Preface to consider, after what manner, Saint *Ignatius* speaks of this Obligation in the Constitutions; and tis afterwards added, that then all Religious, either in Confession or otherwise, as they shall choose, and may be most to their Comfort, must take care intirely to discover the bottom of their Soul, without keeping any thing to themselves, in which they have Offended God, from the last six Months that they gave an account of their Conscience;

† Et si sicut oportet a subditis reddatur, & a superioribus accipitur, magnum proculdubio momentum habebit, ad spiritus renovationem, & augmentum. *Claud. Aquav.* ubi sup.

* Debet unusquisque eorum qui inferiores sunt, siquidem memorabilem aliquam facere progressionem studet, & ad perfectionem pervenire, nullum animi motum sui apud seipsum celatum retinere: Hoc enim modofiet, ut & quod laude dignum sit, in nobis confirmetur; & quod minus probandum, congruo remedio sanetur; atque ex hujusmodi mutua exercendi inter nos consuetudine, per modicas accessiones ad perfectionem perveniamus. *Basil. in quest. fus. disput. respons. 26.*

Conscience; or at least that they make known those Faults, to which they are most of all subject. But I at present affirm, that 'tis in this, that all that is of greatest importance in this matter do's consist, and that he who shall fail in what is set down in this first Part, would not give a good account of his Conscience, tho' he should afterwards observe whatsoever is set down in the Second, which contains fourteen Points.

Moreover 'tis not necessary to run over 'em all, to prove this Truth; 'tis necessary only to take one of the chief; let us take, for Example, the third, which is to give an account of our Temptations, Passions and bad Inclinations; one of the chief things of which we are to give an account, says the Rule, is of our Temptations. After what manner we resist 'em, what we do to resist 'em, and of the Facility and Difficulty, we find in overcoming 'em; and so after the same manner in regard of our Passions and bad Inclinations; behold here, all that is contain'd in the third Point, and all that there is upon this subject, in all the Second Part of this Instruction. Now I Demand at present, whether in rendering a good account of our Conscience, and to make known the State of our Soul to our Spiritual Father, concerning the Point we just now spoke of, 'tis not enough to tell him all our Temptations and all the bad Inclinations we find within our selves? I Answer no, by no means; but we ought also to render an account of all our Failings and how often we have done so; for 'tis a quite different thing, to say I am Naturally prone to Pride, and to say, I am so Naturally given to it, that I did such and such a thing, purely to gain esteem; and I endeavour'd to dispence with my self in such a thing I was Commanded, which gave me a Difficulty; not that it was very hard of it self, but because it was uneasy to my Vanity. There is also a great Difficulty between saying I am Cholerick and Impatient; and that I was so Cholerick and Impatient, that I fell into a Passion, and did or sayd what might Scandalize my Brethren: And lastly there is a great difference between saying, I have had Temptations against Purity; and that I have even entertain'd my self in 'em, or given consent to them. There is a far different judgment to be made between him who consents to a Temptation, and him who resists it with courage; and the Remedies that are to be prescrib'd or employ'd for the cure of

of the one, are far different, from those that are to be made use of, to fortifie the other: For as when a Physician treats a Patient that is Sick of a Fever; 'tis necessary he shou'd know whether the Sick Person be Naturally strong or robust, or whether he be delicate and feeble; because the Fever is differently to be treated, according to the difference of Constitutions; so it imports very much, that your Spiritual Physician shou'd know your Interior strength and weakness, that he may know how to treat you, and prescribe fit Remedies for you; wherefore 'tis not sufficient that you only render an account of your Temptations and bad Inclinations, unless you also give, an account of your Failings in them; because 'tis according as you have fallen or resisted 'em, that he judges of your strength and weakness; and this is the reason, that in the one and fortyth Rule of the Summary, where it treats of this matter, 'tis expressly sayd, that we must not only discover to our Superiours our Temptations, but also our neglects and failings.

P. 3. c. 1. §. 12.
Const. reg. 41.
summ.

The self same thing is in like manner declar'd in the Preface of the Instruction I now speak of, which has in exprets terms, that we must intirely discover to our Superiours the bottom of our Soul, without hiding any thing, in which we have Offended God; or at least, we ought to make known the Faults, to which we are most of all subject. There is nothing sayd like this, in the fourteen following Points, so that if we shou'd only stick to what they prescribe, it wou'd be to reduce one of the most important and considerable Rules that we have, to a pure Formality and Ceremony. Moreover this Observation may generally serve all the World; because it gives 'em a knowledge, how they are to give an account of Conscience to their Ghostly Fathers.

To proceed herein yet with more Clarity and Integrity, we must not be contented to declare our Faults in General, but to specify them in Particular; because 'tis hereby only, that we can make our selves clearly known; and this is also a very good advice for what concerns Confession: For as you ought not to content your self to say I have let my self be carried away with Faults against Purity, but you ought to discover how far you let your self be carried; and tho' the things of which you accuse your self, shou'd be only Venial Sins, which are not necessary matter of Confession, yet notwithstanding, since you Confess 'em, as 'tis fit you

you shou'd, 'tis not sufficient to express 'em in general terms, which always hides some of the Fault, but to specify them in particular; which is a means whereby to make the grievousness of the Sin, more clearly appear. For proof of this, is it not certain, that it do's not at all make known our Fault, to accuse our selves in general, to have let slip some words of Impatience and Passion, when the words are such, that by expressing 'em, they make the Fault appear far greater? Is it not also very true, that when one has fail'd in Obedience, that the Fault ought to be specify'd after such a manner, as may make the quality thereof appear the greater, and may give a more distinct knowledge thereof? I say the self same thing, of that account of Conscience, we ought to render to our Superiours; we must not render it after a general manner, nor make use of Circumlocutions to express our selves, but must declare 'em clearly, intirely and sincerely, without omitting any thing that may serve to make known the State of our Soul; without leaving out any thing which is not expos'd to their View; and without omitting the least Fould or Wrinkle, that we do not explain. 'Tis in these Foulds and Wrinkles that ordinarily the Dust stick's, and * *God wou'd, says Saint Paul, make himself a Church, that shou'd be full of Glory, where there shou'd not be the least Spot or Wrinkle, nor any thing like it, but that it shou'd be Holy and Immaculate.* We must according to these words, neither have Fould or Wrinkle in our Soul, but all shou'd be as Smooth, Plain and Clear, as a Looking-glass.

* Ut exhiberet ipse sibi gloriosam Ecclesiam, non habentem maculam, aut rugam, aut aliquid hujusmodi, sed ut sit sancta & immaculata, Ephes. 5. 27.

Saint Ignatius requires such an exact and intire account of Conscience; of each Religious as this, when he Enters into the SOCIETY; and will have him at that time discover not only his bad Inclinations and Sins, to which he is then most subject, but also the bad Inclinations which he has heretofore had; the Sins into which he has ofteneft fallen, and the Vices which heretofore have caus'd the greatest disorders in his Soul: To inform a Physician very well, and to make him be able to form a right Judgment of our Disease, and to apply such Remedies, which in curing one Distemper, may not occasion another; we must give him an account, not only of the Distemper which we have at present; but of all those to which we have been subject at other times; 'tis the same thing here, if you wou'd have your Spiritual Physician be well inform'd of your Interior

Interior State, you must give him a Faithful account, not only of those bad habits and inclinations that you have at present, but also of all your past Disorders; because they help to make him know the cause, and even the source or origin of your Distemper. 'Tis for this reason that we ordinarily Counsel him who would make a General Confession, to make choice for this end of the Confessour, that he designs constantly to Confess to; and the reason of this is, that the Confessour may have a more perfect knowledge of the Soul of his Penitent, and labour more profitably in the direction thereof. For oftentimes Impure Temptations, which we are tormented; and the Rebellion of the Flesh against the Spirit, are the relicks and consequences of past Irregularities, and the Punishment of that Licentious Life we have heretofore led; and therefore in whatsoever Retreat or Retirement we live in, sometimes in Punishment of our bad Habits, to which heretofore we have abandon'd our selves, 'twill happen, that we shall be tormented by these kinds of Rebellions and Involuntary Motions. Wherefore as to this Point, all that we have to do, is to humble our selves before God, taking this occasion, to enter into lively Sentiments of Sorrow and Confusion, not only in regard of what is present, but also of what is past; and by this means, we shall receive no prejudice by such Impure Morions, as the force of Temptation shall excite in us.

In the last place, we must here take notice, that to render an account of Conscience, and to make a general Confession, are quite distinct things amongst us; as may be seen by the different Rules we have, concerning these two obligations; and also by the end and matter of each one, which are also, very different. Notwithstanding 'tis very certain, that every one has liberty to render an account of Conscience either in, or out of Confession, as he pleases; and as he shall believe 'twill be most for his Comfort; and our Constitutions declare the same in exprefs terms: But, 'tis also very good, to make Reflection upon one thing, that Father *Aguaviva* says upon this Subject, in his Instruction to Visitors, which I shall set down here word for word, by reason of the great importance of the matter, who after having taken notice of the difference that there is between the account of Conscience, and Confession; and after having sayd, that each one may, if he pleases, give an account of Conscience in Confession, he add's, * *Since therefore we ought not to constrain our*

* Quare ut non sunt cogendi nostri ad rationem conscientie

Tom. III.

H h h

Religious

reddendam extra confessionem, cum constitutio id liberum permittat pro cuiusque consolatione: ita laudandi, qui semotis his, quæ ad confessionem propriè spectant, quæque in confessione Superiori manifestari poterunt, extra confessionem eam reddunt, quosque seipsum patefaciunt, quod liberius, & absque ullo respectu, superiores ad illorum directionem, & utiliore gubernationem eâ notitiâ uti possint.

Idem omnino habetur in instr. resus. tan. ex Congregat. 6. gener. instr. 3. cap. 2. v. 2.

Religious to give an account of Conscience out of Confession; because the Constitutions leaves an entire Liberty herein, for each on's particular Comfort; yet we ought to praise those, who, excepting the things that belong properly to Confession, and which they may afterwards discover to their Superiour in Confession, give an account of their Conscience out of Confession; and let themselves be seen to the bottom; that the Superiour, not being constrain'd in any respect whatsoever, may freely make use of this knowledge, for the advantage of their direction, and the greater Glory of God. 'Tis better therefore to give an account of Conscience out of Confession, whereby we testify to have a greater Confidence in our Superiour; like as a Man by putting many Precious Stones, into the Hand of his Friend to keep, testifies a greater Confidence, than if he had given 'em lock'd up in a strong Box.

C H A P. XI.

Wherein several difficulties are answer'd, resulting from what has been sayd in the foregoing Chapters.

SOME difficulties result from all that I have already sayd, which may present themselves to our Minds; and therefore 'tis necessary to endeavour to remove them. The first is, that as on the one side, I have sayd in one place, that 'tis better to give account of Conscience out of Confession; and in another, I have taken notice, that we must not only declare our Temptations and bad Inclinations, but also our Falls, thou'd we happen to have been guilty of any, and that without this, we do not render a good account of Conscience. Wherefore thou'd it happen, that God by withdrawing his Grace thou'd permit, that any Religious by giving way to Temptation, thou'd fall into some grievous and shameful Sin, I ask whether it be possible, that the Rule thou'd oblige us

to

to give an account hereof to our Superiour out of Confession, since this seems a very hard and difficult Practice, and generally speaking, very few wou'd be able to submit thereunto? To this I answer, that the Intention of the Rule and of our Founder, do not oblige, that in this case we shou'd declare our Sin out of Confession; but on the contrary 'tis chiefly to take away this constraint, that the Rule, of which I have spoken, do's establish the alternative, and gives liberty to accuse our selves of our Sins, either in, or out of Confession, according as we shall desire. The Rules of the Provincial expressly contain the same thing, for after having sayd, that when any Religious Person has given an account of his Conscience, the Superiour may ask him what Questions he shall judge fit. they presently add; how that he ought to have this reserve also, to ask no body out of Confession, about such things as are very difficult or shameful to Confess; *For when the things of themselves are of such a Nature, that it seems that we are affraid to say them out of Confession;* we shall then do a great deal better, to keep 'em for the Tribunal of Confession, and not only the Superiour or Spiritual Father ought never to ask any Question out of it, about these sorts of things; but even they ought not to permit 'em, to speak to them thereof out of Confession. Chast Ears ought not to hear such things as these out of Confession; and therefore 'tis good to reserve for Confession, all that we may have to say upon this matter. 'Tis what Father General *Aquaviva* wou'd admonish us of, by the words set down in the precedent Chapter, for in saying that 'tis better to give account of Conscience out of Confession, he excepts such things as properly regard Confession.

The second difficulty is of greater importance than the first; for as I have sayd on the one side, and Saint *Ignatius* in his Constitutions expressly says the same thing, that one of the reasons why we are oblig'd to give an account of Conscience, is that Superiours knowing perfectly well those that are under their Conduct, may be the better able to provide, for what regards the good of each Religious Person in particular, and the advantage of the whole SOCIETY in general. So I have also sayd elsewhere, that the same Constitutions permit each one, to give an account of Conscience in the Tribunal of Confession: So that they may with reason object, that the general Government of the

H h h 2

SOCIETY,

*Quamvis quæ
hominem pu-
dore multum
afficerent, ea
extra confes-
sionem interro-
ganda non
essent.
In fine regulæ
provincialis.*

Cland. Aquariva in Ordin.
impress
P. Suarez tom.
4 in 3 p. de
penit. disp. 13.
c. 33 sect. 7.
Sanchez tom. 1.
de Matr. l. 3.
disp. 16. q. 1.

SOCIETY, is founded from the Lights that Superiours draw from Confessions; and in effect, some Persons not well understanding the manner, that the SOCIETY governs it self herein, have permitted themselves to be extreemly thock'd by this objection. To answer to which, I say first, that the SOCIETY is so far from regulating it's Conduct by the Confessions of it's Religious, that even Father General *Aquariva*, perceiving that some Divines held that a Confessour, without violating the Seal of Confession, might make use of what was reveal'd to him in Confession in certain Cases, rejects this opinion in his Ordinations, and very severely forbids, either to Teach or Follow it. Nay he even commands all the Confessours of the SOCIETY, that as to those things that are reveal'd to them in Confession, they always carry themselves so, as if they had never come to their knowledge; and this is intirely conformable, to a Decree that Clement the VIII. made four Years after, upon the same matter; and of which Father *Francis Suarez*, and many others make mention. But the SOCIETY still observes more strict measures than these; for it ordains all Superiours, carefully to keep Secret all those things that shall be sayd to them in giving an account of Conscience, wherefore if they wou'd have us have so great Circumspection, in the things which they understand in the Tribunal of Confession, what reserve do they not exact, in such things as belong to it, what care therefore ought not they to take, to hinder Confession from becoming odious, and that they commit not a Sacriledge, against the inviolability of such a Secret?

Cap. Quid
quidam de pen-
itentis &
remissionibus.

I Answer in the second place that there is no inconvenience at all to make use of Confession, for the Interior Government of Souls. On the contrary 'tis one of the greatest Fruits and Advantages that can be drawn from it. For as the Penitent do's then discover all the Wounds and Infirmities of his Soul. The Spiritual Physician who is the Confessour, may be better able to Judge what Remedies are proper, and what Conduct he ought to cause him to take for the future. This truth is so evident, that Pope *Alexander* the III. speaking of certain habitual Sinners, who even in the Tribunal of Confession, declare that they are not able to hinder themselves from falling back into the like Disorders, and consequently are incapable of Absolution; because they have not a true desire, to renounce or quit their Sin,

Sinners Confessours to hearken their Confessions; that they may have an occasion to give themselves good Counsel for their Direction and Salvation. He also exhorts Sinners, who are in this bad Disposition, not to neglect Confession, tho' Absolution ought to be refused 'em; and Counsels 'em to Confess themselves of all their Sins, and Disorders of their Life, and also of that bad Disposition, they then begin withal to Confession. He Commands Ghostly Fathers also to receive, and to hear 'em; and with Bounty and Sweetness to give 'em afterwards good Counsel, and wholesome Instructions. Because it will perhaps happen, that by this means their Hearts coming to be touch'd, they will quit the occasions. And lastly by means of this Practice of Humility, and such good Works as their Confessour shall recommend to them, to Practice, God will open their Eyes, and move 'em intirely to renounce their Sin, and to make a good Confession. Wherefore 'tis not a new Institution, but a very Ancient and approv'd Practice of the Church, to make use of Confession, as a very useful means to lead Souls the better, into the way of Salvation.

Lib. 3. cap. 1.

We Read in the Life of Saint *Ignatius*, that the first Fathers of the Society, having chosen him into two different Assemblies for General, he for a long time refus'd to accept it, as judging himself incapable of that charge. Yet they press'd him on all sides, signifying to him, that to persist in refusing it, was to resist the Will of God, which sufficiently appear'd by their unanimous Suffrages. But by whatsoever they cou'd say, they cou'd then gain no Consent from him; so that it was necessary to make use of an expedient, which he himself propos'd, and which he here set down. I will put, says he, this affair intirely into the Hands of my Ghostly Father; I will declare to him all the Sins that I ever committed, all the bad Habits and Inclinations to which I am subject, and lastly all my Weaknesses and Infirmities, both Corporal and Spiritual, as well past as present; and if after this he Commands or Counsels me in the Name of *JESUS CHRIST*, to charge myself with so heavy a Burden, I'll Obey without reply. He did as he had say'd, he enter'd for some Days into a retreat; at the end of which, he made an General Confession to a Holy Religious Man of the Order of Saint *Francis*. Call'd Father *Theophilus*, of whom he ask'd, after he had ended it, whether or no he shou'd accept of the Election that was made

of him: And the Answer being given him, that he ought to accept it; and that otherwise he wou'd resist the Holy Ghost; he made no longer any difficulty to submit himself thereto. Now I ask, whether any one can be so malicious, as to find any thing, in this to reproach the conduct of Saint Ignatius, and so suspect it as Hypocrisie? I certainly believe that no body can speak of it, without praising it, as in effect it deserves; and as 'tis prais'd by all that writes his Life. But our Saviour who made use of this means, to conduct our Founder and our Head, taught him to put the same in Practice for our whole Body; and therefore the custom of declaring to our Superiour, in or out of Confession, all our Vicious Inclinations, Faults and Imperfections; is a means given us by God, that the Superiour may be able the better to conduct us in the way of Perfection, to which we make Profession to Aspire.

This being so, I say, that in this which regards the Exterior and Politick Government of the SOCIETY, we can by no means make use of Confessions; but as to what regards the Interior and Spiritual conduct of Souls, 'tis very proper, and even very necessary to make use thereof in the manner I have set down. Do not we also see that 'tis a very common Practice, throu'out the whole Church, that when we have any doubt or difficulty concerning our Interior conduct, that we address our selves to a Prudent and Learned Confessor, and confer with him about it, either in, or out of Confession, that we may receive his Advice and Counsel? Which was precisely the design of Saint Ignatius, when he left it to the choice of his Religious, to give an account of their Conscience, either in, or out of Confession; 'tis not therefore by following the Lights which they draw from Confessions, whetby they make or appoint Rectors; or that they receive Persons to their Professions; or that they provide for all the Offices of the SOCIETY; for 'twou'd be very ill done, to make use of it in this manner; as 'twou'd be also very ill, to harbour such an Opinion as this of Superiours.

We ought moreover here to take notice, of what is very Essential and of great Importance, which is, that a Religious Man may find himself in such a Disposition, and so many circumstances may meet together, that his Confessor may oblige him in Conscience, and under pain of Sin, to go to desire his Superiour, not to put him into such an employment; or not to send him into such a Mission; or

to take him out of such an occasion: Declaring to him at the same time, the danger he may thereby be expos'd to, by reason of his Weakness. What better, or more convenient means, can be given to a Religious Person in such an occasion as this, than to oblige him to lay open his Conscience to his Superiour? Because then he will be able sweetly to take him out of the occasion, without letting his honor suffer thereby in any thing; and the Superiour will be hinder'd from exposing him to such dangers, as may be above his forces. And at the same time, both secure his Honor and Conscience. It also sometimes happens, that we are not certain, whether we shall expose ourselves to danger or not; but yet we are afraid and doubt of it, and then nothing is a greater ease to our Mind, and a greater Comfort, than to propose our Doubts and Difficulties to our Superiour, and to put our selves intirely into his Hands. For if after this, they engage you in any imployment which you shou'd be afraid, might be dangerous to your Salvation, the danger will no longer fall upon your self, as it wou'd have done, if you had sayd nothing; but will intirely fall upon your Superiour; and God who perceives that you have done as much as you cou'd on your side, will tend you his assistance, and give you force to acquit your self well, of what is commanded you.

In the third place I further answer, that the Rule which permits us to give an account of Conscience in Confession, is still better, as I have already sayd, than to give an account of Conscience out of Confession; and that as amongst us, each of us knows, 'tis better to make this use of it, so each of us also generally speaking, imbraces that which is the best; and consequently we ought not to suspect that the Government of Superiours, shou'd be ground'd upon what has been Reveal'd to them in Confession; because 'tis ordinarily out of Confession, that we give an account of Conscience. But be it suppos'd that any one wou'd give an account of Conscience in Confession, can we imagine that there shou'd be any Religious so great an Enemy to Perfection, as not to be glad when he has sayd any thing in Confession to the Superiour, that the Superiour shou'd make use thereof to take him out of the occasions of falling into Sin, and of more securely leading him into the way of Salvation? For so long as the Superiour proceeds with all that Prudence and Circumspection that is necessary, and that

that nothing can happen that is not for the good of
 our Religion, and that no body can be able thereby to
 know, the Faults into which he has fallen, 'tis certain that
 the Religious gains very much hereby, for tho' all Subjects
 of the Society are willingly mov'd to give an account
 of Conscience and of Confessions, that the Superiour being
 oblig'd to constrain none of respect to Confession, may more
 freely make use of the knowledge they give of themselves
 for their Spiritual Advancement and Salvation; yet 'tis
 also true to say, that even for the Spiritual and Interior
 conduct of souls, 'tis not practis'd in the Society,
 to make use of Confessions, tho' they may Lawfully and
 Piously do so, but that ordinarily for this effect, they make
 use of what they know out of Confession.

D. Bonav. de
 sexuali Sero-
 phim.

Our Saint Bonaventura, teaches the self same Doctrine that we
 hold; and says that 'tis of great importance, that the Su-
 periour should know the Conscience of those that are un-
 der his charge, as also their Inclinations and Habits, and
 the extent of their Spiritual and Corporal forces, that he
 may the better know how to govern 'em; and as all Per-
 sons are not equally fit for all things, so he may the
 better also distribute the burdens of Religion, according to
 each one's Capacity. He recounts upon this subject these
 words of the Holy Scripture; *† Aaron and his Children,*
shall enter into the Sanctuary, and these shall be they, that shall
have the Disposition and Ordering, of what every one ought
to do, and shall Distribute to each one the Charge he ought
to bear: And he says, that Aaron and his Children are
 Superiours, and 'tis their Office to Penetrate the Interior
 of those that are under their Charge; that perfectly knowing
 of 'em, they make a just Distribution of the Employments
 and Offices of Religion, and give * *To each one according*
to his Ability.

† Aaron & fi-
 lij ejus intra-
 bunt in san-
 ctuarium, ipsi-
 que disponent
 opera singu-
 lorum, & di-
 dent quid
 portare quis
 debeat.
 Num. 4. 19.

* Unicuique
 secundum pro-
 priam virtu-
 tem.
 Math. 25. 15.

T H E

THE EIGHTH TREATISE OF Fraternal Correction.

CHAP. I.

*That Correction is a Mark of Charity,
and how useful it is.*



SAINT Bernard says, that when God Chastises us, 'tis a mark that he loves us, as his Children; and the Holy Scripture, is very full of proofs of this truth. † *The Lord Chastises whom he loves*, says the Wise Man, *and takes pleasure in him as a Father do's in his Son*. The Son of God also, by the Mouth of Saint John, says, * *That he Reprehends and Chastises those whom he loves*: And Saint Paul teaches us the same thing, when he says, † *The Lord Chastises him whom he loves, and Scourges every Son he receives; for what Son is there whom his Father do's not Chastise?* 'Tis for this reason that all the Saints hold for

Tom. III.

I i i

certain,

*Bern. serm. 41.
in Cons.*

† Quem enim diligit Dominus, corripit, & quasi pater in filio complacet sibi.

Prov. 3. 12.
* Ego quos amo, arguo, & castigo.

Apoc. 3. 19.
† Quem enim diligit Dominus, castigat: flagellat enim omnem filium, quem recipit. Quis enim filius, quem non corripit pater?
Hebr. 12. 6.
7.

certain, that one of the greatest favors that God bestows upon a Soul that falls into Sin, is presently to Chastise him by Remorses of Conscience. 'Tis therefore a mark that God loves you, and that you are of the number of his Elect; because he do's not quite forsake you, but on the contrary, invites and calls you at such a time as you forsake him. But when any Sin is not follow'd, either by Remorse of Conscience, or some other Chastisement: 'Tis, say they, a very great mark, that God is extreemly provok'd; this being one of the greatest Chastisements with which he punishes Sinners in this Life. The same Saint Bernard upon this Subject, alledges these words of Ezechiel, * *My Indignation shall cease against thee, and my zeal shall be taken away, and I will acquiesce and be angry no more.* And these other words of Isay, † *I have sworn that I will be no more angry with thee, and will not reprehend thee any more.* † Take notice, says he, that God is never more angry, than when he appears not to be so. If his zeal has then forsaken you, believe that his Love has done so too, for you are certainly unworthy of his Love, if he judges you not worthy of his Chastisements, which are the favors that he bestows upon those he Loves. But as the Chastisements of God, are a mark of his Love towards us; so 'tis a mark also of the Paternal Love that Superiours bear towards their Subjects; when they reprehend 'em for their Faults; and advertise them of 'em, that they may correct 'em. * *An open Reprehension is better than a hidden Love;* says the Wise Man: And in effect the Charity and Affection which they have Interiorly for you, is very good, but 'tis only good for him who Loves you, and 'tis very prejudicial to you, if he do's not give you some proof hereof. This is that which causes that earnestness in your Superiour, when he Charitably admonishes you of some Fault, which you your self either do not perceive, or else do not look upon it as a Fault: For hereby he loves you with profit and advantage to your self, and loves you with the love of a Father, who desires nothing more, than the advantage of his Children; because had he not the true Sentiments of a Father for you; he wou'd not reprehend you for your Faults. 'Tis after this manner that when a Father takes his Son in a Fault, he Reprehends and Chastises him, because he is his Son, and because he loves him as his Son, and wou'd very fain see him accomplish'd in all Perfections. But if the same Person surpriseth another Child in

* Et requiescet indignatio mea in te, & auferetur zelus meus à te, & quiescam, nec irascar amplius.

Ezech. 16. 42. † Juravi ut non irascar tibi, & non increpem te. Isai. 54. 9.

* Vides quia tunc magis irascitur, cum non irascitur. Si ergo zelus ejus deservit, deservit & amor; neque eris amore dignus, qui indignus castigatione censuris.

Fern ubi sup. * Melior est manifesta correctio, quam amor absconditus.

the same Fault, he says nothing to him, and is not at all in pain for him; because he is not his Son: Let his Father, says he, look to him and take care of correcting him, it belongs not to me, to put my self in pain, for what do's not at all concern me.

Moreover, when the Superiour reprehends you for your Faults, he do's not only let you see that he loves you as his Son; but is also perswaded of your Affection for him; and that you are likewise perswaded of his, and of the Zeal he has for your good. Nay, even hereby he signifies to you, that he has a good opinion of your Vertue; because if he did not believe, you had sufficient Humility to receive in good part his Advice and Correction, he would have refrain'd from saying any thing to you: On the contrary, when he is not so free with you, but keeps certain measures, and says nothing to you of your Faults, nor of what was told him of you; 'tis because, either he loves you not as his Child, or believes you love him not as your Father; or because he thinks you have not sufficient Humility, to make your profit by his Admonitions and Reprehensions: And lastly, 'tis always either want of love or want of esteem, that hinders him from telling us our Faults, tho' it may happen, according to outward appearance, that he may have both the one and the other for us, whilst he will have neither of 'em in effect, but only a fain'd esteem and affection: For what signifie these exterior appearances of esteem and good will, of the Superiour; if in the bottom he has so bad an opinion of you, as that he dares not take upon him to admonish you of your Faults? 'Tis to proceed after a double and insincere manner, exteriorly to refuse, different Sentiments from those one has within; and 'tis thus, that People in the World carry themselves towards others; because they dare not freely tell one another what they think; for 'twill often happen, that they will praise and flatter you, to make you believe they have an esteem for you, and yet interiorly they have quite different Sentiments in their Hearts:

† Their words, says the Prophet, are sweet like Oyl, yet they carry Darts along with 'em; their Mouth gives a Blessing to those, whom they Curse in their Heart; they are deceitful in their discourse, and the Oyl of Asps is under their Lips. We ought to be far from such proceedings as these amongst our selves; the Charity we make Profession of, requires a sincere and open procedure, and admits not of such dissimulation.

† Mollis sunt sermones ejus super oleum; & ipsi sunt jacula. Psal. 54. 12. Ore suo benedicebant, & corde maledicebant. Psal. 61. 5. Linguis suis dolose agebant. Psal. 5. 17. Venenum aspidum sub labiis eorum. Psal. 139. 4.

S. Franc. de
Borgia in epist.
ad Societ.

simulation, What shall I then have Defects, which perhaps I do not perceive, or that seem to me not to be so, and yet the Superiour who sees 'em, and knows that my Brethren are Scandaliz'd at 'em, do's not at all admonish me of 'em? This wou'd be to have no Charity at all; if you wore your Cloak the wrong side ourward, or that your Face were dirty, is it not certain, that 'twou'd be a great Charity to tell you of it, and you wou'd not only thank him who did so, but on the contrary you wou'd take it ill, if any one saw it, and wou'd not tell you of it? We ought with a great deal more reason, to have the same Sentiments in regard of those Faults, which blemish the Vertue of our Soul, and which Scandalize our Brethren; and 'tis a great advantage for us, that there is any one, who has the care with Charity to admonish us of 'em; because the love which we bear to our selves, and which blinds us, is the occasion that we perceive not our Faults; or that we know them not to be what they are. As the tenderness which a Mother has for a Child, makes her believe it Beautiful and Pretty, tho' in it self it be Ugly and Deform'd; so that dangerous tenderness that we have for our selves, makes even our Defects, to appear to us as good Qualities; and we always set 'em out in the best Colours: Wherefore Philosophers say very well, that a Man is not a good Judge in what regards himself; for if the Law has a suspicion of a Judge, who is Friend to one of the parties, how much more ought the love which we have to our selves render us suspect to our selves in our own cause? A third Person who is not prevented with any Passion for what touches us, perceives a great deal better our Faults, and is far more capable of Judging of 'em, than we our selves are: Moreover as the common saying is, *Two Persons see more than one.

* plus vident
oculi quam
oculus.
Plutarch in his
Book of the
utility we
draw from our
Enemies.

Plutarch says, that we ought to give Money for the purchase of an Enemy; because they are only our Enemies that tell us truth's: For from our Friends we must expect nothing else but Praises and Flatteries, they'll tell you that nothing can be added to your good qualities, tho' perhaps they find not so much as one in you; there's no language more common in the World than this, and God grant it be not also introduc'd amongst us. That also which is still very bad, is that our Vanity and Weakness, cause us with pleasure to hearken to these sorts of Flatteries, and even to believe 'em, instead of doing as the Royal Prophet did
who

who sayd, † *The just shall reprehend me with Charity, and give me a severe Correction, but the Perfum'd Oyl of a Sinner shall not Anoint my Head.* Saint Austin says, that by the Perfum'd Oyl of a Sinner, Flattery is to be understood, and that the Prophet hereby signifies to us, that he detests it, and that he had rather Charitably and Sincerely be reprehended by a Vertuous Man, than be charg'd with Praises, and Flatteries from the Wicked. They serve, says he, for nothing else, but to encrease our folly and error, according to the words of *Isa. 48. My People, those who call yee Blessed deceive yee*: And on the contrary, those that severely reprehend us do us a great deal of good, according to these other words of the Wise Man; † *The Wounds that are made by one who loves, are far better than the deceitful Kisses of him that hates us.* * *And 'tis better to be reprehended by a Wise Man, than to be deceiv'd by the Flattery of Fools.* That which gives us pain for a short time, is just that which is the cause of our Cure, whereas we become but so much the harder to be Cur'd, when we are too much Flatter'd; for then we imagine that there is nothing that deserves reprehension in us, and therefore we think not at all of correcting our selves.

Diogenes sayd, that we stand in need, either of a good Friend, that will admonish us of our Faults; or of a bad Enemy, that will reproach us of 'em; because the Admonitions of the one, and the Reproaches of the other, may help to correct us. The second means, is but too much in use in the World, where ordinarily only Hatred and Enmity, speak sincerely of others Faults, and where Truth is only to be heard from the Mouths of Enemies. But in Religion 'tis neither by Hatred nor Jealousie, nor by malice or ill Will, that they tell us of our Faults; 'tis only out of goodness, out of Charity, and out of a desire of our Salvation: 'Twill therefore be our own Fault, if we who have 'em, do not make very great profit by them, having in the Person of our Superiour a true and faithful Friend, who Charitably admonishes us of our Faults; and without doubt, we ought to believe our selves happy, when he reprehends us; because without that, we shoud perhaps never be able to perceive our Faults, nor consequently ever think of correcting 'em.

† *Corripiet me iustus in misericordia, & increpabit me, oleum autem peccatoris non impinguet caput meum.*
Psal. 140. 5.
Aug. ep. 174. ad Procul.

* *Popule meus, qui te beatum dicunt, ipsi te decipiunt.*

Isai. 3. 12.
† *Meliora sunt vulnera diligenter, quam fraudulentia oscula adientis.*
Prov. 27. 6.
* *Melius est a sapiente corripitur, quam a stultorum aculatione decipi.*
Ecc. 7. 6.

Diogen. Laert. l. 6. de Diogene. Plur. l. de profect. mor. traç.

C H A P. II.

That Pride is that which binders us, from receiving Corrections, so well as we ought to do.

† Quis facile
inveniet qui
vellet reprehendi? Et ubi est
ille sapiens de
quo dictum est
proverbiorum
nomo. v. 8.
Argue sarten-
tem, & diliget
te? Aug. epist.
ad Felice, &
Rufine.

* Quis est hic,
& laudabimus
eum?
Ecc. 11. 9.
Gregor. Moral.
lib. 10. c. 1.

THAT which most of all manifests the Pride of Man, is the repugnance he feels, to be reprehended for his Faults; † *Who will be able, says Saint Austin, to find out a Man, who has a mind to be reprehended? And where is that Wise Man to be found, of whom 'tis said in the ninth Chapter of the Proverbs, Reprehend the Wise Man and he will love thee,* such a one without doubt, truly deserves the Name of a Wise Man; because he gratefully acknowledges, as he ought to do, so great a benefit, as that of Correction is: But where is such a one to be found? * *And who is he, that we may give him such praises as are due to him? We are so puffed up with Pride, says Saint Gregory, and this Vice is so rooted in us, that we cannot bear to be told of our Faults; because we imagine, that what they say to us, lessens the good opinion the World has of us, and renders us less esteem'd. And because we are very sensible of the least things that touch our honor, we presently take fire, as soon as we believe it wounded, and instead of thanking those that reprehend us for our Faults, we look upon their Admonitions as Injuries, and as a kind of Persecution. And in effect there are some People, who when care is taken to tell em of their Faults, presently think themselves persecuted, and that is done out of some kind of aversion to them; nay some are also to be found, continues this Father, who tho' of their own accord they frequently accuse themselves of their Faults; yet if any one happens to reprehend em, or accuse them of em, they are presently mov'd, and excuse themselves; because they cannot endure to be less esteem'd, than they deserve. Such as these are not truly Humble, and speak not of their Faults with the Spirit of Truth; for if they were truly Humble, and believ'd what they sayd of themselves,*

themselves, they wou'd not be angry that others say'd the same, and wou'd not take so much pains as they do, to excuse and defend themselves. True Humility consists in the knowledge and contempt of our selves, and in being glad that others also shou'd know us, and condemn us; and such Persons as these, says Saint *Gregory*, make it clearly appear, that 'tis not that they may be condemn'd, that they speak ill of themselves, but that they may pass for Just and Humble Persons; because as the Scripture says, † *The Just Man is the first who accuses himself*. You wou'd therefore gain esteem, and pass for one that is Humble; and you speak ill of your self, because you think this a means, to obtain what you aim at; But at the same time, because you do not believe, that the Evil that another says of you, can help you thereunto; but on the contrary you imagining that it may destroy the good opinion that People may have of you; therefore you cannot suffer from another, that which you say of your self: All this proceeds from Pride and Vanity, and from hence it often happens, tho' we see what they say is true, and that they have reason to reprehend us; yet we fail not to suffer the reprehension very impatiently, and to be displeas'd at it.

† Justus prior est accusator sui.
Prov. 18. 17.

How then can we say any longer, * *Reprehend the Wise Man, and he will love you*, for where are these Wise Men to be found, that desire to be reprehended, and are pleas'd with those that tell them of their Faults? Wherefore we are forc'd to say, that which the same *Salomon* say'd in another place, † *Take care of reprehending a Scoffer, for fear he hates you*; this is the recompence that the World ordinarily gives; to those that give good advice: * *For a Wicked Man loves not him who reprehends him, and has no Conversation with those that are Wise*; or that are able to admonish him of his Faults. And lastly, 'tis an old saying, † *That Truth begets Hatred*, and speaking Truth procures Enemies; the Saints compare these sorts of People to Fools and Mad Men, who cannot endure the sight of their Physician, and refuse all sorts of Remedies; because they feel 'em painful, and do not believe themselves Sick. This Comparison is taken from the Holy Ghost, who says, * *That he who hates Reprehensions is Mad*. And in effect he do's not only want Humility, but he wants judgment and common sense; and in a word is either a Fool or a Mad Man; because he refuses those wholesome Remedies that are given him, and because he hides himself from his Physician who wou'd cure him.

* Argue sapientem, & diliget te.
Prov. 9. 8.

† Noli arguere derisorem, ne oderit te.
Prov. 9. 8.

* Non amat pestilens eum, qui se corrigit, nec ad sapientes graditur.
Prov. 15. 12.
† Veritas odium parit.
Terent. in Andria.

Aug. Epist. 87. ad Felicianum & Rusticum.

* Qui odit increpationes, insipiens est.
Prov. 12. 1.

C H A P. III.

Of the Inconveniences that happen, by not receiving
Correction in good part.

PRIDE and Folly, of which I just now spoke, are grown to such an excess, and all the world knows it so well, that there is scarce one at present to be found, who will admonish his Brethren of their Faults; because there is scarce any one, that is willing to make himself hated, or as the common Proverb says, to give Money to purchase ill will. But proud Men do not gain hereby what they deserve: For what is it that a Sick Person deserves, who will not permit himself to be treated, but that he shou'd be forsaken and let alone to Dye? And what other thing do's that Man also deserve, who will not permit himself to be reprehended, and receives in bad part, all those charitable Admonitions that are given him? * *He that hates Correction, says the Wise Man, shall Dye, and he who hates Discipline despises his own Soul.* He deserves without doubt not to be admonish'd, nor to be reprehended for any thing, and that his defects shou'd daily increase, that they come to be known to all the World, and that all the World may divert themselves with 'em, without any on's having the Charity to speak to him of 'em. 'Tis this which ordinarily happens to those that find difficulty in being reprehended; and what greater Punishment can such a Man receive, than to be left in his Pride and Obstinacy? † *We have taken care of Babylon, and she is not Cur'd; let us forsake her:* He that will not make use of the Remedies that are given him, deserves to be forsaken; when we leave off dressing a Vineyard, and prune it no longer; 'tis because 'tis abandon'd, as not being able to bring forth any more Grapes; when also we leave off, reprehending any Person, who takes it in ill part, 'tis that we abandon him, as being incapable of Correction.

* Qui increpationes odit, morietur... Qui abiicit disciplinam, despicit animam suam. Prov. 13. 20. & 22.

† Curavimus Babilonem, & non est sanata; derelinquamus eam. Jerem. 51. 9.

Saint Francis Borgia, speaking of the Inconveniencies of not receiving correction in good part, says that there are two very considerable ones, and both the one and the other, is an infallible cause of falling. For either they will leave off giving correction; because no-body will take upon him to give remedies to Sick Persons, that are untractable and impatient; wherefore, wheresoever any defects are found they will take root. Or if they do not hereupon leave off giving correction to those who have need of it, or to those they know will take it ill; all the House will presently be fill'd with Gall and Bitterness by their Indocility; who take that for an injury, which they ought to receive as a favor; and convert wholesome remedies into Poyson: They remaining offended and exasperated for the same thing, for which they ought to think themselves eternally oblig'd: This methinks ought extreemly to afflict those, to whom no one gives any reprehension; for they ought to reflect upon themselves, and say, is it not because I am like a desperate sick Person, that is given over by the Physician, without any farther care taken to cure him? Is it not because I have receiv'd in ill part what has been sayd to me, that none will take the pains to speak to me any more? The same Saint afterwards recommends to us in the same place, that Spirit of Sweetness, Simplicity and Charity, that was practis'd in the beginning of our Institution; and which caus'd, that correction was so far from being an occasion of scandal and bitterness, to those that were told of their Faults, that it was a subject of Edification and thanksgiving.

A grave Doctor speaking of those that have no mind to be reprehended, compares 'em to the Devil; because they are as incorrigible as he is: And says, that one of the things that distinguishes a Sinner from the Devil, is that the Sinner is capable of correction, whilst he lives; whereas the Devil is eternally incapable thereof. He applies also to this subject, these words of Ecclesiasticus, † *He who hates correction is of the race of the Sinner*; that is to say, of the Devil, who figuratively is call'd *The Sinner*: As the Foot-step then is like to the Foot, so he who hates correction is like to the Devil; because he renders himself as incorrigible as he is, shutting the gate against one of the best means he can have to correct himself. Saint Basil says, * *That he who do's thus, is of a very pernicious conversation; because his Example makes others hate correction, and thereby hinders and*

† Qui odit correctionem, vestigium est peccatoris. Eccl. 11. 7.

* Qui huiusmodi est, eius conversatio inter reliquos fratres perniciosior est. Si quidem exemplo suo à suscepto certamine ceteros abducit.

Basil in reg. breviorib. num. 159. Item in animadversionibus advers. canonicos delinquentes, §. 2.

Tom. III.

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Withdrews 'em from their just enterprise, which is to labour continually in the amendment of their Life. Wherefore he orders that these indocil and incorrigible Spirits, shou'd be separated from the rest of the Community; for fear they shou'd Infect and Communicate their Disease to their Brethren.

C H A P. IV.

Of how great importance it is, to receive correction well.

*Galen. lib. de
cognosc. & cu-
rand. animi
morb.*

ONE of the best Counsels that can be given upon this matter, is that which *Galen* gives; who not contenting himself, only to write many prescriptions and aphorism's, for the cure of the Diseases of the Body; has also compos'd a Book of the knowledge, and cure of the Diseases of the Soul: He says therefore, that he who wou'd correct himself, and make progress in Vertue, ought to find out some prudent Man, that may admonish him of his Faults; and that when he has found out such a one, that he shou'd earnestly conjure him to admonish him of whatsoever he shall take notice to be amiss in him; promising him, to have a perpetual obligation to him for it, during his whole Life; as for the greatest mark of affection he can receive from him; and moreover assuring him, that as far as the Soul exceeds the Body in Perfection, so he shall have by far, a greater obligation to him, than if he had cur'd him of some very desperate Sicknes. But if he to whom you shall address your self, add's he, and who shou'd take upon him to admonish you of your Faults, shou'd let pass some days without saying any thing to you, go and make your complaint to him, and conjure him again, more earnestly than you did the first time, that he wou'd be mindful of his promise; and that he wou'd admonish you of your Faults, as soon as you shall have committed any one. If he answers that he remembers his promise, but that he has had no occasion of performing it; because either you have done nothing amiss, or not done any thing

thing that stood in need of an admonition; take care of believing him, or of imagining, that he has wanted matter; but believe that his Silence proceeds from one of these three causes that I shall here set down. In the first place out of negligence; because he has made no reflection upon your Defects, nor of what he promis'd; there being very few Persons that will take the pains after this manner, to render others more wise. In the second place; because that if he has taken notice of any Fault in you, he has not had the confidence to tell it you; or because he wou'd not put himself in danger, thereby to lose your friendship; knowing very well that most commonly all that is gain'd by speaking truth, is to procure hatred to on's self. Or lastly; because he has perceiv'd that sometimes it has happen'd, that you have not receiv'd the admonitions given you in good part; and therefore whatsoever you shall be able to say to him, he gives more credit to your deeds, than words; and cannot persuade himself that you desire in good earnest, that he shou'd admonish you of your Defects. Take heed, add's he moreover, that sometimes it seem's not to you, that the Faults they reprehend you for, are no faults at all; or not such great on's as they make 'em; for you must by no means defend 'em, nor excuse your self; first, because another ordinarily sees our Faults, better then we our selves; and therefore can better judge of 'em, than we are able to do. And in the second place, tho' they shou'd be deceiv'd, yet what they tell you, may always serve to make you have a greater attention to your carriage; and also to avoid with all care for the future, the giving any occasion, to suspect any thing in that kind of you.

Behold here all that *Galen* says upon this subject, and we have need to put it all in practice, if we can but find our, any one that will willingly take upon him, the care of admonishing us of our Faults: Because this is not an easie matter; and each one cannot but be convinc'd of this truth; not only by the disquiet the correction may give him when he receives it, but also by the difficulty he suffers who gives it him. Which he may easily perceive by what he suffers, when he himself is oblig'd to give it another, and when the Superiour orders him to admonish any one of his Faults. 'Tis certainly one of the things, that gives even the greatest pain to a Superiour, to have to do with Religious, who have not the Spirit of Humility and Docility, to

receive correction in good part. For on the one side, he is oblig'd to give it, and on the other he fears they will not receive it well: Wherefore he gives it even trembling, like to a Surgeon, who is about to make a hard and dangerous operation: So that oftentimes they even doubt whether they shou'd speak or no. Sometimes the Superiour thinks he ought to do it, and to take the best time for it, seasoning the reprehension with something that makes it less bitter: And sometimes he finds those to whom he ought to give it, so little dispos'd to receive it well, that he thinks it better to say nothing, tho' with hazard of seeing 'em still persevere in their Defects: Because he fears, that his admonitions will do them hurt, instead of their profiting by them, and will serve only to give 'em greater difficulty with him, and perhaps be the occasion, that for the future they will perform their duty far worse. The Sun softens Wax, but hardens Dirt; and when Plants have taken good root; Water, Air and Sun, help very much to make 'em spring out; but when they are not well rooted. The self same things make 'em either rot, or else to dry up. 'Tis after this manner that correction softens the Hearts of those, who are truly humble; and in whom humility has taken deep root, by the knowledge of themselves; whereas in those that are not well rooted in Humility, by the knowledge of their own baseness and nothing, it produces only dryness and hardness of Heart. Wherefore Superiours often abstain, from reprehending those whom they perceive to be of this bad disposition; because they perceive their Distemper grows worse by these Remedies; for turning the best things into Poyson, they take that for an aversion and cruelty, which is an effect of the friendship they have for them, and of the zeal they have for their Salvation: And certainly such kind of dispositions as these, deserve to be abandon'd, and left to themselves as desperate.

If you desire therefore not to be abandon'd, as a Person sick of an incurable Disease; and as one of an incorrigible Spirit, you must receive in good part, whatsoever is said to you. * *'Tis an excellent thing to be reprehended, says the Wise Man, and to manifest a Sorrow for our Fault; for tho' we shou'd not have committed the Fault, of which we are admonish'd, or that it shou'd not be so great; as 'twas made; or that the thing were otherwise than as 'twas represented. Yet notwithstanding we ought not to neglect, the receiving the reprehension with a great deal of good Will,*

* Quam bonum est correptum, manifestare penitentiam!
Eccles. 20. 4.

Will; towards him that gives it; and to tell him, that you will another time take more care thereof, and that he has done you a very sensible pleasure; because hereby you'll encourage him to do the like another time; but if you should begin to excuse and defend your self, all that you would gain hereby, would be that another time, and perhaps in an occasion, wherein you would have greater need of his admonition, he will say nothing to you. The first thing that some People do, when you reprehend 'em for any Fault, is presently to excuse themselves; and when they perceive that they cannot intirely defend themselves, they seek out reasons, and colours to make their Fault appear less; which is the true way to hinder any one, from giving 'em any admonition for the future; for when one perceives he can never make you acknowledge the Faults he tells you of, and that you find out excuses for every thing, he resolves never to admonish you any more; and so besides your giving herein bad Edification, all that you gain by your Justifications and Excuses, is to hinder him from ever more taking upon him, to give you any profitable advice upon any occasion.

'Tis look'd upon as a very great defect even in Superiours, not to receive the advices and counsels that are given 'em. Inasmuch that 'tis ordinarily sayd that a Man whose Wit and Talents are but small, who notwithstanding knows his own defects, and will hearken to Counsel, is far more fit for Government, than another who has a greater extent of Wit; but is on the other side so full of self-conceit, and thinks himself so knowing in all things, that he takes it ill to be admonish'd, or to have Counsel given him. The Holy Scripture is full of of passages that confirms the truth of what I here say; † *Have you not seen, says Salomon, one who thinks himself a very able Man? There is more to be hop'd for from a Fool, than from him. The carriage of a Fool appears very good in his own Eyes; but a Wise Man hearkens to Counsel. I am Wisdom; that make my abode in Counsel. Where there is a great deal of good Counsel, there Salvation is to be found.* Saint James also takes notice, that to be tractable and to let ones self be perswaded, is one of the conditions and qualities of Wisdom. * *Wisdom that comes from on high, says he, is in the first place full of Baisfulness, and afterwards 'tis a friend of Peace, 'tis Modest, Tractable, and easily Carried to Good.*

But

† Vidisti hominem sapientem sibi videntem magis illo spem habebit insipiens.
Prov. 26. 12.
Via stulti recta in oculis ejus; qui autem sapiens est, audit consilia.
Prov. 12. 15.
Ego sapientia habito in consilio, Prov. 8. 12.
Salus autem, ubi multa consilia.
Prov. 11. 14.
* Quæ autem desum est sapientia, primum quidem pudica est, deinde pacifica, modesta, subdilis, bonis consentiens.
Jac. 3. 17.

But if in Superiours, 'tis a laudable thing willingly to hear the Advice and Counsels that are given 'em: And if on the contrary 'tis so much to be blam'd in 'em, not to do so; with how far greater reason ought Subjects to be blam'd, that cannot suffer with Patience the reprehensions of their Superiours? This alone shou'd oblige us to receive Correction with docility and sweetness: But that we may more willingly of our side be mov'd thereunto, 'tis good here to make this remark; which is, that when we receive a Correction as we ought, and the Superiour is convinc'd thereof, he is not so much in pain for the Faults we fall into; because as he perceives the Disease, so he perceives also the Remedy. But when his Correction is not well receiv'd, he finds a great deal of difficulty; because he finds the Door shut, to the only remedy; and this is one of the greatest troubles almost that Superiours can suffer. Wherefore 'tis good to testify in particular to our Superiour; that we have a great desire to be reprehended for Faults, and for this end, beg of him to watch our carriage with the Eyes of a Father; without taking notice of any Impatience, that we may at any time have shown whilst he Corrected us, and not receiv'd his Reprehension with such a submission as we ought. Moreover 'tis not sufficient once to have made this Petition to him, as a thing sayd out of custom; but often to reiterate the same, even with great instance; for be assur'd, that you cannot do too much, to perswade and move him to acquit himself well upon your account, of a thing that is so disagreeable and so hard in it self. Wherefore tho' in all other occurrences we ought to be pleas'd, when they believe us full of Imperfections, yet herein we ought to take care to give no occasion to our Superiour, to believe us so untractable and immortifi'd, as not to receive his Corrections in good part; but ought to make it our chief endeavour, to perswade him to the contrary; for fear he shou'd not give himself the pain and trouble of reprehending us, and that hereby we come to be depriv'd, of the chief means we have for our Spiritual Advancement.

As a sick Person who has a great desire to be cur'd, says Saint Basil, willingly submits himself to the Physicians ordinations, and *How difficult and sharp soever, the remedies are*, he takes it not ill, and suspects no bad Intention therein. So a Man who has a great desire to correct himself, must willingly receive such admonitions as are given him, and

Licet acerba
sit & aspera
curatio
ratio.

S. Basil. in his
lit. rules. n. 159.
and in his great
rules, n. 52.

and permit no such thought as this to enter into his mind, that 'tis out of ill will and aversion, that they find Fault with him. Wherefore if the interest and love of our health, add's the same Saint, makes us willingly take very bitter Medicines; if for this reason we permit the Physician and Surgeon, to cut and burn us as they think fit; and if we even thank 'em for it, as for a special favor; is it not very just, that for our own Salvation, and for the good of our whole Order, we shou'd submit our selves after the like manner to Correction, how hard and harth soever it may appear in it self, and what repugnance soever we may have thereunto?

C H A P. V.

Wherein what has been sayd in the foregoing Chapter is confirm'd by Examples.

S AINT *Chrysostom*, willing to move us to receive Correction in good part, and to profit by the admonitions that are given us, alledges the example of *Moyse*; who being himself very wise, and very much enlighten'd; and on the other side being chosen by God to be the Leader of his People, and the Instrument whereby he wrought so many wonders; fail'd not notwithstanding to receive in good part, the advice of *Jethro* his Father in Law; who counsell'd him to make choice of some persons, to ease himself in the Government of the People, and in the Administration of Justice: † *You do not well*, says *Jethro* to him, seeing him do all things himself, *so consume your self with imprudent labour; what you undertake is above your Strength, and you can never be able alone to sustain it.* And the same Father hereupon takes notice, that *Moyse* took a great deal of care not to do as some do, who even when the Counsel that is given 'em appears good, are angry with those that give it, as being displeas'd that any one, less able than themselves, shou'd take

*Chrysost. hom. 1.
sup. 1. epist. ad
Corinth.*

† Non bonam, inquit, rem facis, & stulto labore consummeris. . . . Ultra vires tuas est negotium, solas illud non poteris sustinere. Exod. 18. 17. & 18.

take upon 'em to Counsel 'em; but he receiv'd this Counsel with great submission, and put it presently into practise.

*Cyp. Epist. 11.
ad Quirinum
Aug. l. 2. contra
Donat. c. 1.*

Saint *Cyprian* and Saint *Austin* propose also the example of Saint *Peter*, when Saint *Paul* reprehended him; when he wou'd have subjected those amongst the Gentils, who were Converted to the Faith, to the Law of Circumcision. Take notice, say they, that Saint *Peter* presum'd not upon himself, nor wou'd not take upon him to decide the Question, tho' he were head of the Church, and tho' his opinion were more prevalent than any on's else. Take notice also, that he condemn'd not Saint *Paul*, as having been a little before, a Persecutor of the Church of God; and was not angry or troubl'd to be reprehended by him, but took his Counsel very well, and presently yielded to truth and reason.

*Hist. Ecclef.
cripart. p. 2. l.
7. cap. 6.*

'Tis also an Example worthy to be remembered and taken notice of, that the great *Theodosius* gave, in receiving with Submission and Humility, the Correction and checks of Saint *Ambrose*. For whether or no this holy Bishop did then Excommunicate him, and forbid him to enter into the Church; by reason of the Masacre, which he had made of all the People of *Thessalonica*: Or whether it was, that being then plac'd within the railes or precincts of the Quire, after he had made his Offering at the Altar; the same Saint sent to him, to bid him retire into the nave or body of the Church; because it belong'd only to Priests to be in the place where he was; and that the Purple did not raise Emperors to the Dignity of Priest-hood. Ecclesiastical History reports these two examples at length, and says, that 'tis hard to decide, whether the constancy and courage of the Bishop, or the obedience and humility of so powerful an Emperour, ought to be more admir'd and prais'd.

We Read in the Life of the same Saint *Ambrose*, that he thank'd those that admonish'd him of his Faults, and receiv'd their advice as a signal favor. The History of the Order of the *Cistercian* Monks, makes mention of a Religious of *Clarevallis*, that receiv'd any Correction was giv'n him with so much gratitude, that as often as he was reprehended for any Fault, he sayd a *Pater Noster* for him that reprehended him: And in the same place he takes notice also, that from that time, this custom has always been practis'd in this Monastery, and observ'd as an inviolable Law.

*Refert. Simon
Metaphrastes.*

Saint *Arsenius* was in very great Reputation of Sanctity amongst the Hermits of his time, and had been before highly

highly esteem'd, in the Court of the Emperour *Theodosius*, he having made him Governour of his Children *Arcadius*, and *Honorius*, who were also Emperours after the Death of their Father: Yet his Sanctity had not so intirely destroy'd all those bad habits, he had contracted whilst he liv'd at Court, but that still there remain'd some light defects in him, which were the reliicks of a Court Life, which he had lead for many Years; for amongst others, he was wont to set with his Legs a cross, placing one Knee on the top of the other: And once whilst he was at a Conference with the other Hermits, this posture seem'd to them, so very indecent and immodest, that tho' they thought fit he shou'd be admonish'd of it; yet not one of 'em wou'd undertake to do it; because they had a repugnance to reprehend a Person of his consideration, for what seem'd so simple and trivial a Fault. Hereupon they consulted how to find out a means to make him correct this bad habit; whereupon the Abbot *Pastor*, who was a very Holy and Ingenious Man, propos'd to them a very easie and proper expedient. The first time that we meet together, says he, I will put my self in the same posture with *Arsenius*; and yee shall publicly reprehend me for it, whereupon I will presently put my self into a more modest posture, and so he will be sufficiently advertis'd hereof. All the Fathers approv'd this expedient, and the first time that they met at a Spiritual Conference, the Abbot *Pastor* fail'd not to put himself in the same posture with Saint *Arsenius*, the Fathers presently admonishing him thereof, as of a thing that was against modesty and good manners; at the same instant he put himself into a more becoming posture; and Saint *Arsenius* presently understanding and taking this, as an admonition given to himself, without taking notice of any thing, by little and little set down his Leg also, and never after happen'd to fall into the like Fault. This Example lets us see two things; first how troublefom and hard a task it is to reprehend others, and secondly that every one ought to take to himself such repehensions, as are publicly given to his Brethren.

CHAP. VI.

Of the Rule that obliges us, presently to discover to our Superiour, the Faults of our Brethren.

C. 4. Exam.
§. 8.

Motu proprio.

THE ninth Rule of the Summary of our Constitutions, says, that for our greater Spiritual Advancement, but more especially for our greater humiliation, we ought to be contented that all our Faults and Imperfections, and even whatsoever we have done, that is known out of Confession, shou'd be discover'd to our Superiours: Here 'twill be much to the purpose, for the better establishing what has been already sayd upon this matter, to know that not only all our Constitutions have been approv'd and confirm'd by the Apostolical Sea; and that Gregory the XIII. in the Bull whereby he approves 'em, has expressly put this clause; *Out of my own proper Motion*: But that this very Rule which I just now cited, has also been particularly approv'd, even by a particular sentence and decree, after it's having been call'd in question; which renders it more authentick. Wherefore I shall here set down how the thing happen'd. A Priest who had been of our SOCIETY, and who had been dismiss'd as one of a turbulent and disquiet Spirit, caus'd to be printed one part of the Summ of Cardinal Toletus, and joyn'd a Chapter thereunto, in which he sayd, that in a certain Order, for which otherwise he had a great deal of Respect, by reason of the many Learned Men that were in it; there was a certain Rule which oblig'd all the Religious, that as soon as they knew any Fault of their Brethren, they shou'd immediately advertise the Superiour thereof, without saying any thing to the Person that had committed it: To which he added, that great inconveniencies might spring from this Rule, and that 'twas quite contrary to the Gospel. Father Everardus Mercurianus, who was then General of the SOCIETY, complain'd to the Pope of this Calumny; and the Pope desiring

desiring to see the Book and the Rule, and being inform'd after what manner it was practis'd in the SOCIETY. Did not only declare, that it was not contrary to the Gospel; but that it was so far from deserving any just censure, that it truly contain'd Evangelical Perfection; and moreover ordain'd, that that part of the Book in which 'twas so injuriously spoken of, shou'd be forbidden: As afterwards it was by Cardinal Sirler, by Vertue of the Power, which the Office of Inquisitor General gave him.

But suppose this Rule had not been sufficiently justifi'd, by what I have now prov'd it to be, yet to make the excellency thereof more clearly appear, I cannot here omit the declaring two things: The first is, the shewing of how great importance and necessity it is; and the second, how just and reasonable; and in this, I shall not rely upon the subtilities of Schools; but will endeavour to give palpable and convincing Reasons for it. As to the first point, which regards the importance and necessity of this Rule; of which I have spoken elsewhere; which is of the giving an account of Conscience to our Superiour; for all the Reasons which our Holy Founder alledges in his Constitutions, to let us see of how great importance and necessity it is, to give an account of Conscience to our Superiour, do all of 'em also concur, to prove the importance and necessity of the Rule, of which I now speak. I have already treated these Reasons very fully, but they may be reduc'd to two; the first is, that Superiours may the better know, how they ought to govern each Religious; and the second, that the General Superiour, may the better provide, for what is for the good and profit of the whole SOCIETY in General: But 'tis for these very reasons, that Saint Ignatius judg'd fit, that our Superiours shou'd be advertis'd of our Faults and Defects, by any one that shou'd know them out of Confession. And he wou'd by this Precaution be assur'd, of a thing that was of so great consequence both for your own good, and for the universal good of the whole SOCIETY; that in case you shou'd neglect your Duty, your Brother might on this occasion, do what you ought to have done your self, had you been faithful in the observance of your Rules. Wherefore he do's it only to pay your Debt; and all is done for your greater good, and for the greater good of Religion, and that Superiours, for want of knowing the Forces and Capacities of each one, may not expose any one to the danger of losing himself.

Treatise 7. c. 3.

Now as to what belongs to the second Point, which regards the justice and equity of this Rule, it may be maintain'd by very many Reasons and Authorities; of which the first is, that the self same thing is practis'd in the most Ancient Religious Orders: 'Tis in use, no less in the Order of Saint *Francis*, than in ours; that when any one knows any Fault of his Brother, he go's presently to advertise the Superiour thereof; without saying any thing before-hand to the Person that committed it. One of the Books of this Order, intitled *Serenity of Conscience*, expressly takes notice of this practice, in the hundred and fortieth Question. And in other General Statutes of the Order, intitled those of *Barcelona*; because they were made in a General Chapter held there, in the Year one thousand four hundred and fifty one: 'Tis expressly sayd, that when the Religious shall be out of their Monasteries, they must at their return home, make known to their Superiour, all things of Consequence that happend to their Brethren abroad; and whosoever shall fail to do this, shall be punish'd by Fasting with Bread and Water, or by such other Penance as the Superiour shall think fit to impose upon him. The same thing is also ordain'd by the Statutes, that were made at the beginning of this Order, in the fifth General Chapter; and it was confirm'd in that also, which was held when Saint *Bonaventure* was General; where it was resolv'd, that the contrary opinion shou'd be banish'd out of the whole Order, as an Enemy to Religious Discipline; and that he that shou'd teach it, shou'd have all his Books taken from him, be depriv'd of Active and Passive Voice, and even be clapt up in Prison.

But farther to shew how Ancient this Doctrine is, and how it has been approv'd by those who have embrac'd Angelical Perfection; I will here set down an Ancient Decree, made by the Abbots *Stephen* and *Paul*, and reported in these terms, by the Abbot *Smaragdus*; † If any sees or hears another do or say any thing that is not of Edification, and do's not presently tell it to the Superiour, let him know that he foment's the Sin, and that he intirely renders himself as guilty thereof; as he that committed it; and that lastly he is a cruel Enemy both of his own Soul, and of his self whose Defects he endeavours to hide. But if any one, says another Decree afterwards set down by the same *Smaragdus*, shou'd know that one of his Brethren, finding a Monastical Life too hard, shou'd have a design to run away, and do's not go presently

† Si quis alterum in quacunque parte videret illicitum quid operari, vel sermonem facientem, & distulerit Priori publicare, cognoscat se esse nutritorem peccati, & per omnia aequalium peccanti, sua & animae suae, & illius, quem tegit, est durissimus inimicus. Si quis autem, qui dis-

to discover it, let him not doubt, but that he is in part the cause of his Brothers Perdition, and is to be separated from the Conversation of his Brethren, till he that is run away be brought back. Hereby then we perceive, that this Rule is no new thing, nor in use only in our SOCIETY; but was an ancient practice, and observ'd in other Orders. Moreover this Custom is founded upon the end, of the Precept of Fraternal Correction, which is the Amendment of our Brother, which, as 'tis ordinarily hop'd, we may more easily compass, rather by means of his Superiour, than of any other particular Person.

tricionem
monasterij
duriter
ferens, fugam
meditari cog-
noverit, & non
statim prodi-
derit, perditionis
illius participem
se esse
non dubitet;
& tandiu à
conventu Fra-
trum seque-
strandus est,
quandiu ille
valeat revo-
cari.
Smaragd Abb.
in Comment.
sup. reg. S.
Bened. c. 13.

The Reason that justifies this Rule, and makes it appear neither to be so hard, nor so rigorous as some imagine it, is that all that it ordains, and all that is practis'd amongst us upon this Subject, is to tell the Fault of our Brother to our Superiour, as to a Spiritual Father; that he reprehending him for it, with the Charity and tenderness of a Father, may by this means, hinder him who was ready to fall, from doing so; or if he be already fallen, will presently help him up again; 'tis in this sense, that the twentieth of the Common Rules says, that he who shall know any considerable Fault of his Brother, ought to advertise the Superiour thereof, that he may by his prudence and Fatherly care, procure a convenient Remedy. So that when one discovers his Brothers Fault to his Superiour, he do's not do it as to a severe judge, that has right to punish him for it; but as to a Father, who cannot but do what is best for him; to whom it belongs to apply a remedy, and to avoid such inconveniencies, as might happen, if nothing were known of it, and if no order were taken about it.

Father Natalis, a Man very considerable both for his Piety and Learning, add's in the third place a very good Reason; we see, says he, that both in the Ecclesiastical and Secular Government, when they are about to seek out any Person for an employment, they are wont to make secret inquiries, into the Life of those that pretend to it; yet this is not done with a design to punish any one whom they shall find to have deserv'd it. But only because they would be very well inform'd of those, whom they trust with such Offices of Authority, in which the good of their Order in general, or the Spiritual good of particular Persons is concern'd. Because all Subjects of the SOCIETY may be chosen for Missions, which is one of the Ends for which 'twas Instituted,

Instituted, and which requires Persons of a very solid Vertue; and not such weak and frail on's, as by their Fault wou'd ruin, the good reputation of the SOCIETY. So that the Superiour has consequently right to inform himself, and to desire to be inform'd, even of the most Secret things; and even to establish a Rule hereupon; that the light he shall thereby receive, may better help him to know those Subjects he shou'd make choice of; and hinder him from being deceiv'd in a thing of so great importance, both for the good of particular Persons, and for that of the whole SOCIETY in general.

In the fourth place, to shew how much this Rule is founded upon Reason, let us put into the Scales, on the one side the prejudice you receive thereby, in telling, or in having your Fault told to your Superiour as to a Father; and in the other, the inconvenience of it's not being told, either by our selves or others; and see which is of greater weight. All the prejudice it can do us, is reduc'd to the little confusion we receive, and the little esteem that we think we lose; but the inconvenience that may happen, by not having your Fault discover'd to your Superiour, either by your self or another is far greater; for the Superiours for want of knowledge thereof, can take no order at all about it, which in the mean time, like a Distemper to which no Remedy is apply'd, ordinarily augments, and easily communicates it self to others. Moreover this wou'd afterwards infallibly turn to your own shame and confusion, and to the discredit of your Order; because that at last * *There is nothing hid which is not reveal'd*; sooner or later, by one means or other, all things come to light; and a Distemper that at first might easily have been cur'd, if it had been then told the Superiour, as it shou'd have been, cannot afterwards be so, without applying Fire and Lance. All this without doubt brings along with it, far more prejudice, than the little confusion you wou'd have undergone, or the little esteem, that you think you shou'd have lost, by the discovery of your Fault to your Superiour. Wherefore I say, that nothing is done against Charity, by the discovering the Fault of our Brother to the Superiour, but that we are even oblig'd in Charity to do so; and that we ought to have a great Scruple not to do it; for this omission, may sometimes happen to be a Mortal Sin: Not by Vertue of the Rule; because our Rules, as I have already sayd, oblige not under pain of Mortal Sin, but by Vertue of

* Nihil oper-
tum est quod
non reveletur.
Luc. 12. 2.

of the importance of the matter; and because of the great inconveniencies that may thereby happen. Of which we render our selves culpable, when we might have remedy'd and prevented 'em, by giving advice in due time to our Superiour, which we neglected to do, and were oblig'd to perform.

Saint Basil says upon this subject, † *That to conceal the Sin of our Brother to our Superiour, is properly like the advancing the Death of a Sick Person, and the thrusting or casting a Man down from a Precipice, who is about to cast himself into it.* For a Sin which is conceal'd, is like an Impostume or Gangrene which daily augments, and at last gets to the Heart, and brings Death along with it. Wherefore as 'tis to render great service to a Man, to Lance or Cut the Impostume or Gangrene, what pain soever the Operation thou'd give him; and on the contrary, 'twou'd not be the part of a Friend, out of Compassion to hinder such an Operation, tho' never so painful: So 'tis not to exercise the Office of a Friend, to hide to your Superiour the Fault of your Brother, but on the contrary, 'tis to contribute to his Death, nor to discover his Infirmary to a Physician, that is able to cure it. * *Do not think, says Saint Austin, treating on this matter, that 'tis any hurt, to reveal the Faults of your Brother, there is far more, by letting him perish by your Silence, whom you might have cur'd by the discovery thereof; for if your Brother had any dangerous Infirmary which he wou'd keep secret, fearing the pain of Incisions, wou'd it not be a great cruelty in you, to say nothing of it, and a great Charity to speak on't? With how far greater reason, ought you then to discover this Spiritual Wound, which he has a mind to hide, which may occasion the Death of his Soul?*

The Silence therefore which some keep, out of Honor and Friendship, as they erroneously pretend, is a thing quite contrary to the Duty and Obligation of Charity. They imagine that 'tis friendship and a point of Honor, to hide the Faults of another from the Superiour, and therefore they have a great repugnance not to do so; because they fear they shall upon this account be the less esteem'd; and and therefore, as they say, they will not at all meddle or make, in carrying reports to the Superiour, they desiring to do no body any hurt, nor to lessen any on's esteem with his Superiour. This is not at all the Spirit of Religion, and far less that of the SOCIETY. They are Worldly

Maximes,

† Peccatum occultare nihil aliud est, quam ægrum sua sponte ad mortem ventem, impellere, & proclivorem reddere.
Basil in reg. sup. disp. num. 46.

* Nec vos judicetis esse inalevolos, quando hoc indicatis: magis quippe innocentes non essis, si fratres vestros, quos indicando corrigere potestis, tacendo perire permittitis. Si enim frater tuus vulnus habet in corpore quod velit occultari, cum timet secari, nonne crudeliter à te sistetur, & misericorditer indicaretur? Quanto ergo potius debes manifestare vulnus hoc spirituale, ne deterius putrescat in corde?
Aug. reg. 3. c. 25. tom. 1. in fine.

Maximes, and such precautions as these, are very dangerous, for any one to have in Religion; for 'tis not to carry Stories about, nor to hurt your Brother, that you discover his Faults; 'tis on the contrary to do him good; and not to discover 'em, is both to do him and Religion a prejudice. Where have you learnt, that not to displease a particular Person, you may neglect the fidelity you ow to a whole Body? To whom have you a greater obligation, to your whole Order, or to a particular Religious thereof? 'Tis very ill to hide the Faults of another; 'tis as if one had intelligence, or were pertakers with him that committed 'em; and 'tis for this Reason, that one ought to be asham'd, of not being faithful to Religion, and of not observing it's Rules. * Wherefore, Saint Basil concludes, *let there be no one that helps to hide the Faults of another, for fear that instead of showing his affection to his Brother, he procures his Death.* Hide not the Disease of your Brother, but discover it to the Physicians, before it becomes incurable, and he be forc'd to suffer, both Fire and the Lance; and this will be to perform the office of a true Friend to your Brother; for by this means you will save him; and had you done otherwise, you would have been the cause of his Perdition.

All these and many other Reasons, which are brought both by Saints as well as Divines, are sufficient to prove, that this Rule is both Just and Holy; even tho' a Religious Man in making his Profession, thou'd not expressly renounce, as we do, to the right he may have against this Rule; because in effect, there is no order, in which they do not in this manner renounce to it. But we have moreover a reason, which is particular to our selves; which is, that when any one has a design to be receiv'd amongst us, the Rules are given him, and a Summary of those Constitutions which he ought to observe, in which the Rule of which we speak is contain'd; and 'tis demanded of him, whether he be contented to submit to these Rules? This Rule also is particularly specifid unto him; and his express consent is again ask'd of him; and during the two Years of his Novitship, before he can be receiv'd to his Vows, every six Months the same proposition is made to him. But there is still yet more, the Master of Novices, is oblig'd by a particular Rule, to advertise the Novices of those things, which may afterwards give them any pain; amongst which this is particularly set down for one, and in effect he never fails, to advertise 'em of it; and that which takes

* Nemo sit
ergo qui pec-
cato alterius
latebras quæ-
rat, ne pro a-
more, quem
fratri debet,
exitium illi
conciliet.
Basil. ubi sup.

Reg. xi. mss.
novitior.

takes away all kind of difficulty in this matter, they answer according to the terms of the same Rule; that they voluntarily submit hereunto, for their greater Spiritual Advancement, whereby they may have a greater occasion to Humble and debase themselves. For 'tis very, certain that there is no body, who may not at his Entrance into Religion, Renounce to his own Right, upon account of greater Perfection; and give his Consent that without being advertis'd of his Faults, they may directly be discover'd to his Superiour; for each one is Master of his own Reputation, and 'tis lawful for him for his greater good, to be content to lose it, either with his Superiour or with any one else; so there be no particular circumstance, that obliges him not to permit himself to lose it. As in effect there is not in the matter of which we speak; for as every Religious Person may lawfully discover his Sins to his Superiour, how great or secret soever they be; so he may lawfully give permission to another to do the same, which is what all the Religious of the SOCIETY do, by the express consent and approbation they give of this Rule, as I have already sayd: In which they do nothing else but renounce to the right, they might have to the contrary. For if any one shou'd reveal to me in Confession, under the promise of Secrecy, some great Sin which he may have committed, and shou'd afterwards give his consent, that for the better judging what remedy he ought to apply thereunto, I might consult and advise with my Superiour about it. 'Tis certain that by the consent he gave, he renounc'd to the right he had, to hinder me from discovering his Fault to any one; and at the same time I have gain'd a right, to discover it to my Superiour, thereby to have his advice. And moreover, the Novices see this Rule practis'd for two Years, before they make their Vow's; which is sufficient to give them occasion to suppose, that when they afterwards make 'em, they tacitly renounce to the right that they may have against this Rule, tho' they say not in express terms that they renounce thereunto. 'Tis as a Carthusian do's, when he makes his Profession, who knows, that in the Order to which he engages himself, perpetual Abstinence is observ'd, which is never broken upon any account whatsoever; and therefore by engaging himself, he renounces to the Natural right he has to conserve his Life by eating Flesh; tho' he renounces not to it in express

Tom. III.

M m m

terms;

terms; yet this right of his, is much to be prefer'd; before that of our conserving our own Reputation. 'Tis also after the same manner, that he who takes Sacred Orders renounces to the right of Marriage; and remains strictly oblig'd to observe Chastity all his Life long, tho' nevertheless he makes no Vow of Chastity. Moreover Saint *Francis Borgia*, being General; and being consulted about this matter, by some Provincial Congregations of *Spain*, answer'd that those who enter'd into the SOCIETY, were judg'd to have renounc'd to all the right, they might have had against this Rule: 'Tis moreover certain, both by the Tenour of our Bull's, and by the Priviledge which the General of the SOCIETY has, to declare the true Sense of our Constitutions, that we give up our right. To conclude this Rule having been afterwards discus'd also in the sixth General Congregation; all things were decided therein after the same manner, and a General Congregation of the SOCIETY, as 'tis not'd in the same place, has Authority from the Holy Sec, to decide all doubts that may arise concerning the Rules of our Institute. 'Twas also declar'd in the sixth General Congregation, that these words of the Rule; *By any one whomever, that has had a knowledge of 'em out of Confession*: Ought not to be understood; but of the Faults which another has taken notice of, and not of those that may have been told him in Secret by any one, by way of asking his Counsel and advice.

All the difficulties that may arise about this matter, are hereby intirely taken away, and hereby all subjects of complaint will cease; it being an undoubted maxim of the Law, ** That no injury is done to him who knows and consents to it*. You were inform'd of this Rule, when you were first receiv'd, and then you signified that you were contented to submit thereunto; if you are angry afterwards that your Faults are told to the Superiour, be angry with the Rule that ordains it, not with your Brother that observes the Rule but with your self, who ought now to be more confirm'd in the Spirit of Mortification and Humility, than you were in the beginning; and yet you are far less; because you are not now in the same disposition you were then in; all the pain that this Rule gives to any one, proceeds from hence, and our Holy Founder knowing very well, that Pride and want of Mortification were the only things that cou'd render it troublesome, tell's us, that the Spirit of Humility

*Congr. 6. gen.
Societ. Jesu.
Decret. 49.
Can. 10. 11.*

*Decret. 35.
Can. 6.*

** Scienti &
volenti non
fit injuria.*

Humility and the desire of greater Perfection, ought to be the foundations thereof. If then we have this Spirit, and this Desire, we shall be glad when they come to know our Defects, that they may esteem us the less; and with how far greater reason ought we to be glad that they are known; that hereby they may reprehend and correct us for 'em? He that has not sufficient Humility to desire his Fault shou'd be known upon this account, has scarce the Spirit either of Humility or of Mortification.

C H A P. VII.

Of some important Admonitions concerning this matter.

FROM all that I have already sayd, several good Admonitions and Advices may be gather'd, no less for him that receives, than for him that gives Correction. And to speak first of him that receives it; 'tis certainly very ill done, when one has been reprehended for any Fault by the Superiour, to go and seek out, how and by whom he came to the knowledge thereof; or to torment himself to know whether nothing more was told to him, or whether they have not exaggerated the Fault; and lastly, to go and make complaints on all sides for the discovery thereof; because perhaps, he who reported it may have done it after a more disadvantageous manner, than he shou'd have done: To do this, is to commit a greater Fault than the first; and very often we thereby more lessen out esteem, and give a greater Scandal to our Brethren, than by the Fault it self. They know very well that you are a Man, and that you have your Faults, but they perceiving you are so sensible of a thing of this Nature, they have but a worse opinion of you. Because herein you shew a great deal of Pride, and give them occasion to think that you are not in pain about correcting your

M m m 2

Faults,

† Qui proca-
citer etiam a-
perta defendit,
quomodo
occultat, &
malas cogita-
tiones cordi
suo advenien-
tes humiliter
revelaret. Ab-
bati?
Bern. de Gradi-
bus humilitatis
gradu 8.

Faults, but only how to hide 'em, and how to gain esteem by your exterior behaviour: † *He who stily defends and excuses himself of a Fault*, says Saint Bernard, *when he is known to have committed it, how will he be able Humbly to discover his secret Faults to his Superiour, into which he fall's; and the bad thoughts of his Heart, which are only known to himself?* He who is truly Humble and thinks of himself as he ought, do's not at all wonder at what is sayd of him, nor of the Faults he is accus'd of; because he still knows greater Faults in himself, and thinks they have said too little in comparison of what they shou'd have sayd of him. Self-love, with which you are blinded, makes you think the Fault far less than it is; and even sometimes, it makes you believe that 'tis no Fault at all: But a third Person who sees the Fault with disinterress'd Eyes, as it is in it self, sees after another manner than you do. But let us put the case, that it appear'd to him greater than it was in effect; and for this reason he shou'd have too much exaggerated it, do you not call to mind, that when you were receiv'd to Religion, you were ask'd whether you were content to suffer for the Love of God, Injuries, Affronts, and false Accusations; and that you answer'd you were content? How comes it therefore to pass, that you have so soon forgot your Promise, and how come you at present to Repent your self of it? You ought to rejoyce that your Brother, believing he spoke Truth, shou'd have exaggerated your Fault beyond what it deserv'd; and tho' he shou'd not have done it Innocently, but with a bad Intention, yet you still ought to mind none but your self, and be glad he has given you an occasion of greater Humiliation, and of Imitating more perfectly JESUS CHRIST. Wherefore with how far greater reason are you oblig'd to be glad, that he has Innocently given you this occasion, he thinking what he sayd had been true? We gain a great deal more both in the sight of God and Man; when we do thus; whereas when we are too sensible thereof, we lose on all sides, whilst we think we gain.

But the Fault wou'd be still greater, if coming to know by whom it was discover'd, we shou'd go to reproach the Person, for either having sayd it, or for having sayd more

more than was true; and afterwards shew any coldness towards him, or let him know you retain any Resentment thereof. He who truly desires to Correct himself, and to Aspire to Perfection, would have the Eyes of all the World upon him, to make him more easily compass the End he proposes. † O that I had, says Saint Bernard, even a hundred Pastors that took care of me; for the more I know, that employ themselves in doing so, the greater security I find my self in. How great a Folly is it! To make no difficulty to charge one's self with the care of an Infinity of Souls, and to be angry when any one takes care of our's? For my own part, I am more afraid of the Teeth of the Wolf, than of a Sheep-hook. Now as to our Brethren Faults, which we are to give notice of; we must in the first place know, that they ought to be told to our Superiour in Secret; that he as a good Father may procure a remedy, and hinder the inconveniencies that might otherwise happen thereby. Moreover great care is to be taken herein; lest it shoud happen, that instead of telling the Fault of our Brother to our Superiour, who ought to remedy it; we shoud go and tell it to another, who has no right to know, nor has any Care or Inspection over him; for this woud be very ill done; because it woud be to fall into the Sin of Detraction.

In the second place we must carry our selves herein after such a manner, that as the Rule says, we ought to do it with that Affection and Charity, which is requir'd. Which are the terms, with which Pope Gregory the XIII. was very well satisfied, when he took the pains himself to Examine our Rules; and whosoever has a mind to do his Duty herein, ought to take a great deal of care, that he acts not out of Passion nor Envy; nor moreover that he permits himself, to be carried away with an indiscreet Zeal, by presently going to make his report, before it be right and well digested. He ought also to abstain from exaggerating things so far, as to make a Fly an Elephant, and from a particular Fault, judge a generally destruction of all Discipline: And lastly he ought to avoid the proposing his Suspensions and meer Imaginations, as certainties

† Quis dabit
mihi centum
in mei custo-
diam deputari
Pastores?
Quanto plures
sentio mei cu-
ram gerere,
tanto securior
exeo in pal-
cua. Stupenda
infamia! Ani-
marum aon-
cundor turbas
mihi custodi-
endas collige-
re, & unum
super propri-
am gravor ha-
bere custo-
dem. Plus ti-
meo dentes
lupi, quam
virgani Pastro-
ris.
S. Bern. Epist.
42.

Regul. 10. sum-
marij.

certainities and real Truths, for there is reason to make a great Scruple of this, and this Indiscretion, is oftentimes the cause of many disorders.

In the third place 'tis to be observ'd, that tho' our Brother likes not to be corrected for his Faults, yet notwithstanding one ought not to neglect to advertise the Superiour of 'em, and to do our Duty, tho' he do's not perform his. Saint *Austin* speaking of those that receive not Correction in good part, says, they are like those that are Frantick, who will not hear any thing either of Physick or Physician: What then, says he, ought to be done with such indocile Spirits? Ought they quite to be abandon'd, and no care at all taken of their cure? No such matter, † *For a Mad-man has no mind to be bound, and he who is in a Lethargy would not be awak'd; and yet Charity neglects not to persist always in binding the one, and in waking the other, and in loving of 'em both; and tho' both of 'em are herewith offended, yet both of 'em are below'd. Pain is caus'd to both and disquiet also so long as they are indispos'd, which displeases 'em; but as soon as they are cur'd, they perceive the Favour that was done to them, and are extremely pleas'd therewith.* We must hope 'twill be the same with our Brother; for tho' he is angry at present that he is reprehended, yet the time will come, when entering into himself, and considering the things as in God's sight; he'll acknowledge his Fault and be sensibly oblig'd for the Charity you have done him. If Men, says the same Father, neglect not to take a great deal of Pains, and sometimes even expose themselves to great dangers to cure Beasts, * *Who have no Understanding; and from whom they can hope for no thanks. With how far greater reason, ought we to Labour for the Cure and Correction of our Brother; that he may not Eternally Perish? He is endow'd with Reason, and he may one Day come to be sensible of the greatness of the Favour you have done him: † For he who reprehends another, says the Wise Man, will afterwards be in greater esteem with him, than he who deceives him by Flatteries.* Saint *Basil* applies to this Subject, the words of Saint *Paul* to the *Corinthians*, * *who is there from whom I receive the greatest Joy, but from him to whom I have given Sorrow?* The pain and trouble that Correction gives you, is that which

† Nam & phre-
netici nolunt
ligari, & le-
thargici no-
lunt excitari,
sed perseverat
diligentia cha-
ritatis phrene-
ticum ligare,
lethargicum
stimulare, am-
bos amare.
Ambo offen-
duntur, sed
ambo diligen-
tur: ambo
molestantur
quandiu agri-
sunt, & indig-
nantur; sed
ambo sanati,
gratulantur.
Aug. ep. 167.
*& 87. ad Feli-
cis. Rustic.*

Idem. ep. 10.
ad Bonif.

* Quibus non
est intellectus.
Psal. 51. 9.

† Qui corri-
pit hominem,
gratiam postea
invenit apud
eum, magis
quam ille, qui
per linguam
blandimenta
decipit.
Prov. 28. 23.
Basil. in Regul.
*fusus disputa-
tis num. 12.*
* Quis est qui
me lætificet,
nisi qui con-
tristatur ex
me?
2 Cor. 12. 2.

which gives me Joy; because I know that you receive profit thereby; † For true Sadness according to God, produces a solid and wholsom Penance, and even that which has afflicted you according to God, how great a Solitude has it caus'd in you? But you will say there are some Persons, to whom Corrections and Admonitions do no good at all: Saint *Austin* answers very well to this objection, * *Alas!* says he, must we quite and clean leave off Medicines? Because there are some Diseases that are quite Incurable? No certainly; wherefore we ought not any more to neglect the Correction of our Brethren. Because some of 'em make no good use thereof: 'Tis a duty of Physicians, both of Soul and Body, presently to employ all their care and art, for the cure of Sick Persons, and never to abandon 'em, but always to give 'em some Remedy or other.

Now as to the manner we are to make use of in Correction, Saint *Basil* inform's us: He who do's it, says he, ought to imitate Physicians, who are never angry with their Patients, but regard only their Distemper; and endeavour all ways they can, by Remedies to resist and cure it: He therefore who reprehends another ought never to be angry with him, who has offended; he must only apply himself to retrench whatsoever is bad in him; he ought to do, continues the Father, as a Physician wou'd, that treats his own Child, for a very painful Wound; with what niceness and circumspection do's he dress it? One may perceive that he feel's the Pain of his Son, as if it were his own. Thus a Superiour ought to do in regard of those whom he Corrects: He is their Father, they are his Children; he ought to reprehend 'em as the Apostle did, † With the Spirit of Meekness. * He that wou'd kill a Man, says Saint *Austin*, cares not which way he do's it, but he who desires to cure one, is oblig'd in making Incisions, to take care how he makes 'em. The Superiour who proposes to himself the cure of his Brother by Correction, and not to do him any hurt, ought to have the same regard and circumspection; and this is a thing of very great importance, and which the Saints recommend very much unto us: Let him, say they, who reprehends another; take care of shewing the least Passion or Anger; for he will thereby lose all the Fruit, he wou'd otherwise have been able

† *Quæ enim secundum Deum tristitia est, penitentiam in salutem stabilem operatur.* * *Acced enim hoc ipsum, secundum Deum contritari vos, quantum in vobis operatur sollicitudinem.* 2 Cor. 7. 10. & 11. * *Numquid ideo negligenda est medicina, quia nonnullorum est insanabilis pestilentia?* Aug. ep. 43. ad Vincent.

Basil. in regul. sup. distiguit. num. 50. & 51. & in reg. brev. num. 9.

† In spiritu lenitatis. Gal. 6. 1. * *Qui trucidat, non considerat quomodo saniet; qui autem curat, quemadmodum secerat.* Aug. ep. 8. ad Vincent.

Basil. ubi sup. See the 2. page and 2. treatise, chap. the 8.

to

to produce, he will not cure the Distemper but rather make it worse: And they alledge for this Subject, the words of the Apostle: † *Reprehending with meekness, chafe that resist Truth.* For tho' the ordinary Translation says, * *with Modesty*, yet both signifie the same thing, for to Reprehend with Modesty, one must do it without Anger or Passion. To conclude we must so season Correction, that he to whom 'tis given, may be perswaded that all that is sayd to him, proceeds from an excess of Affection and Charity; and an extream desire of seeing him Perfect: For when 'tis taken after this manner it never fails to become profitable.

The End of the third and last Tome.

